

**ALVARO'S ADVENTURES**  
birding & nature tours



# South Africa Birds and Wine – 2022

*July 28 – Aug 10, 2022*

*Sani Pass extension Aug 10 – 13, 2022*

**Guided by Alvaro Jaramillo and Keith Valentine**  
**With the assistance of our colleagues at**



**Cape Rockjumper (Clayton Burne)**

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For many years, we have operated our very successful Birds and Wine trip in Chile and Argentina. So many birders have asked, when are you going to expand this incredible concept to other parts of the world with great birds and wine? Well, here we go! Yes, we have chosen to go New World wine with Old World birds, where is this possible? South Africa of course! Don't ask me how the wine people came to consider Africa as the New World, for we all know it is the cradle of humanity and where some of the rocks could be the grandparents of the Andes. But as we get into controversial topics, why not leave these for a time where we actually have a wine in hand, after a great day of birding to discuss these very important matters? We operated this tour in 2019 and it was a wonderful hit with clients, due to Covid-19 we have delayed a new version until the middle of 2022 but we are greatly looking forward to it.

This Birding and Wine tour has been specifically crafted for those who wish to view a wide variety of South Africa's most sought after endemic birds, incredible mammal watching, while enjoying some of South Africa's fabulous wines with the remarkable beauty of the South-Western Cape as a backdrop. The Mother City, Cape Town, widely considered one of the world's most beautiful cities, will be our base for the first four nights of the tour. From here we will range out to explore the varied ecosystems conveniently accessible from our comfortable accommodations. We will then make our way up the West Coast where we will explore the beautiful West Coast National Park, before heading into the interior where the dry country riches of the Tanqua Karoo await us! Our next destination will be the province of KwaZulu-Natal on South Africa's eastern seaboard which boasts some of the country's finest birding as well as exceptional mammal viewing. An area of incredible natural diversity; and this, coupled with a modern infrastructure well suited to the needs of the modern traveler, makes birding and game viewing here an absolute delight. From the teeming Zululand Rhino Reserve, to the rich mature Fynbos of the Western Cape, this tour offers the very best of Southern African birding, game viewing and wine tasting!

Both Alvaro and Keith are long time birders and very experienced guides. But they are also keen naturalists, and enjoy and love a good glass of "vino." This will be a trip full of great wildlife watching, camaraderie, and enjoyment of great wine and some incredible scenery. This is the tour that your non-birding friends will be envious of! Come on down and join us for some incredible fun in South Africa.



**Zebra.**

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## THE TOUR AT A GLANCE...

### THE ITINERARY

Day 1 – Jul 28	Arrival in Cape Town, visit Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and late afternoon wine tasting
Day 2 – Jul 29	Cape Point, Strandfontein Water Treatment and late afternoon wine tasting
Day 3 – Jul 30	Seabird outing and afternoon wine tasting
Day 4 – Jul 31	The Cape Peninsula and late afternoon wine tasting
Day 5 – Aug 1	Cape Town to Ceres via West Coast National Park and Wine Tasting
Day 6 – Aug 2	Ceres and the Tanqua Karoo
Day 7 – Aug 3	Ceres to Cape Town via Stellenbosch/Paarl
Day 8 – Aug 4	Cape Town to Mkuze via King Shaka International Airport
Day 9 – Aug 5	Mkuze Day trip
Days 10 to 13, Aug 6 – 9	Manyoni Private Game Reserve
Day 14 – Aug 10	Manyoni Private Game Reserve to King Shaka International Airport and depart.

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Zebra Hills Lodge

## The Birding Sites We Visit

### **The Cape region.**

South Africa's Cape Region is unique, unlike other parts of Africa the climate here is Mediterranean. Like other Mediterranean regions (hot and dry in summer, wet and cool in winter), there is a distinctive habitat here. Not the Chaparral of California, or the Matorral of Chile, here it is the Fynbos. This is an endemic montane shrub land, with an incredibly high amount of endemism. An amazing 80% of plants here are endemic to the Fynbos! The area is so unusual, that it is by itself one of the 6 floral kingdoms on earth, the "capensis" floral kingdom. There is no place like it, and its flagship plants are the unusual pincushions of the Proteacea. A total of 6 bird species are endemic to the Fynbos and we will look for them, and with luck we shall find them. These are the Cape Sugarbird, Victorin's Warbler, Cape Rockjumper, Protea Seed eater, Orange-breasted

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Sunbird and Cape Siskin. Apart from these species there is an entire cadre of birds which are associated but not specifically found in in the Cape Region's Fynbos.

Furthermore, the Cape Region is one of the earth's best spots for pelagic seabirding. The water currents here bring cold water from the south, and mix with warmer water from the Indian Ocean. There is a great diversity of petrels, shearwaters and albatrosses here along with cold water species such as the Cape Gannet, African Penguin and a nice assortment of gulls, terns and cormorants here. This promises to be a great day of seabirding!



**The Karoo!**

## **The Karoo.**

Slightly north of the Cape's coast is a semi desert region known as the Karoo. This is a distinct habitat type, between the Fynbos of the Cape, and the Kalahari Desert farther north. This region does not hold a huge number of species, but many specialties. Birds such as Verreaux's Eagle, Spike-heeled Lark, Eastern Long-billed Lark, Black-eared Sparrowlark, Karoo Korhaan, Burchell's Courser and many others. Although our visit to the Karoo will be quick, we will see a wonderful assortment of species that we will not see during the rest of the trip.

## **Manyoni Game Preserve.**

This part of the tour is entirely different. Here we leave the wine region of Africa, but we will still maintain a good stock of wines to taste during dinner, so do not despair. This is a private reserve created in 1995 through a partnership with private owners and the World Wildlife Fund, primarily to preserve stocks of the highly endangered Black Rhinoceros. Great for birds, and a haven for mammals, the following can be found here: Black and White rhinoceros, African Elephant, Cape Buffalo, Giraffe, Nyala, Blue Wildebeest, Warthog, Impala, Kudu and smaller antelope. Less common, but occurring in the reserve are Brown Hyaena, Suni and Leopard. The name of the reserve means "Place

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for Birds” as this private game preserve has been found over the years to be amazingly rich in birdlife. In fact, the area is an Important Bird Area. We will have fun photographing the wildlife, birds and tasting some great food and wine while we are here.



Southern Giraffe

## About the Physical Requirements & Pace

This tour is meant to be a great balance between birding and good food and wine. This is a South Africa trip that is of a moderate pace. It is not meant to be a birding marathon, but we will have full days in the field, and early mornings to make the best of the day. When possible, a post lunch break will be scheduled. Birding will be from good trails, safari vehicle, and comfortable bus. There is a pelagic trip scheduled on the tour, which is optional for those who do not do well on boats. This is not meant to be a strenuous trip, but an enjoyable and very birdy trip. The photographic opportunities are stunning for the “photo birder.”



Cape Sugarbird - Hugh Chittenden

## **Itinerary for South Africa – Birds and Wine 2022**

**Day 1, July 28, 2022 –Arrival in Cape Town, visit Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens with late afternoon wine tasting.** We begin our tour in Cape Town with an afternoon exploration of the picturesque Cape Peninsula at one of the local birding hotspots. Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens lies on the slopes of Table Mountain and is home to a plethora of endemics restricted to the Macchia-like fynbos vegetation of the southern tip of Africa: Cape Spurfowl scurry across the lawns, the magnificent Protea gardens are home to spectacular Cape Sugarbird and Orange-breasted Sunbird, both of which are South African endemics, whilst Cape Bulbul, Olive Thrush, the attractive Cape Grassbird, Karoo Prinia, Bokmakierie, Southern Boubou and Southern Double-collared Sunbird may be found in areas of denser cover. We will watch out for African Goshawk and Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawk, which occasionally display above the indigenous forest that cloaks the slopes above the gardens. These forests are also home to African Olive Pigeon, Lemon Dove, Cape Batis, Sombre Greenbul and Cape Sugarbird by Hugh Chittenden Forest Canary.

With the splendors of Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens fresh in our minds, we shall depart for the spectacular mountains and surrounding valleys covered by a myriad of vineyards which welcome us to the heart of the Cape winelands. It is in this magnificent region that we shall enjoy a sample of the superb wines on offer including the South African signature variety, Pinotage, a wine produced from cross pollinating Pinot Noir and Hermitage grapes. Our wine estate of choice this evening will be Groot Constantia. This estate was founded in 1685 and is South Africa's oldest wine producing

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estate. Stepped in history we will have some time to explore the gardens a little before enjoying our first tasting on South African soil. We will have the opportunity to taste a wonderful selection of varietals including some of their Chardonnays for which the estate is probably best known for. Over the past 10 years Groot Constantia has collected an incredible total of 66 gold medals, mostly from international wine shows and largely for their Chardonnay's, although their Shiraz and Pinotage have also collected their fair share of accolades. We will dine tonight at the famous Jonkershuis Restaurant on the property, which serves a lovely selection of food including a number of typically South African dishes.

**Day 2, July 29, 2022 – Seabird outing and afternoon wine tasting.** The cold upwelling of the Benguela current off Cape Town supports a wealth of pelagic seabirds, with vast concentrations of albatrosses, petrels, shearwaters and prions gathering in the deeper water at the edge of the continental shelf. Birding is excellent year-round and we hope to



**Orange-breasted Sugarbird (Adam Riley)**

see White-capped, Black-browed and both types/species of Yellow-nosed Albatrosses, Southern and Northern Giant Petrels, White-chinned Petrel, Sooty, Great, Manx and Cory's Shearwaters, Wilson's and European Storm Petrels, Sabine's Gull, Parasitic Jaeger, Pomarine Jaeger and Cape Gannet. If we manage to locate one of the commercial fishing trawlers the birding can be truly spectacular, with a cloud of seabirds following

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

Whilst in False Bay we will also visit the famous African Penguin colony, watch for the endemic African Oystercatcher along the adjacent rocky shoreline, and scan the offshore islets for their breeding populations of Crowned, Bank and Cape Cormorants.

After a wonderful pelagic experience, we shall venture to the nearby wine estate of Cape Point Vineyards where we shall supplement the salty ocean scents for the subtle

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bouquet of further fine wines at an evening wine tasting followed by an early dinner. Nestled against the Silvermine Mountains with phenomenal views over Noordhoek and Chapman's Peak this fabulous estate is probably best known for their award winning Sauvignon Blanc. The estate is situated very close to the icy Atlantic Ocean and the cool breezes are perfect for producing excellent Sauvignon Blanc's. This afternoon/evening we will have ample time to enjoy exceptional views, sunset, wines and good food on this estate.

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

## **Day 3, July 30, 2022 – Cape Point, Strandfontein Water Treatment and late**



**afternoon wine tasting.** We travel to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve this morning. This wonderful park showcases the most south-western point of the continent and is very popular amongst birders and general tourists alike. Here we should again find Cape Sugarbird, stunning Orange-breasted Sunbird, and perhaps the impressive Black Harrier, Grey-winged Francolin, Cape Grassbird and Cape Siskin. We will explore the network of roads to less visited parts of the reserve, visiting secluded coves and searching for the

### **Black Harrier (Adam Riley)**

elusive Cape Mountain Zebra and Bontebok antelope. In addition, we could also find Eland, the largest antelope in the world.

We will spend the rest of the day at the productive Strandfontein water treatment works. Regarded by many as the best locality in Cape Town to connect with water-birds, this site hosts Maccoa Duck, Eared, Little and Great-crested Grebe, Great White Pelican, Greater and Lesser Flamingo, South African Shelduck, Cape, Red-billed and Hottentot Teal, African Oystercatcher, African Marsh-Harrier and large numbers of Palearctic migrants including Ruff, Little Stint, Common Ringed Plover, Wood, Marsh and Common sandpiper all intermixed with Pied Avocet, Three-banded and Kittlitz's Plovers while African Swamphen and Black Crake dart through the reeds along the edge of the pans.

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**Bokmakierie (Adam Riley)**

Later on, in the afternoon we will venture back towards the vineyards below the Silvermine/Table Mountain range for another memorable tasting and evening meal. The estate of choice tonight will be Steenberg Estate and we will once again be able to sample a fine selection of the region's best wines. Like Cape Point Vineyards this estate is most famous for its award-winning Sauvignon Blanc's however also produces some excellent Semillon, Merlot and Shiraz while their Nebbiolo, an unusual varietal to be

found in South Africa, has picked up a number of accolades as well. Dinner tonight will be enjoyed at another fine restaurant on the property – Katharina's.

**Day 4, July 31, 2022 – The Cape Peninsula and late afternoon wine tasting.** A diverse array of birding habitats are present around Cape Town and today we will visit a variety of sites, ranging from wetlands to fynbos and marine shoreline. Making our way early to the



**African Oystercatcher (Markus Lilje)**

rugged Hottentots-Holland Mountains, we will search for one of South Africa's finest endemics: the handsome Cape Rockjumper. Though strikingly plumaged and conspicuous by their vocalizations, these charismatic birds possess an incredible ability to disappear amongst the boulders and we may have to be patient if we wish to enjoy sightings of these elusive creatures. The thick mountain fynbos is the favored habitat of Orange-breasted Sunbird, Cape Siskin and the beautiful, endemic Victorin's

Warbler, while other species including Verreaux's Eagle, Grey-backed Cisticola and Ground Woodpecker is also found in the area. Chacma Baboon is fairly common here, but we will have to scan the rocky ridges carefully for the agile Klipspringer. After a delicious lunch we shall again have ample opportunity to visit a few more estates in the seemingly endless expanse of the Cape winelands. One of the possible estates on the cards today

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include Waterford where we can enjoy a lovely chocolate and wine tasting. Many argue that chocolate and wine aren't the best pairing however Waterford have created a few special chocolates to prove otherwise and this makes for an interesting experience. The estate is also very well regarded for their Shiraz, which continually keeps picking up numerous awards. We will then return to Cape Town for a lovely dinner near our accommodations.



**Rufous-eared Warbler (Glen Valentine)**

**Day 5, Aug 1, 2022 – Cape Town to Ceres via West Coast National Park.** Our first site of interest today is the West Coast National Park. Large numbers of waders spend the northern winter here and we will check the exposed banks of Langebaan Lagoon for Red Knot, Bar-tailed Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Black-bellied Plover, Terek Sandpiper, Greater Sand Plover and Eurasian Curlew, as well as Kittlitz's and the local Chestnut-banded Plovers. In addition to the shorebirds, these areas also support large numbers of Greater and

Lesser Flamingos, South African Shelduck, Cape Shoveler and other waterfowl. The surrounding short, coastal vegetation (Strandveld) is home to the endemic Southern Black Korhaan, Grey-winged Francolin, Grey Tit, Cape Penduline Tit, Karoo Lark, Capped Wheatear, Fiscal Flycatcher, Karoo Scrub Robin and the magnificent Black Harrier, surely one of the world's most attractive raptors! In the late afternoon we will make the drive through to the farming village of Ceres, gateway to the Tanqua Karoo.

**Day 6, Aug 2, 2022 – Ceres and the Tanqua Karoo.** Just a short drive from the village of Ceres is the semi-arid, central plateau of South Africa known as the Karoo; a land of endless vistas and spectacular sunsets, renowned for its endemic larks, chats and canaries. We leave the famous fruit-growing valley of Ceres before reaching our first stop at Karoopoort, a narrow canyon that forms the gateway to the Succulent Karoo. Birds inhabiting the arid, rocky slopes and *Acacia*-filled watercourses of this area include White-backed Mousebird, Acacia Pied Barbet, Mountain Wheatear, Layard's and Chestnut-vented Warblers, the dainty Fairy Flycatcher and Pririt Batis, whilst the adjacent reed beds are home to the endemic Namaqua Warbler. One of the area's most charismatic birds is the highly local Cinnamon-breasted Warbler. Though fairly vocal, this species is highly elusive and seeing it in its habitat of jumbled boulders and rocky scree will require a combination of patience and perseverance.

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



**Cape Grassbird (Keith Valentine)**

**Day 7, Aug 3, 2022 – Ceres to Cape Town via Stellenbosch/Paarl.** This morning we have the opportunity to target one final endemic species, the range-restricted Protea Canary. This uncommon and local bird is fairly regularly seen on the high Protea-clad mountain slopes above Ceres and we will spend time at key positions listening for its distinctive call. The moist gullies here also hold a few other endemics such as the skulking Victorin's Warbler, Cape Grassbird, Cape Sugarbird and Bokmakierie. After our morning's birding we will then depart from

Ceres for Stellenbosch. On the way we will stop at Paarl Mountain where we can do a little more birding if there are still species that we haven't yet seen. The site can be a decent backup for the tricky Protea Canary while quality species such as Sweet Waxbill, Fiscal Flycatcher, Cape Sugarbird, Malachite and Orange-breasted Sunbirds, Cape Batis, Yellow Bishop and Streaky-headed Seedeater can all regularly be found.

Our accommodations tonight will be in the heart of wine country – Stellenbosch and on the estate known as Spier. Nearby are some of South Africa's most prestigious wine estates such as Meerlust and Vergenoegd. Meerlust Rubicon is arguably South Africa's most well-respected wine estate and for years has provided a benchmark for others trying to produce a first class Bordeaux blend. The estate was founded back in 1756 and has been in the Myburgh family for 8 generations. Being only a few kilometers away from our accommodations at Spier we can enjoy tasting the Meerlust range of wines that include a fine Pinot Noir, Merlot, oaked Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon. Vergenoegd just happens to be the next-door estate and is also famous for their Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz and Bordeaux Blend and if time allows we can also enjoy a few wines from this prestigious

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estate before returning to Spier for a delicious final dinner in the heart of the Cape Vineyards.



**Gorgeous Bushshrike (Adam Riley)**

**Day 8, Aug 4, 2022 – Cape Town to Manyoni Game Reserve via King Shaka International Airport.** After an early breakfast we shall depart for an onward flight from Cape Town International Airport to the tropical climate of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal Province. From here we will strike out north into the heart of Zululand. Our base for the next 5 nights will be the beautifully appointed Zebra Hills Safari Lodge situated inside the 56,000 acre Zululand Rhino Reserve.

After checking in to our private and very comfortable lodge overlooking a busy waterhole, we will take our first game and birding drive in an open safari vehicle, returning in the dark whilst spotlighting. Each evening we will relax under the stars around an open fire enjoying a refreshing beverage and listening to the sounds of the African night and watching for animals that might come down to drink at the lodge waterhole. In the past, we have had Lion, Cheetah, both species of rhino, Giraffe, Cape Buffalo and numerous species of antelope quenching their thirst here.

After checking in to our private and very comfortable lodge overlooking a busy

**Day 9, Aug 5, 2022 – Day trip to Mkuze Game Reserve.** Nearby Mkuze Game Reserve is one of South Africa's most well-known birding hotspots. This reserve offers additional chances for almost all the bird and wildlife species that occur in the Zululand Rhino Reserve but today we will focus on waterbird and sandforest specials that are more difficult or irregular in the Zululand Rhino Reserve. Mkuze has much larger stands of Tongaland Sandforest and here we will seek out any of this microhabitat's special birds that we may not have encountered yet such as Neergaard's Sunbird and African Broadbill. The expansive Ensumo Pan hosts a mouthwatering selection of waterbirds and large pods of Hippopotamus and massive Nile Crocodiles. Here we will look for flocks of White-faced Whistling Duck, Spur-winged Goose, Red-billed and Hottentot Teal, Yellowbilled, Saddle-billed and Marabou Stork, African Openbill, Glossy Ibis, African Spoonbill, the enormous Goliath (largest heron in the world), Purple, Squacco and Black Heron, Great, Little and Intermediate Egret, Great White and Pink-backed Pelican, African Darter, African Swamphen, Black-winged Stilt, Pied Avocet, African Jacana, the elusive Greater Painted Snipe, Collared Pratincole, White-winged and Whiskered Tern, Malachite, Giant and Pied Kingfisher and Blue-cheeked Bee-eater. Other species for which we stand a better chance in Mkuze include Southern Banded Snake Eagle, African Cuckoo-Hawk, African Marsh Harrier, Pel's Fishing

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Owl if we are very lucky, Green Malkoha, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird and Black-throated Wattle-eye. After a full day of birding we will return to Zebra Hills.



**Green Woodhoopoe**

**Day 10 - 13, Aug 6 - 9, 2022 – Zululand Rhino Reserve.** Over the course of the next 3 full days we will explore the wonders of this incredibly scenic African wilderness. Home to an impressive variety of big game including the much talked about ‘Big 5’, our time in this reserve is sure to be thrilling and memorable. Landscapes in the reserve range from rolling hills of open Acacia savannah, lush riverbeds lined with giant Sycamore figs and bright Fever tree forests, dense thickets favored by the elusive Black Rhinoceros, towering cliffs and scattered waterholes often thronged with thirsty animals. Regularly encountered mammals include the ubiquitous Impala and Common Warthog, splendid Nyala (a stunning richly colored and boldly marked antelope that has a rather limited distribution), Greater Kudu (males with impressive spiraled horns), Common Waterbuck, both Southern and Mountain Reedbuck, the diminutive Natal Red Duiker and its more nocturnal cousin the Grey Duiker, Steenbok which favour the driest zones and Common Bushbuck which stick to the denser vegetation around the riverbeds, herds of ungainly Blue Wildebeest and Plains Zebra usually travel together, dispersed herds of enormous Giraffe and noisy troops of Chacma Baboon and Vervet Monkeys. A few of the larger waterholes support family groups of raucous Hippopotamus and two other sought-after target species are the elegant Cheetah which occur in healthy numbers and a pack of endangered African Wild Dogs that call this reserve home. The “Big 5” is always high on every visitor’s want list and the Zululand Rhino Reserve is particularly proud of the conservation work that it does in protecting good numbers of both Black and White Rhinoceros despite the current scourge of illegal poaching. Family groups of White Rhinos are regularly encountered but the shyer and less numerous Black Rhino are more difficult to find. Herds of African Buffalo can

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number in their hundreds and both lone bulls and matriarchal herds of African Elephant roam the reserve. Lions occur in good numbers, especially around this southern section of the reserve and are regularly encountered around Zebra Hills lodge itself where our guests are often awakened at dawn by the reverberating roar of Lions. Finally, the Leopard, which is the most elusive of the Big 5, occurs in healthy numbers but finding this stealthy spotted cat always requires a hefty dose of good luck.

We will also take time out to do a few night drives and besides the mammals mentioned above, we stand chances of finding a variety of nocturnal specialists such as Spotted Hyena, Cape Porcupine, Black-backed Jackal, White-tailed Mongoose, Cape Genet, Scrub Hare and Greater Galago (Thick-tailed Bushbaby). If we are very lucky we might come across the bizarre Aardvark, Caracal, Serval, Bushpig or Brown Hyena. The reserve bird list boasts over 400 species and we are sure to encounter a mouthwatering selection of quality species during our time here. Topping the list are the classic sand forest specialties that include the highly local trio of Pink-throated Twinspot, Neergaard's Sunbird and Rudd's Apalis, eye-catching Gorgeous Bushshrike, Eastern Nicator and Bearded Scrub-Robin. Early morning drives often turn up Crested and Natal Francolins scuttling off the roads as well as flocks of the bizarre Crested Guinea fowl. We will spend quality time along the reserve's riverine woodlands searching for numerous frugivorous species that flock here to feed on the abundance of fruiting figs. These include cryptic African Green Pigeons, the brilliant Purple-crested Turaco, White-eared and Black-collared Barbet and their smaller cousin the Red-fronted Tinkerbird, noisy Trumpeter and Crowned Hornbills, Black-headed and the migrant Eurasian Golden Oriole, and busy flocks of Black-bellied and Violet-backed Starlings. Other species that also prefer these moister forests include Scaly-throated and Lesser Honeyguide, Burchell's Coucal, the sought-after Narina Trogon, raucous Broad-billed Roller, Brown-hooded, Woodland and the gorgeous African Pygmy Kingfisher and the most southern breeding population of Grey-headed Kingfisher, cackling family groups of Green Wood Hoopoe, the enormous Southern Ground-Hornbill, Black-backed Puffback, Southern Boubou, Square-tailed Drongo, Blue-mantled and African Paradise Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied and Sombre Greenbul, Terrestrial Brownbul, Black Saw-wing, Red-faced Cisticola, Yellow-breasted Apalis, Whitebrowed and Red-capped Robin-chats (both accomplished songsters), Collared, Grey and Purple-banded Sunbird and both Spectacled and Forest Weaver.

Waterbirds include pairs of Egyptian Goose that dominate most waterholes, noisy Hadedda Ibis and unique Hamerkop, Woolly-necked Stork, the secretive Striated Heron and more conspicuous Grey Heron, migrant Common and Wood Sandpipers, Three-banded Plover, African Wattled Lapwing, family groups of Water Thick-knee and Black Crake. Thirsty Red-eyed, Ring-necked, Laughing and Emerald-spotted Wood Dove are regular waterhole visitors and noisy Village, Lesser Masked and Southern Masked Weavers nest in vegetation hanging over the waterholes. The reserve's more open grasslands are home to a healthy population of the world's largest bird, the Common Ostrich, as well as a good number of Black-bellied Bustard. Other species we will seek in this habitat include Common Buttonquail, Crowned and Senegal Lapwing, Temminck's Courser, Shelley's

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Francolin, Black Coucal (in longer, moister grasslands), Little and European Bee-eater, Rufous-naped and Flappet Lark, Barn, Lesser Striped and Redbreasted Swallow, Croaking Cisticola, Neddicky, Red-billed Quelea which sometimes flock and breed in the reserve in the millions, Whitewinged Widowbird, Yellow-throated Longclaw and African Pipit.

The Acacia savannas or bushveld habitat have their own subset of species which prefer this slightly drier habitat and these include Grey Go-away-bird, Red-faced and Speckled Mousebird, the multi-colored Lilac-breasted Roller, African Hoopoe, Common Scimitarbill, Southern Yellow-billed and Redbilled Hornbill, Acacia Pied and Crested Barbets, Greater Honeyguide, Brown-backed Honeybird, Striped Kingfisher, Golden-tailed, Cardinal and Bearded Woodpecker, Chinspot Batis, flocks of White-crested Helmetshrike, Grey-headed and Orange-breasted Bushshrike, Brown-crowned and Black-crowned Tchagra, Brubru, Black Cuckooshrike, migrant Red-backed and Lesser Grey Shrike, the miniscule Grey Penduline Tit, Sabota and the rare Dusky Lark, Long-billed Crombec, migrant Icterine and Willow Warbler, ubiquitous Rattling Cisticola, the scarce Stierling's Wren-warbler, Yellow-bellied and Burnt-necked Eremomela, noisy flocks of Arrow-marked Babbler, abundant Cape Glossy Starling, Red-billed Oxpecker which frequent the larger mammalian fauna, Groundscraper and the near endemic Kurrichane Thrush, the handsome White-throated Robin-chat (another near-endemic), White-browed Scrub-Robin, Pale and Grey Tit Flycatcher, Scarlet-chested and White-bellied Sunbird, Yellow-throated Petronia, the little known Bushveld Pipit, Yellow-fronted Canary and last but not least, Golden-breasted Bunting. Raptors are prevalent in the Zululand Rhino Reserve and we will keep a look out for a variety of eagles including the massive Martial (Africa's largest) and powerful Crowned Eagle (Africa's monkey-eating version of Harpy which nest in good numbers in the reserve and are virtually guaranteed to be encountered), as well as breeding pairs of migrant Wahlberg's, Tawny, the scarcer African Hawk-Eagle and non-breeding migrants which include Lesser Spotted, Booted and more rarely Steppe Eagle. Brown Snake Eagle is the most commonly encountered snake eagle but Black-chested also occurs and the aberrant Bateleur, one of Africa's classiest raptors is regularly seen rocking over the savannas on its broad wings. Small numbers of Secretarybird stride across the more open grasslands in search of snakes and other prey and other regularly encountered raptors include Black-shouldered and Yellow-billed Kite, African Harrier-Hawk, Lizard Buzzard, Gabar and African Goshawk, Black and Little Sparrowhawk, migrant Common (Steppe) Buzzard and Lanner Falcon. Vultures are also prevalent and play an important role in cleaning up the reserve. African White-backed is the default species but smaller numbers of massive Lappet-faced, White-headed, Hooded and rarely Palm-nut occur.

Colourful seedeaters are also a feature of the area and species we will seek include Green-winged Pytilia, Red-billed, African and Jameson's Firefinch, Blue, Common and Grey Waxbill, African Quail Finch and the incredible Pink-throated Twinspot. Nocturnal excursions may reveal the uncommon Bronze-winged Courser, Spotted Eagle, Barn, African Wood, African Scops, Southern White-faced and Verreaux's Eagle Owls and Fiery-necked and Square-tailed Nightjars.

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**Day 14, Aug 10, 2022: Zululand Rhino Reserve to King Shaka International Airport and depart.** This morning we shall embark on a final drive through this unspoilt reserve before we depart for King Shaka International Airport where the tour shall conclude.



**Cape of Good Hope**

## ***Karkloof & Sani Pass Extension***

***10 August to 13 August 2022 (4 days)***

*The province of KwaZulu-Natal on South Africa's eastern seaboard boasts some of the country's finest birding as well as exceptional mammal viewing. On this short extension, we'll spend time birding the mist-belt forests of the Karkloof and Marutswa,*

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*before enjoying a thrilling journey up the lofty peaks of the magnificent Drakensberg for a host of endemic and near endemic species.*



**Drakensberg Rockjumper by Adam Riley**

**Day 14, Aug 10, 2022: Zululand Rhino Reserve to Hilton.** Those who are continuing will transfer to the town of Hilton.

**Day 15, Aug 11, 2022: Karloof.** We have an early departure this morning for the Karkloof, a range of forested hills not far from the town of Hilton and home to a number of uncommon and local birds restricted to Afro-montane forests. We will be searching for South African endemics such as Forest Buzzard, Knysna Turaco, the highly endangered Cape Parrot, elusive Bush Blackcap - one of South Africa's most sought-after endemics - Chorister Robin-Chat, Southern Boubou, Greater Double-collared Sunbird, Sweet Waxbill, Forest Canary and Barratt's Warbler. We may also see more widespread, yet no less spectacular birds such as African Olive Pigeon, Olive Woodpecker, Narina Trogon, the uncommon Orange Ground Thrush, White-starred Robin, Olive Bushshrike and

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Yellowthroated Woodland Warbler. Further up the Karkloof range we visit a pristine area of upland grassland hosting breeding Black-winged Lapwing, but the star bird is undoubtedly the striking Buff-streaked Chat, an endemic wheatear that is breathtaking both in its appearance and song. Wetlands in this area host a variety of waterfowl that might include the uncommon Maccoa and White-backed Ducks, as well as Grey Crowned Crane. If we are lucky, we may encounter a pair of the endangered Wattled Crane striding majestically across the grasslands.

**Day 16, Aug 12, 2022: Sani Pass.** Today we travel up into the tiny mountain kingdom of Lesotho in search of a handful of highly localised, highland endemics. In order to do this, we will transfer to 4 x 4 vehicles and make our way up the rugged and spectacular Sani Pass – birding en route. The grassy slopes and rocky outcrops at the lower end of the pass are home to the bizarre Ground Woodpecker, Cape Rock Thrush and Yellow Bishop, whilst stands of protea support the spectacular endemic Gurney's Sugarbird (belonging to a family endemic to southern Africa), Greater Double-collared Sunbird and the dazzling Malachite Sunbird. As we approach the crest of the escarpment, we will be watching the rocky scree at the roadside for the stunning Drakensberg Rockjumper, African Rock Pipit, Sentinel Rock Thrush, Drakensberg Prinia and Drakensberg Siskin. Atop the plateau, the steep slopes and rugged cliffs are replaced by gently undulating terrain and endless vistas of distant, blue mountains. Black and White Storks and Southern Bald Ibis may be found alongside the mountain streams, whilst Grey-winged Francolin, Red-capped Lark, Sicklewinged Chat, African and Mountain Pipits, Yellow Canary and Cape Bunting prefer adjacent meadows.

A number of birds more typical of the Karoo, such as Grey Tit, Large-billed Lark, Karoo Prinia, Layard's Warbler and Fairy Flycatcher, reach the eastern limits of their range here in the Lesotho highlands. We will keep a careful watch skywards as the magnificent Bearded and Cape Vultures, Verreaux's Eagle, Jackal Buzzard, Lanner Falcon and White-necked Raven are all possible. Other animals of particular interest atop the "Roof of Africa" are the approachable and endearing Sloggett's Vlei Rat, the endemic Drakensberg Crag Lizard and the colorful Southern Rock Agama.

**Day 17, Aug 13, 2022: Himeville to Durban (King Shaka) Airport.** We will depart after breakfast, allowing us to arrive at the Durban airport by mid-day roughly. This allows for afternoon flights northbound. Safe Travels!

## Your Guides

**Alvaro Jaramillo** was born in Chile but began birding in Toronto, where he lived as a youth. He was trained in ecology and evolution with a particular interest in bird behavior. Research forays and backpacking trips introduced Alvaro to the riches of the Neotropics,

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where he has traveled extensively. He is the author of the Birds of Chile, an authoritative yet portable field guide to Chile's birds. Alvaro writes the Identify Yourself column in Bird Watcher's Digest. Among various projects he recently authored the ABA Field Guide to Birds of California, and the sparrow chapter for the Handbook of Birds of the World, he is also writing a photo guide to the birds and wildlife of Patagonia. Alvaro was recently granted the Eisenmann Medal by the Linnean Society of New York, it is awarded occasionally for excellence in ornithology and encouragement of the amateur. Little known fact, Alvaro spent several months studying the White-breasted Guinea fowl in the Ivory Coast when he was in university; he is keen on returning to what was his early focus on African birds! Alvaro lives with his family in Half Moon Bay, California.

**Keith Valentine** hails from Johannesburg, South Africa, where his interest in the outdoors, wildlife and especially African birds developed while he was still very young. Keith has always had a passion for adventure and while he was growing up spent more time away from the metropolis than within. Keith has through time in the field acquired extensive and specialist knowledge of the birds, mammals and overall ecology of many diverse regions throughout Africa, Asia and Madagascar. At 21 years of age, Keith became the youngest person to have ever seen 850 birds in the Southern African sub region. His expertise has been gained through numerous field trips, where he has observed and studied birds and other wildlife and their behavior in depth. As well as researching the birds and wildlife of Africa, he holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree in Financial Management from the University of South Africa. Keith spends most of his time guiding tours throughout Africa, Asia and Madagascar for Rockjumper Birding Tours. Keith has a wholehearted excitement for wildlife and birds and gains immense enjoyment from sharing these experiences whilst on tour.

## Financial Information

**FEE: \$6950** from Cape Town, ending in Durban. If the group is smaller than 8, a small group surcharge may apply.

**Note that the internal one-way flight is included in the tour pricing.**

**DEPOSIT:** \$500 per person

**FINAL PAYMENT DUE:** March 30, 2022

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional):** \$900

**LIMIT:** 12.

**EXTENSION FEE: \$1650** Starting and ending in Durban.

**EXTENSION SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (Optional):** \$100

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African Lions

## Additional Information

**DOCUMENTS:** A current passport, with two consecutive empty pages and valid 30 days beyond the date of your return is necessary for US citizens to enter South Africa. A visa is not required for US citizens if your visit is for less than 90 days. If you are not a US citizen, please check with the South African consulate nearest you for entry requirements. Information about consulates and entry requirements is generally available online or phone or e-mail Alvaro's Adventures and we can look this up. Passports should have an adequate number of blank pages for the entire journey.

**AIR ARRANGEMENTS:** Please plan to arrive in Cape Town by early morning on July 28, 2022, arriving a day early to rest up and avoid the stress of missed connections is always recommended and we can arrange for an additional hotel night for you. Flights back home at the end of the tour can be booked for in the evening of Aug 10, 2022 out of Durban; or in the afternoon or evening of Aug 13, 2022 if you are on the extension. Note that the tour ends in Durban, not Cape Town, so plan your travel arrangements accordingly. Be sure to check with Alvaro's Adventures to confirm that the flights you have chosen will work with our itinerary and to confirm that the tour is sufficiently

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subscribed to operate. Once purchased, most airline tickets are non-refundable and carry a penalty to change. We are not responsible for these fees.

**TOUR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS:** The tour fee is **\$6950** for one person in double occupancy from Cape Town, finishing in Durban, South Africa. It includes all lodging from Day 1 through Day 12, all meals from lunch on Day 1 through breakfast on Day 13, all ground transportation, entrance fees, tips for baggage handling and meal service, and the guide services of the tour leaders. **Wine during tastings and meals is included in the tour fee.** Other alcoholic beverages and items of a personal nature are not included. The above fees do not include your airfare to and from South Africa, airport taxes, visa fees, optional tips to local drivers, hotel staff and guides, phone calls, laundry, or other items of a personal nature. The extension fee is **\$1650**, single supplement of \$100

The single supplement for the tour is \$900. If you do not have a roommate but wish to share, we will try to pair you with a roommate from the tour; but if none is available, you will be billed for the single supplement. Our tour fees are based on double occupancy; one-half the cost of a double room is priced into the tour fee.

**TOUR REGISTRATION:** To register for this tour, complete the enclosed Registration/Release and Indemnity form and return it with a **deposit of \$500** per person. If registering by phone, a deposit and the Release and Indemnity form must be received within fourteen days, or the space will be released. **Full payment** of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to departure, or **by Mar 30, 2022. We will bill you for the final payment at either 120 days or when the tour has reached sufficient subscription to operate, whichever date comes later.** Since the cost of your trip insurance and airline tickets is generally non-refundable, please do not finalize these purchases until you have received final billing for the tour or have been advised that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate by your tour manager.

**SMOKING:** This is a non-smoking tour.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Refund of deposit and payment, less \$100 handling fee, will be made if cancellation is received up to 120 days before departure. If cancellation occurs between 119 and 70 days before the departure date, 50% of the tour fee is refundable. Thereafter, all deposits and payments are not refundable.

This policy only applies to payments made to Alvaro's Adventures for tour (and any services included in those fees). Airline tickets not included in the tour fee and purchased separately often carry penalties for cancellation or change, or are sometimes totally non-refundable. Additionally, if you take out trip insurance the cost of the insurance is not refundable so it is best to purchase the policy just prior to making full payment for the tour or at the time you purchase airline tickets, depending upon the airlines restrictions.

The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute

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another guide for the original one. Where this is necessary, notification will be given to tour members, and they will have the right to cancel their participation and receive a full refund.

Alvaro's Adventures' is a Registered Seller of Travel in the State of California (CST # 2105497). Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California. This ensures your right to a prompt refund: Upon cancellation of the transportation or travel services, where the passenger is not at fault and has not canceled in violation of any terms and conditions previously clearly and conspicuously disclosed and agreed to by the passenger, all sums paid to the seller of travel for services not provided will be promptly paid to the passenger, unless the passenger advises the seller of travel in writing, after cancellation. This provision does not apply where the seller of travel has remitted the payment to another registered wholesale seller of travel or a carrier, without obtaining a refund, and where the wholesaler or provider defaults in providing the agreed-upon transportation or service. In this situation, the seller of travel must provide the passenger with a written statement accompanied by bank records establishing the disbursement of the payment, and if disbursed to a wholesale seller of travel, proof of current registration of that wholesaler.

**TRIP CANCELLATION & MEDICAL EMERGENCY INSURANCE** We strongly recommend you consider purchasing trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or your family prior to or during a trip. Because we must remit early (and substantial) tour deposits to our suppliers, we cannot offer any refund when cancellation occurs within 70 days of departure, and only a partial refund from 70 to 119 days prior to departure (see CANCELLATION POLICY). In addition, the Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and if it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. US medical insurance plans seldom cover health costs incurred outside the United States unless supplemental coverage is purchased. Furthermore, US Medicare and Medicaid programs do not provide payment for medical services outside the United States.

When making a decision regarding health insurance, Americans should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the United States may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties. When consulting with your insurer prior to your trip, please ascertain whether payment will be made to the overseas healthcare provider or whether you will be reimbursed later for expenses that you incur.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** For and in consideration of the opportunity to participate in the tour, each tour participant and each parent or legal guardian of a tour participant who is under 18 agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Alvaro's Adventures, its agents, servants, employees, shareholders, officers, directors, attorneys, and contractors as more

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fully set forth in the Release and Indemnity Agreement on the reverse side of the registration form. Alvaro's Adventures acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, or other means, and assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity caused by defect in such vehicles or for any reason whatsoever, including the acts, defaults, or bankruptcies of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. Alvaro's Adventures accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. The tour participant shall bear all such losses and expenses. Alvaro's Adventures reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. Alvaro's Adventures reserves the right to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely.

Participants should be in good health and should consult a physician before undertaking a tour. If you have questions about the physical requirements of a tour, please contact our office for further information. Participants should prepare for the tour by reading the detailed itinerary, and other pertinent matter provided by Alvaro's Adventures. Each participant is responsible for bringing appropriate clothing and equipment as recommended in our bulletins.

THE RECEIPT OF YOUR TOUR DEPOSIT SHALL BE DEEMED TO BE CONSENT TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS. EACH TOUR PARTICIPANT AND EACH PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A TOUR PARTICIPANT WHO IS UNDER 18 SHALL SIGN AND DELIVER THE RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION.

3/22 AJ



Greater Kudu