

# WILDLIFE TRAVEL



## Drakensberg

16<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026

## SOUTH AFRICA 2026

A gallery of photos from the trip is at [flickr.com/photos/wildlifetravel/albums/72177720332079717](https://www.flickr.com/photos/wildlifetravel/albums/72177720332079717)

(with thanks to Sarah Lambert for so many fantastic images)



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## 17<sup>th</sup> January: Durban to Underberg

Having had varying degrees of success at sleeping on the overnight flight, followed by a short delay to our onwards connection, the group arrived at Durban airport a little rough around the edges, where we met up with Mayur and Campbell, our guides for the next two weeks. Vehicles loaded, and were soon on our way, skirting the city of Durban and then striking off inland, travelling through a landscape increasingly dominated by planted eucalypts and conifers, with the occasional patch of native forest, before reaching the more grassy uplands towards Underberg, the gateway to the Southern Drakensberg.

## 18<sup>th</sup> January: Sani Pass into Lesotho

The morning started with our first Hadada Ibis alarm, with two pairs of the noisy birds probing in the lawns. Over breakfast, we enjoyed watching Amethyst, Great Double-collared and the wonderful long-tailed Malachite Sunbirds visiting the sugar water bird feeders, while a little group of Speckled Mousebirds sunbathed in the tree tops.

For the next two days we were to be in the expert hands of Stuart, Glen and Joseph who would drive us up the Sani Pass to Lesotho and back again, making plenty of stops along the way to make sure we saw all the area's local specialities.

The botanical highlights of any trip to South Africa are likely to include orchids, proteas and gladioli, and our first roadside stop introduced us to our first examples of all three: spikes of our first two orchids, the black *Pterygodium nigrescens* and the brown *Disa versicolor*, the silver-leaved *Protea roupelliae* and the large peachy-orange *Gladiolus dalenii*.

From here on, the botanical stops became something of a blur: every rocky cutting or grassy slope revealed more exciting plants - the dwarf *Protea dracomontanum*, bright pink *Watsonia densiflora*, the tiny sundew *Drosera natalensis*, bright yellow *Euryops tysonii* and *Euryops evansii*, our first pineapple-lillies *Eucomis schijffii* and red hot pokers *Kniphofia ichopensis*, amongst many others.

There was plenty to keep the birders interested, in between all the orchids, with the highlight no doubt a party of four Gurney's Sugarbirds at the roadside the first of the mountains' endemics. Buff-streaked Chat, Ground Woodpecker and Cape Bunting perched up on a rocky slope, while a couple of skulkers, Cape Grassbird and Fan-tailed Grassbird, both gave themselves up after some gentle encouragement from Stuart.

At the South African border post, we enjoyed some brightly coloured Garden Acraeas on the flowers in the car park, before the tarmac ran out and the four wheel drives really came into their own...

As we approached Lesotho, the cloud descended and the increasingly spectacular views disappeared into the gloom. The reduced visibility was probably a blessing in disguise as we visited one particularly showy orchid, *Disa thodei* growing on a ledge above a, no doubt precipitous drop, hidden by the cloud...

After dropping off our bags at the lodge, we headed further onto the plateau for one more botanical stop, where a baffling variety of alpine Helichrysums grew amongst the rocks, along with the glorious *Gladiolus longicollis*.

The log fires gave us a warm welcome back at the lodge, for our overnight stay in Lesotho.

<i>Delosperma seanii-hoganii</i>	Aizoaceae	tiny 'mesemb', Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Agapanthus campanulatus</i>	Amaryllidaceae	lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Cyrtanthus epiphyticus</i>	Amaryllidaceae	red 'lily', steep cliffs, eg lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Searsia dentata</i>	Anacardiaceae	hawthorn-like bush, lower Sani Pass
<i>Alepidea natalensis</i>	Apiaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Cussonia paniculata</i>	Araliaceae	<b>Southern Cabbagetree</b> , lower Sani Pass
<i>Eucomis schijffii</i>	Asparagaceae	<b>Miniature Pineapple Lily</b> , lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Ledebouria ovatifolia</i>	Asparagaceae	flat, fleshy leaves, red spotted, lower Sani Pass

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<i>Kniphofia ichopensis</i>	Asphodelaceae	elegant orange 'poker', upper Sani Pass
<i>Afroaster perfoliatus</i>	Asteraceae	perfoliate leathery leaves
<i>Berkheya cirsiifolia</i>	Asteraceae	<b>Lesotho Thistle</b> , upper Sani Pass
<i>Cotula socialis</i>	Asteraceae	single 'button weed', Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Euryops evansii</i>	Asteraceae	larger yellow daisy bush
<i>Euryops tysonii</i>	Asteraceae	smaller yellow daisy bush
<i>Helichrysum albobrunneum</i>	Asteraceae	upright, brownish bracts, Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Helichrysum appendiculatum</i>	Asteraceae	tall Helichrysum, lower Sani Pass
<i>Helichrysum lineatum</i>	Asteraceae	sprawling 'cudweed', Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Helichrysum marginatum</i>	Asteraceae	white-fringed leaves, Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Helichrysum milfordiae</i>	Asteraceae	maroon bracts, Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Helichrysum montanum</i>	Asteraceae	yellow Helichrysum, lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Helichrysum montanum</i>	Asteraceae	tall yellow spike, Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Helichrysum pagophyllum</i>	Asteraceae	'crusty' cushion, Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Helichrysum praecurrens</i>	Asteraceae	low-growing 'daisy' flowers, Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Helichrysum spiralepis</i>	Asteraceae	pinky clustered Helichrysum, lower Sani Pass
<i>Senecio barbatus</i>	Asteraceae	purple 'groundsel', Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Senecio cf speciosus</i>	Asteraceae	purple 'ragwort', lunch spot, Sani Pass & Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Senecio oxyriifolius</i>	Asteraceae	<b>Nasturtium Ragwort</b> , fleshy octagonal leaves, lower Sani Pass
<i>Myosotis semiamplexicaulis</i>	Boraginaceae	forget-me-not, lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Craterocapsa tarsodes</i>	Campanulaceae	tiny bellflower, Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Cyphia stenopetala</i>	Campanulaceae	
<i>Lobelia flaccida</i>	Campanulaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Lobelia preslii</i>	Campanulaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Wahlenbergia cuspidata</i>	Campanulaceae	lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Dianthus basuticus</i>	Caryophyllaceae	<b>Lesotho Pink</b> , upper Sani Pass
<i>Silene undulata</i>	Caryophyllaceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Sandersonia aurantiaca</i>	Colchicaceae	<b>Christmas Bells</b> , orange bell, lower Sani Pass
<i>Commelina africana</i>	Commelinaceae	small yellow-flowered Commelina
<i>Cotyledon orbiculata</i>	Crassulaceae	lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Crassula alba</i>	Crassulaceae	red-spotted fleshy leaves, lower Sani Pass
<i>Crassula natalensis</i>	Crassulaceae	red Crassula, broad leaves, Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Crassula setulosa</i>	Crassulaceae	rounded green leaves, Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Isolepis cernua</i>	Cyperaceae	lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Drosera natalensis</i>	Droseraceae	small sundew, lower Sani Pass
<i>Erica woodii</i>	Ericaceae	small heather, lower Sani Pass
<i>Indigofera hiliaris</i>	Fabaceae	lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Lessertia cf capensis</i>	Fabaceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Lotononis galpinii</i>	Fabaceae	deep purple sprawling pea, upper Sani Pass
<i>Lotononis lotonoides</i>	Fabaceae	purple-flowered shrubby pea, lower Sani Pass
<i>Lotononis sericophylla</i>	Fabaceae	lilac and yellow flowered shrubby pea, Sani Pass
<i>Geranium cf wackerstroomianum</i>	Geraniaceae	Smaller flowered geranium, Sani Pass
<i>Geranium drakensbergense</i>	Geraniaceae	fine-leaved geranium, Sani Pass
<i>Geranium pulchrum</i>	Geraniaceae	broad-leaved geranium, Sani Pass
<i>Streptocarpus pusillis</i>	Gesneriaceae	ridged leaves, lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Gunnera perpensa</i>	Gunneraceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Hypoxis parvula</i>	Hypoxidaceae	white 'star' lily, growing in cracks in rock, lower Sani Pass
<i>Watsonia densiflora</i>	Iridaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Gladiolus dalenii</i>	Iridaceae	large peach-orange gladiolus at first stop
<i>Gladiolus flanagani</i>	Iridaceae	<b>Suicide Gladiolus</b> , steep cliffs, Sani Pass

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<i>Gladiolus longicollis</i>	Iridaceae	Mokhotlong alpine zone
<i>Sisyrinchium micranthum</i>	Iridaceae	<b>Annual Blue-eyed Grass</b> , South America weed in lawn at South African border post
<i>Coleus calycinus</i>	Lamiaceae	pink-keeled, shrubby 'dead nettle'
<i>Hermannia woodii</i>	Malvaceae	Pink 'bonnets', lower Sani Pass
<i>Psammotropha mucronata</i>	Molluginaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Brownleea macroceras</i>	Orchidaceae	lilac 'bunny ears' orchid, upper Sani Pass
<i>Corycium nigrescens</i>	Orchidaceae	= <i>Pterygodium nigrescens</i> , black-flowered orchid at first roadside stop
<i>Disa cephalotes</i>	Orchidaceae	white 'Disa', lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Disa cephalotes</i>	Orchidaceae	white orchid, dense flower head, upper Sani Pass
<i>Disa stachyoides</i>	Orchidaceae	deep pink Disa, lower Sani Pass
<i>Disa stricta</i>	Orchidaceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Disa thodei</i>	Orchidaceae	large pink flowered orchid on the edge of the cloud, upper Sani Pass
<i>Disa versicolor</i>	Orchidaceae	<b>Browning Disa</b> , tall spikes at first roadside stop
<i>Eulophia zeyheriana</i>	Orchidaceae	lilac and white 'Harlequin Orchid', lower Sani Pass
<i>Habeneria dives</i>	Orchidaceae	white orchid, lower Sani Pass
<i>Holothrix incurva</i>	Orchidaceae	<b>Lesotho Hair Orchid</b> , lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Pterygodium cooperi</i>	Orchidaceae	green 'bonnet' orchid, lower Sani Pass
<i>Satyrium bracteatum</i>	Orchidaceae	brownish 'frog' orchid, upper Sani Pass
<i>Satyrium cristatum</i>	Orchidaceae	creamy white orchid, lower Sani Pass
<i>Satyrium longicauda</i>	Orchidaceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Cycnium racemosum</i>	Orobanchaceae	large pink flower, upper Sani Pass
<i>Harveya huttonii</i>	Orobanchaceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Sopubia cana</i>	Orobanchaceae	silvery leaves, pink flowers
<i>Oxalis cf obliquifolia</i>	Oxalidaceae	pink flowered Oxalis, lower Sani Pass
<i>Cysticapnos pruinosa</i>	Papaveraceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Papaver aculeatum</i>	Papaveraceae	the only sub-Saharan poppy.
<i>Protea dracomontana</i>	Proteaceae	endemic, dwarf sugarbush
<i>Protea roupelliae</i>	Proteaceae	shrubby 'sugarbush' around Sani Pass
<i>Pellaea calomelanos</i>	Pteridaceae	round-leaved fern, lower Sani Pass
<i>Rubus ludwigii</i>	Rosaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Chaenostoma floribundum</i>	Scrophulariaceae	white-flowered shrub, lower Sani Pass
<i>Diascia integerrima</i>	Scrophulariaceae	lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Glumicalyx goseloides</i>	Scrophulariaceae	lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Glumicalyx nutans</i>	Scrophulariaceae	Lesotho alpine zone
<i>Hebenstretia dura</i>	Scrophulariaceae	lunch spot, Sani Pass
<i>Jamesbrittenia breviflora</i>	Scrophulariaceae	red 'pimpernel', upper Sani Pass
<i>Selago galpinii</i>	Scrophulariaceae	purple flowers, Lesotho alpine zone
<i>Halleria lucida</i>	Stilbaceae	<b>African Honeysuckle</b> , shrub with brick-red tubular flowers
<i>Xyris capensis</i>	Xyridaceae	yellow 'flag', lower Sani Pass

### 19<sup>th</sup> January: Sani Pass back to Underberg

We woke up to clear skies, and the dramatic views down across the edge of the escarpment, with the cloud down below us.

A pre-breakfast wander along the cliff edge gave us the chance to get acquainted with the endemic Drakensberg Siskins, with little flocks flittering amongst the bushes and nectaring on the flowers of the sturdy red hot poker *Kniphofia caulescens*, of which they are the main pollinator.

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A trio of Sentinel Rock Thrushes were perched up around the lodge, while a pair of Cape Robin-Chats were bringing food to their chicks in a nest just below the balcony. Cape Bunting and African Pipit were also in the same area, while overhead small groups of African Swift came powering past, along with one or two Horus Swifts, White-rumped Swifts and Alpine Swifts.

The next Drakensberg special took a little longer to put in an appearance, but eventually the distinctive calls of Drakensberg Rockjumper came from the rocks below us, and a pair of these characterful birds hopped their way closer and closer to us, eventually ending up perched on the hotel walls! One of just two members of the family Chaetopidae, both of which are endemic to South Africa & Lesotho, with the other species being the Cape Rockjumper.

As the morning warmed up, a couple of four-legged specialities of these mountains emerged from the rocks to sun themselves: the large Drakensberg Crag Lizard, and a handful of Slogett's Ice Rats, chunky hamster-like rodents.

The area around the hotel was crammed full of new things to keep the botanists amongst us entertained: the variable pink and white stars of *Hypoxis baurii* dotted the short turf, along with pink *Romulea camerooniana* and yellow *Romulea macowanii* and the tiny white flowers of *Limosella vesiculosa*, while more noteworthy Helichrysums were added to our lists: golden *Helichrysum aureum*, mat-forming *H. sessilioides*, and *H. adenocarpum* with bright cerise bracts and fuzzy leaves, along with plenty more *Helichrysum milfordiae* in very photogenic spots overlooking the cliff edge.

Setting off from the lodge, we first stopped to enjoy a flock of 12 Southern Bald Ibis that had flown in to feed on the short turf of the roadside flats, before heading back into Lesotho, where we found a rocky slope peppered with the solid cushions of *Euphorbia claverioides*, some nice *Euchomis schijffii* and the delicate pink 'angels' fishing rods' *Dierama robustum* blowing in the wind. A nearby family of Sickie-winged Chats and a pair of Mountain Pipits were added to our slowly building bird list, while a handsome Clicking Stream Frog was found amongst the low vegetation.

Compared to this handsome little frog, our next amphibian was quite the contrast: dropping down to the riverbank, Glen found us two massive (but, apparently, just youngsters), Maluti River Frogs, big lumpen grey beasts resting on rocks in the stream.

The previous day's cloud started to slowly climb up out of the valley, and we delved back down into the mists of the Sani Pass.

Smaller, paler *Dierama dracomontana* fluttered on one roadside, the almost luminous *Kniphofia porphyrantha* illuminated another stop, and the bright red *Gladiolus flanaganii*, glowed from a wet cliff high above us, the Suicide Gladiolus, so-called because of its favoured precipitous habitats.

A couple of Drakensberg Prinias visited us at our lunch spot, a little group of Sweet Waxbills fed at the roadside, and two Bush Blackcaps put in an appearance lower down, on the edge of a small area of native forest.

Back down in the 'lowlands', we headed off into the back roads around Pevensy, where the 'black plastic bags' floating across the farmland turned out to be male Long-tailed Widowbirds, a family group of Southern Anteaters-Chats posed on the fence posts, and a handful of Amur Falcons perched up on the wires.

A damp field was home to a big population of the impressive pink orchid *Satyrium hallackii*, while the spidery orchid *Habenaria clavata* and tall spikes of *Kniphofia laxiflora* brightened up a nearby road verge.

We ended the day back in Underberg, where we said farewell to Stuart, Glen and Joseph and settled back into the Cedar Garden.

<i>Delosperma lavisiae</i>	Aizoaceae	small, pink-flowered 'mesemb', upper Sani Pass
<i>Delosperma seanii-hoganii</i>	Aizoaceae	tiny 'mesemb', lodge grounds, Lesotho

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<i>Polemannia montana</i>	Apiaceae	<b>Mountain False Parsley-Tree</b> , shrubby 'carrot', upper Sani Pass
<i>Kniphofia caulescens</i>	Asphodelaceae	lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Kniphofia laxiflora</i>	Asphodelaceae	tall orange poker, roadside near Pevensey
<i>Kniphofia porphyrantha</i>	Asphodelaceae	'fluorescent' orange 'poker', upper Sani Pass
<i>Afroaster erucifolius</i>	Asteraceae	'daisy', lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Berkheya cirsijifolia</i>	Asteraceae	<b>Lesotho Thistle</b> , hillside in Lesotho
<i>Berkheya multijuga</i>	Asteraceae	yellow 'thistle' by the frogs, Lesotho
<i>Euryops decumbens</i>	Asteraceae	cushion forming 'daisy bush', lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Euryops evansii</i>	Asteraceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Gazania krebsiana</i>	Asteraceae	yellow Gazania, hillside in Lesotho
<i>Helichrysum adenocarpum</i>	Asteraceae	bright pink bracts, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Helichrysum cf sutherlandii</i>	Asteraceae	by the frogs, Lesotho
<i>Senecio cf speciosus</i>	Asteraceae	purple 'ragwort', lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Helichrysum aureum</i>	Astereaceae	globular yellow heads, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Helichrysum sessilioides</i>	Astereaceae	mat-forming, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Wahlenbergia polytrichifolia</i>	Campanulaceae	lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Lobelia galpinii</i>	Campanulaceae	lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Colchicum cf longipes</i>	Colchicaceae	'Androcymbium' leaves, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Crassula cf natans</i>	Crassulaceae	by the frogs, Lesotho
<i>Crassula obovata</i>	Crassulaceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Dioscorea sylvatica</i>	Dioscoreaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Erica thodei</i>	Ericaceae	tiny heather, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Euphorbia clavarioides</i>	Euphorbiaceae	cactus-like succulent, hillside in Lesotho
<i>Trifolium burchellianum</i>	Fabaceae	pink clover, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Sebaea marlothii</i>	Gentianaceae	yellow gentian, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Hypoxis baurii</i>	Hypoxidaceae	= <i>Rhodohypoxis baurii</i> , pink and white, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Aristea cf galpinii</i>	Iridaceae	'blue eyed grass', lunch stop, upper Sani Pass
<i>Dierama dracomontana</i>	Iridaceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Dierama robustum</i>	Iridaceae	hillside in Lesotho
<i>Gladiolus flanagani</i>	Iridaceae	<b>Suicide Gladiolus</b> , upper Sani Pass
<i>Hesperantha baurii</i>	Iridaceae	<b>Grassveld Evening Lily</b> , lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Romulea camerooniana</i>	Iridaceae	pink Romulea, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Romulea macowanii</i>	Iridaceae	yellow Romulea, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Coleus kirkii</i>	Lamiaceae	pale blue 'rocket', damp farmland near Pevensey
<i>Stachys grandifolia</i>	Lamiaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Hermannia malvifolia</i>	Malvaceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Psammotropha alternifolia</i>	Molluginaceae	lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Corycium nigrescens</i>	Orchidaceae	= <i>Pterygodium nigrescens</i> , black orchid, lunch stop, upper Sani Pass
<i>Habenaria clavata</i>	Orchidaceae	spidery green orchid, roadside near Pevensey
<i>Satyrium hallackii</i>	Orchidaceae	tall pink orchid, damp farmland near Pevensey
<i>Satyrium longicauda</i>	Orchidaceae	pale pink orchid, roadside near Pevensey
<i>Muraltia saxicola</i>	Polygalaceae	pink 'curtain' plant, upper Sani Pass
<i>Polygala hottentotta</i>	Polygalaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Protea subvestita</i>	Proteaceae	upper Sani Pass
<i>Clematis brachiata</i>	Ranunculaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Leucosidea sericea</i>	Rosaceae	lower Sani Pass
<i>Diascia anastrepta</i>	Scrophulariaceae	upright pink Diascia, lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Glumicalyx montanus</i>	Scrophulariaceae	lodge grounds, Lesotho
<i>Jamesbrittenia breviflora</i>	Scrophulariaceae	scarlet 'pimpernel', upper Sani Pass
<i>Jamesbrittenia pristisepala</i>	Scrophulariaceae	pale lilac flowers, upper Sani Pass
<i>Limosella vesiculosa</i>	Scrophulariaceae	lodge grounds, Lesotho

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### 20<sup>th</sup> January: Drakensberg Garden

Today we headed west, to Drakensberg Garden and the valley of the Mlambonja river, where we had a day exploring upstream from the Garden Castle Campsite.

We strayed from the valley path to reach a small copse of *Protea roupelliae*, enjoyed our first Cape Tulips with blue *Moraea inclinata* and white *Moraea albicuspa*, admired some chunky *Eucomis autumnalis* in the grassland, and added some impressive orchids to our ever-increasing lists, including the impressive *Pterygodium magnum*, white-flowered *Habenaria dives* and the delicate *Neobolusia tysonii*.

After a picnic lunch amongst the rocks, with a troop of Chacma Baboons checking us out from across the valley and a pair of Bearded Vultures soaring along the ridge, we headed back the way we had come.

Back at the campsite, we investigated an area of floodplain gravels, where yet more new orchids came in the form of *Disa brevicornis*, *Habenaria lithophila*, *Disperis stenoplectron*, *Disperis concinna*, *Eulophia hians* and *Eulophia ovalis*.

On the drive back to Underberg, we stopped to admire a trio of Common Eland (albeit suspiciously close to Eland Valley Resort), and a pair of Southern Bald Ibis stalking across the golf course on the outskirts of Underberg.

<i>Scadoxus puniceus</i>	Amaryllidaceae	<b>Paintbrush Lily</b> , leaves only
<i>Schizoglossum atropurpureum</i>	Apocynaceae	black-flowered milkweed
<i>Eucomis autumnalis</i>	Asparagaceae	<b>Autumn Pineapple-Lily</b>
<i>Merwillia dracomontana</i>	Asparagaceae	large, broad-leaved squill, on rocks
<i>Helichrysum cf appendiculatum</i>	Asteraceae	dense flower head
<i>Senecio erubescens</i>	Asteraceae	purple 'groundsel'
<i>Crassula vaginata</i>	Crassulaceae	yellow flowers
<i>Alsophila dregei</i>	Cyatheaceae	= <i>Cyathea dregei</i> , tree fern
<i>Erica woodii</i>	Ericaceae	pink heath
<i>Indigofera hedyantha</i>	Fabaceae	feathery leaves, red flowers
<i>Psoralea sp.</i>	Fabaceae	delicate leaves, tiny deep purple flowers
<i>Chironia krebsii</i>	Gentianaceae	bright pink gentian
<i>Sebaea sedoides</i>	Gentianaceae	tall yellow gentian
<i>Hypoxis cf argentea</i>	Hypoxidaceae	yellow stargrass
<i>Moraea albicuspa</i>	Iridaceae	white iris
<i>Moraea inclinata</i>	Iridaceae	lilac iris
<i>Morella serrata</i>	Myricaceae	<b>Water Waxberry</b>
<i>Disa brevicornis</i>	Orchidaceae	green & brown orchid
<i>Disperis concinna</i>	Orchidaceae	creamy 'bonnet' orchid
<i>Disperis stenoplectron</i>	Orchidaceae	brightly coloured 'bonnet' orchid
<i>Eulophia zeyheriana</i>	Orchidaceae	lilac 'harlequin orchid'
<i>Eulophia ovalis</i>	Orchidaceae	white-lipped 'harlequin orchid'
<i>Habenaria laevigata</i>	Orchidaceae	small green 'bog orchid'
<i>Habenaria lithophila</i>	Orchidaceae	<b>Rock Ghost Orchid</b>
<i>Habeneria dives</i>	Orchidaceae	white 'bog orchid'
<i>Neobolusia tysonii</i>	Orchidaceae	<b>White-plate Orchid</b>
<i>Pterygodium magnum</i>	Orchidaceae	sturdy spike
<i>Satyrium longicauda</i>	Orchidaceae	pink orchid
<i>Schizochilus flexuosa</i>	Orchidaceae	drooping, white orchid
<i>Cycnium racemosum</i>	Orobanchaceae	pink 'ink flower'
<i>Melasma scabrum</i>	Orobanchaceae	single creamy flower
<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	Oxalidaceae	
<i>Protea roupelliae</i>	Proteaceae	silver-leaved sugarbush
<i>Phygelius aequalis</i>	Scrophulariaceae	
<i>Zaluzianskya microsiphon</i>	Scrophulariaceae	<b>Short-tube Drumsticks</b>

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### 21<sup>st</sup> January: Underberg to Giant's Castle

Our first stop of the day was a small field in Underberg, crammed full of bright pink *Nerine appendiculata*.

From here, we moved on to the small nature reserve at Himeville, a couple of 'vlei' pools, surrounded by grassland, grazed by a herd of Blesbok, a handsome chocolate brown antelope with a white blaze down the forehead and face, endemic to eastern South Africa.

The pools were home to a handful of Red-knobbed Coot and a Little Grebe, while the tall reedy vegetation around the edges was alive with displaying Southern Red Bishops and both Long-tailed and Fan-tailed Widowbirds. Various warblers were flitting about and singing in the reeds, including Levillant's Cisticola, Lesser Swamp Warbler, Little Rush Warbler and a young African Yellow Warbler.

Meanwhile, the dry grassland was home to a couple of new orchids, with the tall, sweetly-scented *Disa cooperi* and the drooping, green-hooded *Eulophia foliosa*, as well as a population of Pygmy Sand Apple *Bridsonia chamaedendrum*, another round-headed milkweed *Asclepias macropus*, and the delicate *Gladiolus crassifolius*.

From Himeville, we struck out onto the rough and winding backroads that eventually took us to Giant's Castle.

The white-spotted cala lily *Zantedeschia albomaculata* and a flock of 18 Southern Bald Ibises put in appearances at the roadside before we stopped for lunch alongside a stand of *Watsonia densiflora* and a yellow-flowered *Eulophia ovalis*, where an African Harrier-Hawk drifted overhead.

Afternoon roadside stops had us enjoying a couple of blood red 'lilies': the firework-like *Brunsvigia undulata*, endemic to KwaZulu-Natal, and sprays of *Hesperantha coccinea* along the streamsides.

A steep bank a little further on had a lovely spike of the rare and localised *Gladiolus sericeovillosus*, close to a chunky spike of *Pterygodium magnum*, while a little later a roadside wetland gave us great views of some typically African water birds: Red-billed and Yellow-billed Duck, an African Spoonbill, Hamerkop, Blacksmith Lapwing and, most impressively, a pair of Grey Crowned-Cranes, all of whom, with the exception of the cranes, were flushed by a passing African Marsh Harrier.

A stop in the grasslands of Kamberg Nature Reserve gave us another new orchid, with *Disperis tysonii* growing alongside the green *Habaneria laevigata*, while several very photogenic sprays of *Brunsvigia undulata* attracted the photographers. Meanwhile, for the birders, a displaying male Pale-crowned Cisticola was a new 'tick', while a Wing-clapping Cisticola was singing from amongst the grass.

We finally arrived at Giant's Castle, where a pair of Olive Woodpeckers were feeding in the trees around the car park, and where the hooting song of Buff-spotted Flufftail was coming from the bushes all around our cabins after dark, at the end of a packed day.

<i>Nerine appendiculata</i>	Amaryllidaceae	pink Nerine, on the outskirts of Underberg
<i>Brunsvigia undulata</i>	Amaryllidaceae	<b>Red Candelabra</b> , along back road
<i>Alepidea natalensis</i>	Apiaceae	odd saxifrage-like 'carrot', along back road
<i>Asclepias macropus</i>	Apocynaceae	Himeville Nature Reserve
<i>Periglossum angustifolium</i>	Apocynaceae	<b>Round Head</b> , the globe-flowered milkweed in the Nerine field
<i>Xysmalobium stockenstromense</i>	Apocynaceae	long, spiky podded milkweed, last grassland
<i>Zantedeschia aethiopica</i>	Araceae	'Calla Lily' in damp places
<i>Zantedeschia albomaculata</i>	Araceae	'Calla Lily' with white-spotted leaves, growing around rocks
<i>Schizocarpus nervosus</i>	Asparagaceae	white flowered 'Scilla', mostly gone over: Himeville Nature Reserve

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<i>Monsonia attenuata</i>	Geraniaceae	<b>Tattooed Dysentry-Herb</b>
<i>Hypoxis sp</i>	Hypoxidaceae	yellow, Himeville Nature Reserve
<i>Crocasmia paniculata</i>	Iridaceae	red <i>Crocasmia</i> , Himeville Nature Reserve
<i>Gladiolus crassifolius</i>	Iridaceae	pale lilac gladiolus, Himeville Nature Reserve
<i>Gladiolus sericeovillosus</i>	Iridaceae	<b>Silky Gladiolus</b> , along back road
<i>Hesperantha coccinea</i>	Iridaceae	<b>Scarlet River Lily</b> , riverbanks, along back road
<i>Moraea brevistyla</i>	Iridaceae	small white <i>Moraea</i>
<i>Watsonia densiflora</i>	Iridaceae	lunch spot
<i>Disa cooperi</i>	Orchidaceae	tall, sweetly-scented, Himeville Nature Reserve
<i>Disperis tysonii</i>	Orchidaceae	the last grassland
<i>Eulophia foliosa</i>	Orchidaceae	= <i>Orthochilus foliosus</i> . Green, hooded flowers, Himeville Nature Reserve
<i>Eulophia ovalis</i>	Orchidaceae	yellow form, lunch spot
<i>Habenaria laevigata</i>	Orchidaceae	along back road
<i>Pterygodium magnum</i>	Orchidaceae	along back road
<i>Cheilanthes viridis</i>	Pteridaceae	along back road
<i>Hemionitis hirta</i>	Pteridaceae	= <i>Cheilanthes hirta</i> , delicate fern at lunch spot
<i>Bridsonia chamaedendrum</i>	Rubiaceae	<b>Pygmy Sand Apple</b> . The only member of its genus, a South African endemic. Himeville Nature Reserve
<i>Spermacoce natalensis</i>	Rubiaceae	

### 22nd January: Giant's Castle

After an early morning visit (for some of us) from the local Chacma Baboons, we set off for a walk along the Boesmans River valley, southwards from the camp. Unfortunately, after a recent fire, the caves with their famous prehistoric rock art were closed, so instead we headed towards a small patch of forest, where the valley closed in.

A trio of Cape Eland that moved across the hillside in front of us were 'proper' wild animals, after the captive beasts of a couple of days ago.

Several Barratt's Warblers were singing noisily from the denser bushes, a pair of Rock-loving Cisticolas had obviously read the right books and perched up on the rocks, and a Red-chested Cuckoo sang noisily from the trees, where a few Bar-throated Apalis and a lone Cape Batis were flitting about.

The morning's botanical highlights included a new sugarbush, *Protea afra* with smart creamy flowers, and Mountain Cypress *Widdringtonia nodiflora* growing from one or two rocky fire refuges.

Amongst the trees, we found the delicate pink orchid *Stenoglottis fimbriata* and the lovely *Streptocarpus gardenia* growing from damp mossy rocks, the white foxglove tree *Bowkeria verticillata* and orange-flowered *Leonotis ocymifolia*, along with a good variety of ferns.

<i>Searsia dentata</i>	Anacardiaceae	
<i>Searsia discolor</i>	Anacardiaceae	
<i>Alepidea natalensis</i>	Apiaceae	
<i>Albuca fastigiata</i>	Asparagaceae	white 'Solomon's Seal'
<i>Chlorophytum bowkeri</i>	Asparagaceae	white 'asphodel'
<i>Ledebouria sandersonii</i>	Asparagaceae	red-spotted leaves
<i>Asplenium aethiopicum</i>	Aspleniaceae	spleenwort fern
<i>Impatiens hochstetteri</i>	Balsaminaceae	
<i>Cynoglossum austroafricana</i>	Boraginaceae	hound's tongue
<i>Crassula setulosa</i>	Crassulaceae	
<i>Widdringtonia nodiflora</i>	Cupressaceae	conifer
<i>Melianthus villosus</i>	Francoaceae	
<i>Streptocarpus gardenii</i>	Gesneriaceae	on damp rocks in wood/along river

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<i>Hypericum aethiopicum</i>	Hypericaceae	St John's Wort
<i>Moraea trifida</i>	Iridaceae	
<i>Killickia pilosa</i>	Lamiaceae	<b>White Bergmint</b>
<i>Leonotis ocymifolia</i> var. <i>raineriana</i>	Lamiaceae	= <i>Leonotis intermedia</i> , orange 'lion's tail'
<i>Plectranthus grillatus</i>	Lamiaceae	
<i>Disa brevicornis</i>	Orchidaceae	brown & green orchid
<i>Disa patula</i>	Orchidaceae	pink orchid
<i>Disperis cardiophora</i>	Orchidaceae	pink and white 'bonnet' orchid
<i>Disperis fanniniae</i>	Orchidaceae	white 'bonnet' orchid
<i>Satyrium parviflorum</i>	Orchidaceae	green orchid
<i>Stenoglottis fimbriata</i>	Orchidaceae	small pink orchid on damp rocks in wood
<i>Peperomia retusa</i>	Piperaceae	
<i>Podocarpus latifolius</i>	Podocarpaceae	<b>Yellow Wood</b>
<i>Polygala gracilenta</i>	Polygalaceae	
<i>Pleopeltis macrocarpa</i>	Polypodiaceae	strap fern
<i>Protea afra</i>	Proteaceae	<b>Highveld Sugarbush</b>
<i>Adiantum poiretii</i>	Pteridaceae	maidenhair fern
<i>Pteris cretica</i>	Pteridaceae	ribbon fern
<i>Thalictrum rhynchocarpum</i>	Ranunculaceae	meadow rue
<i>Anemia afrorum</i>	Schizaceae	scented fern
<i>Buddleja salviifolia</i>	Scrophulariaceae	
<i>Diascia cordata</i>	Scrophulariaceae	
<i>Diclis reptans</i>	Scrophulariaceae	small white-flowered 'toadflax'
<i>Bowkeria verticillata</i>	Stilbaceae	white 'foxglove' tree
<i>Dais cotinifolia</i>	Thymeleaceae	pink 'pom pom' flowered tree at start of walk

### 23rd January: Giant's Castle to Golden Gate

A travel day took us the 250km from Giant's Castle to Golden Gate Highlands National Park, with a few good stops along the way.

We started with the swollen, silk-filled fruits of *Xysmalobium undulatum* and the last golden flower of the Yellow Flamelily *Gloriosa modesta*, while a male Red-collared Widowbird posed nearby.

Next, a couple of roadside stops near the village of Emawuza got us acquainted with the pink candelabras of *Brunsvigia grandiflora*, along with a nicely posing Citrus Swallowtail and a mixed colony of Village and Southern Masked Weavers.

Moving on, and an exploration of some roadside rocky outcrops revealed the tall spikes of *Ornithoalum candicans*, the slender, creamy 'poker' *Kniphofia gracilis*, and our fifth protea in the form of the dwarf *Protea simplex*. A dark phase Booted Eagle came overhead, while both Piping and Wailing Cisticolas made their eponymous noises from the undergrowth and a pair of African Paradise Flycatchers flew past.

We had our picnics in the shade of acacia trees, while Fan-tailed Widowbirds displayed from the wet grass nearby, before striking out on the flat asphalt of the highway.

As the afternoon came to an end, we reached the amazing scenery of Golden Gate Highlands National Park, complete with grazing herds of Blesbok and Black Wildebeest, a handful of Cape Eland and Burchell's Zebra, and one or two Springbok, the latter a bit out of range, being a native of the arid areas of north west South Africa through the Kalahari into Namibia and Botswana.

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A stop at the appropriately named Protea Corner viewpoint gave us the chance to soak up the views, with a trio of Table Mountain Beauty butterflies flapping about the flowering *Protea afra* at the clifftop, before we arrived at the Golden Gate Hotel, and the simple pleasure of a good buffet dinner.

<i>Brunsvigia grandiflora</i>	Amaryllidaceae	<b>Giant Candelabra</b>
<i>Asclepias albens</i>	Apocynaceae	milkweed, rocky roadside stop
<i>Xysmalobium undulatum</i>	Apocynaceae	<b>Wavy-leaf Cartwheel</b> , 'Satan's Knackers'
<i>Ornithogalum candicans</i>	Asparagaceae	<b>Summer Hyacinth</b> , rocky roadside stop
<i>Kniphofia gracilis</i>	Asphodelaceae	pale 'poker', rocky roadside stop
<i>Asplenium aethiopicum</i>	Aspleniaceae	spleenwort, rocky roadside stop
<i>Berkheya rhapontica</i>	Asteraceae	yellow 'thistle', rocky roadside stop
<i>Dicoma anomala</i>	Asteraceae	low-growing 'knapweed', rocky roadside stop
<i>Monopsis decipiens</i>	Campanulaceae	tri-coloured 'pansy'
<i>Silene burchellii</i>	Caryophyllaceae	<b>African Catchfly</b> , rocky roadside stop
<i>Gloriosa modesta</i>	Colchicaceae	<b>Yellow Flame Lily</b>
<i>Monsonia attenuata</i>	Geraniaceae	<b>Tattooed Dysentery-Herb</b>
<i>Habenaria epipactidea</i>	Orchidaceae	green orchid at viewpoint, Golden Gate Highlands
<i>Satyrium cristatum</i>	Orchidaceae	grassland by the Brunsvigia
<i>Protea simplex</i>	Proteaceae	<b>Dwarf Grassland Sugarbush</b> , rocky roadside stop
<i>Pentanisia prunelloides</i>	Rubiaceae	viewpoint, Golden Gate Highlands

### 24th January: Golden Gate Highlands National Park

A full day spent in Golden Gate National Park. We spent the morning walking part of the Holkrans trail out from the hotel up to an impressive cave in the cliffs up the valley, finding the tangerine-bright *Kniphofia triangularis*, primrose-yellow *Exochaenium grande*, a lovely little flower mantis *Harpagomantis tricolor* and the impressive Common Pirate butterfly along the way. In the shade of the cave, we found the creamy *Ornithogalum regale* while bright red spikes of *Gladiolus dalenii* were spotted up on the cliffs.

After lunch and a midday break back at the hotel, we took the Oribi Loop in the afternoon, stopping at the 'vulture restaurant' which, on this occasion, was 'just' the Hadada restaurant, with just a single ibis probing around the ancient carcass, while a single Black-backed Jackal put in an appearance nearby.

<i>Gomphocarpus fruticosus</i>	Apocynaceae	
<i>Albuca shawii</i>	Asparagaceae	yellow Albuca, Oribi loop
<i>Ornithogalum regalis</i>	Asparagaceae	
<i>Kniphofia triangularis</i>	Asphodelaceae	<b>Mandarin Poker</b>
<i>Helichrysum tenax</i>	Asteraceae	
<i>Wahlenbergia lycopodioides</i>	Campanulaceae	Oribi loop
<i>Cyperus rupestris</i>	Cyperaceae	tiny sedge, Oribi loop
<i>Cyperus spaerocephalus</i>	Cyperaceae	<b>Golden Sedge</b>
<i>Exochaenium grande</i>	Gentianaceae	<b>Primrose Gentian</b>
<i>Sebaea densiflora</i>	Gentianaceae	
<i>Sebaea sedoides</i>	Gentianaceae	
<i>Pelargonium luridum</i>	Geraniaceae	cream Pelargonium, Oribi loop
<i>Gladiolus crassifolius</i>	Iridaceae	cerise colour form
<i>Gladiolus dalenii</i>	Iridaceae	<b>Dragon's-head Gladiolus</b> , bright red form up on the cliffs
<i>Hesperantha baurii</i>	Iridaceae	<b>Grassveld Evening-Lily</b>
<i>Hermannia coccocarpa</i>	Malvaceae	cerise 'bonnets'
<i>Hibiscus trionum</i>	Malvaceae	
<i>Argemone ochroleuca</i>	Papaveraceae	<b>Mexican Prickly Poppy</b> , by the vulture hide
<i>Polygala amatymbica</i>	Polygalaceae	Oribi loop
<i>Jamesbrittenia aurantiacus</i>	Scrophulariaceae	Oribi loop

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<i>Monopsis decipiens</i>	Scrophulariaceae	
<i>Nemesia fruticans</i>	Scrophulariaceae	<b>Grassveld Lionface</b>
<i>Halleria lucida</i>	Stilbaceae	'tree fuchsia'

### 25<sup>th</sup> January: Golden Gate to Witsieshoek

We started the day with the Red-throated Wrynecks calling loudly from their favoured trees over breakfast, followed by the contents of the night's moth trap: a large praying mantis *Paramantis sacra*, the completely unrelated mantis-fly *Afromantispa sp.* and an enormous Mottled Veld Antlion *Palpares caffer*, alongside another array of moths.

After packing our bags into the vans, we headed off for another circuit of the Oribi Loop, which this time gave us good views of Black Wildebeest and Blesbok, along with some distant Plains Zebras and a trio of Rhebok on the hillside.

Some large, fresh spikes of *Disa cooperi* and *Disa versicolor* enticed us out into the grasslands, followed not long after by the creamy flags of *Gladiolus papilio*, positioned wonderfully with the mountains in the background.

Try as we might, we couldn't persuade any larks to put in an appearance, so we headed to the newly-opened Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre, an interesting little museum highlighting some of the important fossils found in the surrounding sandstone hills, including several clutches of eggs of *Massospondylus*, a long-necked dinosaur from 190 million years ago.

Lunch was back at the Golden Gate hotel, before we set off the 60km journey south east to Witsieshoek, perched up at 2,170m asl. Here, a late afternoon wander over the nearby grassy slopes revealed *Kniphofia porphyrantha* and *Kniphofia breviflora*, some lovely *Eucomis bicolor*, and fresh spikes of eight species of orchid, including 'newbies' in the form of the spiralling *Disperis renibractea*, the narrow-lipped black *Pterygicium dracomontanum* and hidden in a lush corner, a couple of large pink spikes of the rare *Disa jacottetiae*, all overlooked by stunning scenery, with The Sentinel looming high in the background... something to look forward to for tomorrow!

<i>Delosperma cf cooperi.</i>	Aizoaceae	along rocky ridge near vulture hide, Golden Gate
<i>Eucomis bicolor</i>	Asparagaceae	grassland behind the lodge, Witsieshoek
<i>Aloe boylei</i>	Asphodelaceae	along rocky ridge near vulture hide, Golden Gate
<i>Kniphofia breviflora</i>	Asphodelaceae	<b>Short Poker</b> , slender, yellow 'poker', grassland behind the lodge, Witsieshoek
<i>Kniphofia porphyrantha</i>	Asphodelaceae	<b>Dwarf Poker</b> , small orange-topped 'poker', grassland behind the lodge, Witsieshoek
<i>Helichrysum monticola</i>	Asteraceae	grassland behind the lodge, Witsieshoek
<i>Helichrysum sutherlandii</i>	Asteraceae	trex cushions, along rocky ridge near vulture hide, Golden Gate
<i>Lobelia sonderiana</i>	Campanulaceae	tiny, creeping, white Lobelia, bare damp soil, Golden Gate
<i>Aristea montana</i>	Iridaceae	small blue Aristea, Golden Gate grasslands
<i>Gladiolus crassifolius</i>	Iridaceae	deep red-pink form, Golden Gate grasslands pale lilac form, Witsieshoek
<i>Gladiolus papilio</i>	Iridaceae	creamy gladiolus, Golden Gate grasslands
<i>Ajuga ophrydis</i>	Lamiaceae	tall pale Ajuga, along rocky ridge near vulture hide
<i>Corycium dracomontanum</i>	Orchidaceae	= <i>Pterygodium dracomontanum</i> , black orchid in grassland behind the lodge, Witsieshoek
<i>Disa cooperi</i>	Orchidaceae	Golden Gate: Oribi loop
<i>Disa jacottetiae</i>	Orchidaceae	large pink orchid, grassland behind the lodge, Witsieshoek
<i>Disperis renibractea</i>	Orchidaceae	pinky 'kidney' orchid, grassland behind the lodge, Witsieshoek

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<i>Habenaria dives</i>	Orchidaceae	white orchid in grassland behind the lodge, Witsieshoek
<i>Satyrium parviflorum</i>	Orchidaceae	green orchid, grassland behind the lodge, Witsieshoek
<i>Chaenostoma sp</i>	Scrophulariaceae	along rocky ridge near vulture hide, Golden Gate

### 26<sup>th</sup> January: Witsieshoek, The Sentinel trail

An earlier start than normal had us boarding two four-wheel drive vehicles to take us up the road to the trailhead of The Sentinel Peak Hike, passing a covey of Grey-winged Francolins along the way.

The morning was spent following the trail up to the base of The Sentinel, an imposing peak. Somewhere nearby are Tugela Falls, the second highest waterfall in the world, not so very far away as the crow flies, but a hard day's hike for those non-crows amongst us... so we made do with our intended destination, the viewpoint looking out over the edge of The Amphitheatre.

A family of Drakensberg Rockjumpers entertained us, bounding amongst the rocks along with a group of Familiar Chat, while soaring birds put on a good performance: a low fly past by an adult Lammergeier was followed by a pair of handsome Verreaux's Eagles.

Butterflies were enjoying the morning sun, with False Silver-bottom Brown, Wichgraf's Hillside Brown, Drakensberg Grassveld Sylph and the now-familiar Table Mountain Beauty all abundant, and a single brightly-coloured Machacha Opal putting in a brief appearance.

The flowery hillsides gave us plenty of distraction from the scenery, with two new *Eucomis* (green *Eucomis humilis* and more colourful *Eucomis bicolor*), two new *Kniphofias* (the more delicate, white-bottomed *Kniphofia thodei* and chunkier *Kniphofia ritualis*), three species of pink-flagged Dioramas and yet more orchids amongst the many highlights.

Lunch by the viewpoint was interrupted by the rumblings of thunder from a rainstorm across the valley, and we decided to head for lower ground, and the shuttle back to the hotel.

<i>Agapanthus campanulatus</i>	Amaryllidaceae	
<i>Brunswigia radulosa</i>	Amaryllidaceae	<b>Eastern Candelabra</b>
<i>Schizoglossum montanum</i>	Apocynaceae	deep brown seed pods
<i>Albuca fastigiata</i>	Asparagaceae	White 'Solomon's Seal' with upright flower heads
<i>Eucomis bicolor</i>	Asparagaceae	<b>Variiegated Pineapple Lily.</b> Purple-tinged flowers & purple-flecked stems, higher up
<i>Eucomis humilis</i>	Asparagaceae	<b>Dwarf Pineapple Lily.</b> Green flowers, smaller than <i>autumnalis</i> .
<i>Ornithogalum candicans</i>	Asparagaceae	
<i>Aloe boylei</i>	Asphodelaceae	
<i>Bulbine capitata</i>	Asphodelaceae	Yellow 'bulbine', going over
<i>Kniphofia ritualis</i>	Asphodelaceae	<b>Rope Poker.</b> Taller, 'chunkier' poker. Endemic to northern Drakensberg.
<i>Kniphofia thodei</i>	Asphodelaceae	<b>Pale Poker.</b> Shorter flower head, with white lower flowers. Endemic to northern Drakensberg
<i>Berkheya cirsiifolia</i>	Asteraceae	<b>Lesotho Thistle</b>
<i>Berkheya rosulate</i>	Asteraceae	big yellow daisy, holly leaves
<i>Helichrysum ecklonis</i>	Asteraceae	
<i>Helichrysum evansii</i>	Asteraceae	Small plant, fuzzy rounded leaves. Endemic to northern Drakensberg
<i>Helichrysum marginatum</i>	Asteraceae	
<i>Helichrysum sutherlandii</i>	Asteraceae	Cushion forming, pinky flower buds. Endemic to Drakensberg
<i>Heliophila rigidiuscula</i>	Brassicaceae	Lilac, geranium-like flowers

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<i>Dianthus basuticus</i>	Caryophyllaceae	<b>Lesotho Pink</b>
<i>Crassula setulosa</i>	Crassulaceae	
<i>Geranium multisectum</i>	Geraniaceae	
<i>Crocasmia pearsei</i>	Iridaceae	Drakensberg endemic
<i>Dierama pictum</i>	Iridaceae	Purple
<i>Gladiolus eclonii</i>	Iridaceae	
<i>Hesperantha baurii</i>	Iridaceae	<b>Grassveld Evening Lily</b>
<i>Hesperantha scopulosa</i>	Iridaceae	<b>Rock Evening Lily</b> , brighter pink, on rocks
<i>Moraea brevistyla</i>	Iridaceae	white Moraea
<i>Moraea inclinata</i>	Iridaceae	purple Moraea
<i>Moraea vigilans</i>	Iridaceae	Pale flower with blue blotches. Endemic to northern Drakensberg
<i>Watsonia lepida</i>	Iridaceae	
<i>Leonotis osimifolia</i>	Lamiaceae	
<i>Disa fragrans</i>	Orchidaceae	Spotted leaves. Found from Sudan through East Africa to eastern South Africa
<i>Pterygodium hastatum</i>	Orchidaceae	small green orchid
<i>Satyrium neglectum</i>	Orchidaceae	
<i>Schizochilus angustifolius</i>	Orchidaceae	Small white orchid: endemic to northern Drakensberg
<i>Cycnium racemosum</i>	Orobanchaceae	Large pink flowers, hemiparasitic. Restricted to eastern South Africa & Eswatini
<i>Harveya speciosa</i>	Orobanchaceae	<b>Showy Inkflower</b>
<i>Harpochloa falx</i>	Poaceae	<b>Caterpillar Grass</b>
<i>Zaluzianskya microsiphon</i>	Scrophulariaceae	<b>Short-tube Drumsticks</b>
<i>Xerophyta viscosa</i>	Velloziaceae	Purple 'lily', able to survive extreme dessication.

### 27<sup>th</sup> January: Witsieshoek, Mahai Falls trail

Back to our normal timings this morning, and after breakfast we set off for the walk across the hillsides behind the lodge, to the base of the Mahai Falls.

Amongst this morning's chief botanical distractions were the 'upside down' *Diascia purpurea*, the endemic borage *Afrotysonia glochidiata*, the rather ghoulish Showy Inkflower *Harveya speciosa* and the wonderful bells of *Pachycarpus campanulatus*.

A group of six Cape Griffons came low over head, giving us our best and closest views of the trip, and the hooting of Striped Flufftail could be heard from the rushy valley below.

The end of the walk took us down to the foot of the waterfall, where amongst the cooling spray we found a wonderful display of pink *Gladiolus microcarpus* and red *Dierama dracomontanum*, along with spikes of the creamy *Ornithogalum regalis*.

<i>Tulbaghia leucantha</i>	Amaryllidaceae	<b>Highveld Wild Garlic</b>
<i>Alepidea setifera</i>	Apiaceae	
<i>Dracosciadium saniculifolium</i>	Apiaceae	delicate 'carrot' by the waterfall
<i>Pachycarpus campanulatus</i>	Apocynaceae	greeny-yellow bell flowers
<i>Schizoglossum bidens</i>	Apocynaceae	smaller, bristly seed pods
<i>Xysmalobium stockenstromense</i>	Apocynaceae	large thorny seed pods
<i>Albuca shawii</i>	Asparagaceae	yellow Albuca, rocks by the waterfall
<i>Kniphofia breviflora</i>	Asphodelaceae	yellow 'poker' by the waterfall
<i>Kniphofia ritualis</i>	Asphodelaceae	chunky, brightly coloured poker

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<i>Kniphofia uvaria</i>	Asphodelaceae	subdued 'poker' in marshier areas
<i>Helichrysum vernum</i>	Asteraceae	bright red bracts
<i>Afrotysonia glochidiata</i>	Boraginaceae	
<i>Crassula dependens</i>	Crassulaceae	
<i>Acalypha angustata</i>	Euphorbiaceae	
<i>Lotononis laxa</i>	Fabaceae	tiny yellow pea
<i>Dierama dracomontana</i>	Iridaceae	'angel's fishing rods' in the spray of the waterfall
<i>Gladiolus microcarpus</i>	Iridaceae	pink gladiolus in the spray of the waterfall
<i>Hesperantha scopulosa</i>	Iridaceae	
<i>Disperis renibractea</i>	Orchidaceae	
<i>Disperis tysonii</i>	Orchidaceae	pale pink 'bonnet' orchid
<i>Disperis wealei</i>	Orchidaceae	larger white 'bonnet' orchid
<i>Harveya speciosa</i>	Orobanchaceae	<b>Showy Inkflower</b>
<i>Striga bilabiata</i>	Orobanchaceae	
<i>Oxalis obliquifolia</i>	Oxalidaceae	
<i>Polygala virgata</i>	Polygalaceae	
<i>Diascia purpurea</i>	Scrophulariaceae	'upside down' Diascia
<i>Hebenstretia dura</i>	Scrophulariaceae	

### 28<sup>th</sup> January: back to Johannesburg

After the spectacular sunrise and scenery of the previous day, today dawned murky, with low cloud blocking any hint of the landscape before breakfast...

After one last flyby from the resident Black-winged Kite, we set off for the long and less-than-thrilling drive north to Johannesburg.

We stopped at a roadside wetland, east of Bethlehem, for a leg stretch and one last attempt at bulking up our bird list. Amongst the hundreds of Red-knobbed Coot and tens of Egyptian Geese, we found a couple of Maccoa Duck and a sleeping Cape Shoveler, while a handful of Whiskered Terns flew back and forth. Scoping the margins, we found five species of heron, three of ibis, Three-banded and Kittlitz's Plover, African Snipe and, best of the lot, a pair of Greater Painted-Snipe.

Continuing north, a couple of Helmeted Guineafowl ran out from the roadside and two flocks of Black-winged Pratincole were flicking over the farmland.

After a truck-stop lunch, we eventually made it to Johannesburg airport, and our flights home...

Drakensberg Pokers



Top row, l to r: *Kniphofia ichopoensis*, Sani Pass; *K. laxiflora*, near Pevensey; *K. gracilis*, near Edashi  
First row, l to r: *Kniphofia porphyrantha*, Witsieshoek; *K. triangularis*, Golden Gate Highlands; *K. thodei*, Sentinel trail  
Second row, l to r: *Kniphofia caulescens*, Sani Mountain Lodge; *K. breviflora*, Witsieshoek; *K. ritualis*, Witsieshoek

Drakensberg Orchids



Top row, l to r: *Satyrium hallackii*, near Pevensey; *Habenaria clavata*, near Pevensey; *Disperis wealei*, Witsieshoek  
First row, l to r: *Stenoglottis fimbriata*, Giant's Castle; *Disa thodei*, Sani Pass; *Eulophia zeyheriana*, Sani Pass  
Second row, l to r: *Holothrix incurva*, Sani Pass; *Disperis cardiophora*, Giant's Castle; *Corycium dracomontanum*, Witsieshoek

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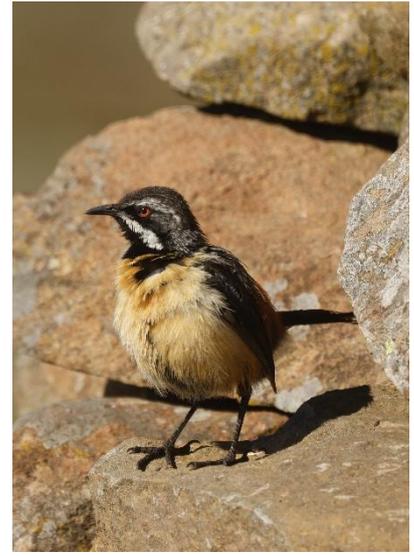
## Drakensberg Butterflies



Top, l to r: **Bushy Beauty**, Giant's Castle; **Machaca Opal**, Sentinel trail; **Brown-veined White**, Sani Pass  
Middle, l to r: **Dark Speckled Widow**, Sani Mountain Lodge; **Gaudy Commodore**, Witsieshoek; **Rainforest Brown**,  
Giant's Castle  
Bottom, l to r: **Common Pirate**, Golden Gate Highlands; **Gaika Brown**, Sani Mountain Lodge; **Garden Acraea**, Sani Pass

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### Drakensberg Birds



Top, l to r: **Gurney's Sugarbird**, Sani Pass; **Drakensberg Siskin** and **Drakensberg Rockjumper**, both Sani Mountain Lodge  
Middle, l to r: **Greater Double-collared Sunbird**, Giant's Castle; **Cape Griffon**, Witsieshoek; **Southern Bald Ibis**, Underberg  
Bottom, l to r: (all courtesy Sarah Lambert): **Sentinel Rock Thrush**, Sani Mountain Lodge; **Red-throated Wryneck**, Golden Gate Highlands; **Southern Red Bishop**, Himeville

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ANIMAL SPECIES LISTS: X = seen, H = heard only, S = tracks and/or signs, D = dead,  
C = domestic animal

### MAMMALS

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<b>Family Procaviidae (Hyraxes)</b>														
Rock Hyrax	<i>Procavia capensis</i>			X				X	X					
<b>Family Cercopithecidae (Old World Monkeys)</b>														
Chacma Baboon	<i>Papio ursinus</i>			X	X		X	X	X	H	X	X	X	
<b>Family Leporidae (Hares and Rabbits)</b>														
Scrub Hare	<i>Lepus saxatilis</i>					X								
<b>Family Muridae (Mice, Rats and Gerbils)</b>														
Sloggett's Ice Rat	<i>Otomys sloggetti</i>				X									
Southern Vlei Rat	<i>Otomys irroratus</i>				X									
<b>Family Bathyergidae (African Mole-rats)</b>														
Common Mole-rat	<i>Cryptomys hottentotus</i>			S	S	S	S	S					S	
<b>Family Equidae (Horses)</b>														
Burchell's Zebra	<i>Zebra quagga burchellii</i>						C		X	X	X			C
<b>Family Bovidae (Hollow-horned Ruminants)</b>														
Common Eland	<i>Taurotragus oryx</i>					C		X	X					C
Rhebok	<i>Pelea capreolus</i>				X						X			
Blesbok	<i>Damaliscus phillipsi</i>						X		X	X	X			
Black Wildebeest	<i>Connochaetes gnou</i>						X		X	X	X			
Bush Duiker	<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>				X									
Springbok									C					C
<b>Family Herpestidae (Mongooses)</b>														
Cape Grey Mongoose	<i>Herpestes pulverulentus</i>								X					
<b>Family Canidae (Dogs)</b>														
Black-backed Jackal	<i>Lupulella mesomelas</i>						X			X				

### HERPTILES

Raucous Toad	<i>Sclerophys capensis</i>						X							
Maluti River Frog	<i>Amietia vertebralis</i>				X									
Common River Frog	<i>Amietia delalandii</i>			X	X				X					
Drakensberg Crag Lizard	<i>Pseudocordylus subviridis</i>				X							X	X	
Mountain Flat Gecko	<i>Afroedura nivaria</i>							X						
Variable Skink	<i>Trachylepis varia</i>					X			X					
Southern Rock Agama	<i>Agama atra</i>								X					
Speckled Rock Skink	<i>Trachylepis punctatissima</i>											X	X	

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### BIRDS

This checklist follows the eBird taxonomy, as published by Cornell Lab at [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)

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<b>Family Struthionidae (Ostriches)</b>														
Common Ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>						C							C
<b>Family Anatidae (Ducks, Geese and Waterfowl)</b>														
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>		X	X		X	X		X					X
South African Shelduck	<i>Tadorna cana</i>						X							
Spur-winged Goose	<i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>			X		X								X
Cape Shoveler	<i>Spatula smithii</i>													X
Yellow-billed Duck	<i>Anas undulata</i>		X		X	X	X							X
Red-billed Duck	<i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>						X							X
Maccoa Duck	<i>Oxyura maccoa</i>													X
<b>Family Numididae (Guineafowl)</b>														
Helmeted Guineafowl	<i>Numida meleagris</i>													X
<b>Family Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse and allies)</b>														
Grey-winged Francolin	<i>Scleroptila afra</i>				X							X		
Common Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>						X		H	X				
Swainson's Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis swainsonii</i>									X				
Red-necked Spurfowl	<i>Pternistis afer</i>								X					
<b>Family Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)</b>														
Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>		X											X
Speckled Pigeon	<i>Columba guinea</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Rameron Pigeon	<i>Columba arquatrix</i>					X			X					
Red-eyed Dove	<i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Ring-necked Dove	<i>Streptopelia capicola</i>			X		X								X
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>			X										
<b>Family Musophagidae (Turacos)</b>														
Grey Go-away-bird	<i>Crinifer concolor</i>													X
<b>Family Cuculidae (Cuckoos)</b>														
Klaas's Cuckoo	<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>									X				
Red-chested Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus solitarius</i>					H		H						
<b>Family Apodidae (Swifts)</b>														
Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>				X			X		X	X	X		
African Swift	<i>Apus barbatus</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Little Swift	<i>Apus affinis</i>		X			X								X
Horus Swift	<i>Apus horus</i>				X					X				
White-rumped Swift	<i>Apus caffer</i>				X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
African Palm Swift	<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>		X											

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<b>Family Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules and Coots)</b>														
African Rail	<i>Rallus caerulescens</i>						H							
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>						X							X
Red-knobbed Coot	<i>Fulica cristata</i>						X							X
<b>Family Gruidae (Cranes)</b>														
Grey Crowned-Crane	<i>Balearica regulorum</i>					X	X							
<b>Family Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)</b>														
Three-banded Plover	<i>Thinornis tricollaris</i>						X							X
Blacksmith Lapwing	<i>Vanellus armatus</i>						X							X
Crowned Lapwing	<i>Vanellus coronatus</i>													X
Kittlitz's Plover	<i>Anarhynchus pecuarius</i>													X
<b>Family Rostratulidae (Painted-Snipes)</b>														
Greater Painted-Snipe	<i>Rostratula bonghalensis</i>													X
<b>Family Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and allies)</b>														
African Snipe	<i>Gallinago nigripennis</i>						X							X
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>													X
<b>Family Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers)</b>														
Black-winged Pratincole	<i>Glareola nordmanni</i>													X
<b>Family Laridae (Gulls, Terns and Skimmers)</b>														
Whiskered Tern	<i>Chlidonias hybrida</i>													X
<b>Family Podicipedidae (Grebes)</b>														
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		X				X							X
<b>Family Ciconiidae (Storks)</b>														
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>											X		
African Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia microscelis</i>		X											
White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>				X		X							
<b>Family Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)</b>														
Reed Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo africanus</i>			X		X	X			X				X
<b>Family Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)</b>														
Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>													X
African Sacred Ibis	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>		X	X	X	X	X		X		X			X
Southern Bald Ibis	<i>Geronticus calvus</i>				X	X	X		X					X
Hadada Ibis	<i>Bostrychia hagedash</i>		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X
African Spoonbill	<i>Platalea alba</i>						X							
<b>Family Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets and Bitterns)</b>														
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		X											X
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>		X						X		X			x
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>			X										X
Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>													X
Black-headed Heron	<i>Ardea melanocephala</i>			X			X		X					X
<b>Family Scopidae (Hamerkop)</b>														
Hamerkop	<i>Scopus umbretta</i>				X	X	X							

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<b>Family Sagittariidae (Secretarybird)</b>														
Secretarybird	<i>Sagittarius serpentarius</i>											X		
<b>Family Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles and Kites)</b>														
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>						X		X		X	X	X	
African Harrier-Hawk	<i>Polyboroides typus</i>						X				X		X	
Bearded Vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>					X		X				X		
Cape Griffon	<i>Gyps coprotheres</i>			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Long-crested Eagle	<i>Lophaetus occipitalis</i>		X		X	X								
Wahlberg's Eagle	<i>Hieraaetus wahlbergi</i>								X					
Verreaux's Eagle	<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>											X		
African Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus ranivorus</i>						X							
Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>		X	X		X	X		X					X
Jackal Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufofuscus</i>			X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>			X	X		X		X					X
<b>Family Strigidae (Owls)</b>														
Spotted Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo africanus</i>									H				
<b>Family Coliidae (Mousebirds)</b>														
Speckled Mousebird	<i>Colius striatus</i>			X	X		X	X						
<b>Family Meropidae (Bee-eaters)</b>														
White-fronted Bee-eater	<i>Merops bullockoides</i>								X					
<b>Family Lybiidae (African Barbets)</b>														
Crested Barbet	<i>Trachyphonus vaillantii</i>										H			
<b>Family Picidae (Woodpeckers)</b>														
Red-throated Wryneck	<i>Jynx ruficollis</i>									X	X			
Cardinal Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicus fuscescens</i>			X										
Olive Woodpecker	<i>Dendropicus griseocephalus</i>						X	X	H					
Ground Woodpecker	<i>Geocolaptes olivaceus</i>			X	X				X	X	X			
<b>Family Falconidae (Falcons)</b>														
Rock Kestrel	<i>Falco rupicolus</i>							X		X	X	X	X	
Amur Falcon	<i>Falco amurensis</i>			X	X				X	X	X	X		X
Lanner Falcon	<i>Falco biarmicus</i>				X		X							
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>										X			
<b>Family Oriolidae (Orioles)</b>														
African Black-headed Oriole	<i>Oriolus larvatus</i>						H							
<b>Family Platysteiridae (Wattle-eyes and Batises)</b>														
Cape Batis	<i>Batis capensis</i>							X						
<b>Family Malaconotidae (Bushshrikes and allies)</b>														
Southern Boubou	<i>Laniarius ferrugineus</i>					H		X	X					X
Bokmakierie	<i>Telophorus zeylonus</i>					X	X			X				
<b>Family Dicruridae (Drongos)</b>														
Fork-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus adsimilis</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X					

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<b>Family Monarchidae (Monarch Flycatchers)</b>														
African Paradise-Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphonev iridis</i>								X					
<b>Family Laniidae (Shrikes)</b>														
Southern Fiscal	<i>Lanius collaris</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
<b>Family Corvidae (Crows, Jays and Magpies)</b>														
Cape Crow	<i>Corvus capensis</i>				X	X	X		X		X		X	X
Pied Crow	<i>Corvus albus</i>								X					
White-necked Raven	<i>Corvus albicollis</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<b>Family Chaetopidae (Rockjumpers)</b>														
Drakensberg Rockjumper	<i>Chaetops aurantius</i>				X							X		
<b>Family Stenostiridae (Fairy Flycatchers)</b>														
Fairy Flycatcher	<i>Stenostira scita</i>				X									
<b>Family Paridae (Tits, Chickadees and Titmice)</b>														
Southern Black-Tit	<i>Melaniparus niger</i>			X										
<b>Family Alaudidae (Larks)</b>														
Rufous-naped Lark	<i>Corypha africana</i>										X			
Large-billed Lark	<i>Galerida magnirostris</i>									X				
<b>Family Macrosphenidae (African Warblers)</b>														
Cape Grassbird	<i>Sphenoeacus afer</i>			X		H		X						
<b>Family Cisticolidae (Cisticolas and allies)</b>														
Bar-throated Apalis	<i>Apalis thoracica</i>							X						
Drakensberg Prinia	<i>Prinia hypoxantha</i>				X			X					X	
Rock-loving Cisticola	<i>Cisticola aberrans</i>							X						
Wailing Cisticola	<i>Cisticola lais</i>			X	X			X	X	X		X	X	
Levaillant's Cisticola	<i>Cisticola tinniens</i>				X		X		X	X				X
Piping Cisticola	<i>Cisticola fulvicapilla</i>								X					
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>						X		X		X			
Cloud Cisticola	<i>Cisticola textrix</i>												X	
Pale-crowned Cisticola	<i>Cisticola cinnamomeus</i>						X							
Wing-snapping Cisticola	<i>Cisticola ayresii</i>				X		X		X	X	X		X	
<b>Family Acrocephalidae (Reed Warblers and allies)</b>														
African Yellow-Warbler	<i>Iduna natalensis</i>						X							
Lesser Swamp Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus gracilirostris</i>						X							
<b>Family Locustellidae (Grassbirds and allies)</b>														
Fan-tailed Grassbird	<i>Catriscus brevirostris</i>			X										
Barratt's Warbler	<i>Bradypterus barratti</i>			X	X	H		X	H				X	
Little Rush Warbler	<i>Bradypterus baboecala</i>						H							
<b>Family Hirundinidae (Swallows and Martins)</b>														
Black Sawwing	<i>Psalidoprocne pristoptera</i>			X		X	X							
Banded Martin	<i>Neophedina cincta</i>				X	X	X		X	X	X			
Plain Martin	<i>Riparia paludicola</i>					X	X		X					
Southern Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne fuligula</i>				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

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Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
White-throated Swallow	<i>Hirundo albigularis</i>				X		X		X	X				
Greater Striped Swallow	<i>Cecropis cucullata</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
South African Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon spilodera</i>								X					
<b>Family Pycnonotidae (Bulbuls)</b>														
Common Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>		X			X	X	X	X	X				
<b>Family Phylloscopidae (Leaf Warblers)</b>														
Yellow-throated Woodland-Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus ruficapilla</i>							X						
<b>Family Sylviidae (Sylviid Warblers and allies)</b>														
Bush Blackcap	<i>Sylvia nigricapillus</i>				X			X						
<b>Family Zosteropidae (White-eyes, Yuhinas and allies)</b>														
Cape White-eye	<i>Zosterops virens</i>			X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
<b>Family Sturnidae (Starlings)</b>														
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>						X		X		X			X
Red-winged Starling	<i>Onychognathus morio</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
African Pied Starling	<i>Lamprotornis bicolor</i>						X		X	X	X			
Cape Starling	<i>Lamprotornis nitens</i>													X
<b>Family Turdidae (Thrushes and allies)</b>														
Olive Thrush	<i>Turdus olivaceus</i>			X				X	X					
Karoo Thrush	<i>Turdus smithi</i>									X	X			
<b>Family Muscicapidae (Old World Flycatchers)</b>														
African Dusky Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa adusta</i>		X											
Cape Robin-Chat	<i>Dessonornis caffer</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Chorister Robin-Chat	<i>Cossypha dichroa</i>							X						
Sentinel Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola explorator</i>				X									
Cape Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola rupestris</i>			X		X		X		X				
African Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>			X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
Buff-streaked Chat	<i>Campicoloides bifasciatus</i>			X										
Sickle-winged Chat	<i>Emarginata sinuata</i>			X	X									
Southern Anteater-Chat	<i>Myrmecocichla formicivora</i>				X	X			X					
Familiar Chat	<i>Oenanthe familiaris</i>									X		X	X	
<b>Family Promeropidae (Sugarbirds)</b>														
Gurney's Sugarbird	<i>Promerops gurneyi</i>			X										
<b>Family Nectariniidae (Sunbirds)</b>														
Amethyst Sunbird	<i>Chalcomitra amethystina</i>			X		X	X		X	X				
Malachite Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia famosa</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Greater Double-collared Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris afer</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X					
<b>Family Ploceidae (Weavers and allies)</b>														
Cape Weaver	<i>Ploceus capensis</i>			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Southern Masked Weaver	<i>Ploceus velatus</i>						X		X					X

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ENGLISH NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	16 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>	23 <sup>rd</sup>	24 <sup>th</sup>	25 <sup>th</sup>	26 <sup>th</sup>	27 <sup>th</sup>	28 <sup>th</sup>
Village Weaver	<i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>		X						X					
Red-billed Quelea	<i>Quelea quelea</i>				X		X							
Southern Red Bishop	<i>Euplectes orix</i>			X	X	X	X		X	X				X
Yellow-crowned Bishop	<i>Euplectes afer</i>								X					X
Yellow Bishop	<i>Euplectes capensis</i>			X		X	X		X					
Red-collared Widowbird	<i>Euplectes ardens</i>		X	X					X	X				
Fan-tailed Widowbird	<i>Euplectes axillaris</i>		X		X		X		X					
Long-tailed Widowbird	<i>Euplectes progne</i>				X		X	X	X	X	X			
<b>Family Estrildidae (Waxbills and allies)</b>														
Swee Waxbill	<i>Coccygia melanotis</i>				X		X		X					
Common Waxbill	<i>Estrilda astrild</i>			X	X	X		X	X	X				
<b>Family Viduidae (Indigobirds)</b>														
Pin-tailed Whydah	<i>Vidua macroura</i>			X	X		X	X	X					
<b>Family Passeridae (Old World Sparrow)</b>														
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>								X					X
Cape Sparrow	<i>Passer melanurus</i>			X	X		X	X	X		X			
Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	<i>Passer diffusus</i>						X		X					
<b>Family Motacillidae (Wagtails and Pipits)</b>														
Cape Wagtail	<i>Motacilla capensis</i>			X	X		X	X	X	X	X			
African Pipit	<i>Anthus cinnamomeus</i>				X				X					
Mountain Pipit	<i>Anthus hoeschi</i>				X									
Yellow-tufted Pipit	<i>Anthus crenatus</i>				H									
Orange-throated Longclaw	<i>Macronyx capensis</i>				X		X		X	X	X			
<b>Family Fringillidae (Finches)</b>														
Yellow Canary	<i>Crithagra flaviventris</i>			X	X									
Streaky-headed Seedeater	<i>Crithagra gularis</i>				X				X					
Drakensberg Siskin	<i>Crithagra symonsi</i>			X	X						X			
Cape Canary	<i>Serinus canicollis</i>			X	X			X				X		
<b>Family Emberizidae (Buntings)</b>														
Golden-breasted Bunting	<i>Emberiza flaviventris</i>					X								
Cape Bunting	<i>Emberiza capensis</i>			X	X									

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### BUTTERFLIES

ENGLISH NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	16 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>	23 <sup>rd</sup>	24 <sup>th</sup>	25 <sup>th</sup>	26 <sup>th</sup>	27 <sup>th</sup>	28 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Nymphalidae (brush-footed butterflies)</b>														
Garden Acraea	<i>Acraea horta</i>			X	X				X	X	X			
Table Mountain Beauty	<i>Aeropetes tulbaghia</i>			X	X				X	X	X	X	X	
Common Joker	<i>Byblia anvatara acheloia</i>						X							
Rainforest Brown	<i>Cassionympha cassius</i>							X						
Pirate	<i>Catacroptera cloanthe</i>									X				
Plain Tiger	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>			X		X	X		X	X	X			
Dark Speckled Widow	<i>Dingana bowkeri bowkeri</i>				X									
Bush Beauty	<i>Paralethe dendrophilus</i>							X	X					
Gaudy Commodore	<i>Precis octavia</i>			X		X	X							X
Gaika Brown	<i>Pseudonympha gaika</i>				X									
False Silver-bottom Brown	<i>Pseudonympha magoides</i>											X	X	
Silver-bottom Brown	<i>Pseudonympha magus</i>													X
Eastern Hillside Brown	<i>Stygionympha scotina</i>											X		
Wichgraf's Hillside Brown	<i>Stygionympha wichgrafi</i>													X
<b>Pieridae (whites, yellows and sulphurs)</b>														
Brown-veined White	<i>Belenois aurota aurota</i>				X					X				
African Migrant	<i>Catopsilia florella</i>			X										
African Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias electa</i>									X	X			
Broad-bordered Grass Yellow	<i>Eurema brigitta</i>								X					
Common Dotted Border	<i>Myiothris agathina</i>							X						
<b>Lycaenidae (gossamer-winged butterflies)</b>														
Common Ciliate Blue	<i>Anthene definita</i>			X		X		X						
Water Geranium Bronze	<i>Cacyerus fracta</i>						X	X		X	X	X		
Machacha Opal	<i>Chrysoritis pelion</i>													X
Marsh Mountain Blue	<i>Harpencyreus noquasa</i>					X								
<b>Hesperiidae (skippers)</b>														
Drakensberg Grassland Sylph	<i>Metisella malgacha orina</i>				X							X		
Wallengren's Ranger	<i>Nervia wallengrenii</i>				X				X					
<b>Papilionidae (swallowtails)</b>														
Citrus Swallowtail	<i>Papilio demodocus</i>							X	X					X
Narrow Green-banded Swallowtail	<i>Papilio niveus</i>							X						

## SOUTH AFRICA 2026

### MOTHS

#### Adelidae (Fairy Moths)

*Ceromitia wahlbergi* Barred Longhorn.

#### Cossidae (Carpenter and Leopard Moths)

*Brachylia sp.* at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21<sup>st</sup>

#### Crambidae (Crambid Snout Moths)

*Ancylolomia prepiella* stripey grass veneer, to light, Golden Gate, 25<sup>th</sup>

*Loxostege venustalis* to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Paraponyx sp* to light, Underberg, 20<sup>th</sup>

*Uresiphita sp* to light, Underberg, 20<sup>th</sup>

#### Erebidae (Underwing, Tiger, Tussock and allied moths)

*Afrosipilarctia dissimilis* to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Amata kuhlweinii* White-spotted black 'tiger moth', Giant's Castle, 22<sup>nd</sup>

*Apisa canescens* to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Automolis bicolora* at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21<sup>st</sup>

*Automolis meteus* **Orange-fronted Matron.** to light, Golden Gate, 25<sup>th</sup>

*Eublemma ornatula* to light, Golden Gate, 25<sup>th</sup>

*Grammodes bifasciata* **Two Lines.** at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21<sup>st</sup>

*Ilemodes astriga* **Buttered False Footman.** to light, Underberg, 18<sup>th</sup>

*Lacipa gemmata* to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Paralacydes arborifera* **Branched Ermine.** to light, Golden Gate, 25<sup>th</sup>

*Phytometra sacraria* to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Polymona rufifemur* to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Psalis africana* to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Radara sp.* to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Rhodogastria similis* **Orange Tricolour Tiger.** at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21<sup>st</sup>

*Sozusa scutellata* **Plated Footman.** to light, Giant's Castle, 23<sup>rd</sup> & Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Sphingomorpha chlorea* **Sundowner Moth.** at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21<sup>st</sup>

#### Geometridae (Emerald Moths and allies)

*Acrasia sp* at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21<sup>st</sup>

*Argyrophora trofonia* **Diamond Studs Streak.** at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21<sup>st</sup> ; to light, Golden Gate, 25<sup>th</sup>

*Argyrophora variabilis* to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Ascotis reciprocata* **Pallid Grey.** to light, Underberg, 18<sup>th</sup>

*Axiodes sp.* to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Drepanogynis angustimargo* at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21<sup>st</sup>

*Microligia sp.* to light, Golden Gate, 25<sup>th</sup>

*Piercia bryophilaria* **Mossy Carpet.** to light, Golden Gate, 25<sup>th</sup>

*Pseudolarentia megalaria* **Large Spot Rivulet,** in grassland, Drakensberg Gardens, 20<sup>th</sup>

*Rhodometra sacraria* **The Vestal.** to light, Golden Gate, 24<sup>th</sup>

*Scopula inscriptata* to light, Golden Gate, 25<sup>th</sup>

*Xanthorhoe exorista* at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21<sup>st</sup>

#### Hepialidae (Swift Moths)

*Eudalaca cretata* to light, Witsieshoek, 27<sup>th</sup>

## SOUTH AFRICA 2026

<i>Gorgopis sp.</i>	at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21 <sup>st</sup> ; to light, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Lasiocampidae (Lappet Moths)</b>	
<i>Bombycomorpha bifascia</i>	<b>Barred Eggarlet.</b> to light, Golden Gate, 24 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Mesocelis monticola</i>	<b>Mountain White-Spot.</b> The big fuzzy caterpillar, 28 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Limacodidae (Slug Caterpillar Moths)</b>	
<i>Taeda gemmans</i>	<b>Gem Slug.</b> at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21 <sup>st</sup>
<b>Noctuidae (Cutworm Moths and allies)</b>	
<i>Acontia margaritata</i>	bird dropping mimic: to light, Underberg, 21 <sup>st</sup> & Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Agrotis segetum</i>	<b>Turnip Moth.</b> at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21 <sup>st</sup>
<i>Agrotis spinifera</i>	<b>Gregson's Dart.</b> to light, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Brithys crina</i>	<b>Lily Borer.</b> Stripy caterpillar on Nerine, Underberg, 21 <sup>st</sup>
<i>Brithysana speyeri</i>	to light, Golden Gate, 24 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Conservula minor</i>	at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21 <sup>st</sup>
<i>Cucullia nigrilinea</i>	'shark', to light, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Diaphone mossambicensis</i>	<b>Pale Cherry Spot.</b> Stripy caterpillar feeding on Eucomis leaves, 27 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Hadena bulgeri</i>	to light, Golden Gate, 24 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Helicoverpa armigera</i>	<b>Scarce Bordered Straw.</b> to light, Underberg, 18 <sup>th</sup> & Golden Gate, 24 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Interdelta intermedia</i>	at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21 <sup>st</sup>
<i>Spodoptera cilium.</i>	<b>Dark Mottled Willow.</b> to light, Underberg, 21 <sup>st</sup>
<i>Spodoptera exigua</i>	<b>Small Mottled Willow.</b> to light, Underberg, 20 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Vietteania intestata</i>	at restaurant lights, Giant's Castle, 21 <sup>st</sup> ; to light, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Vittaplusia vittata</i>	<b>Streaked Plusia.</b> to light, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Nolidae (Tufted Moths)</b>	
<i>Earias insulana</i>	<b>Egyptian Bollworm.</b> Small green moth, to light, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Notodontidae (Prominent Moths)</b>	
<i>Sarimarais bicolor.</i>	to light, Golden Gate, 24 <sup>th</sup> and 25 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Pterophoridae (Plume Moths)</b>	
<i>Stenodacma wahlbergi</i>	in grassland, Drakensberg Gardens, 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Pyralidae (Pyralid Snout Moths)</b>	
<i>Zitha laminalis</i>	to light, Golden Gate, 24 <sup>th</sup> & 25 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Sphingidae (Hawk Moths)</b>	
<i>Nephele comma</i>	to light, Golden Gate, 24 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Pseudoclanis cf postica</i>	<b>Mulberry Hawkmoth.</b> to light, Underberg, 18 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Theretra cajus</i>	<b>Creamstripe Hawkmoth.</b> to light, Underberg, 18 <sup>th</sup> & Giant's Castle, 23 <sup>rd</sup>

## SOUTH AFRICA 2026

### MISCELLANY

<i>Trithemis stictica</i>	<b>Jaunty Dropwing.</b> Sky blue dropwing dragonfly, 21 <sup>st</sup>
<i>Orthetrum machadoi</i>	<b>Highland Skimmer.</b> Dusky blue skimmer dragonfly, 21 <sup>st</sup>
<i>Pinheyschna subpupilata</i>	<b>Stream Hawker.</b> Large dragonfly, Giant's Castle, 22 <sup>nd</sup> and 23 <sup>rd</sup>
<i>Allocnemis leucosticte</i>	<b>Goldtail.</b> Damselfly at the waterfall, 27 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Deropeltis erythrocephala</i>	Shiny black cockroach attracted to lights, Giant's Castle, 21 <sup>st</sup>
<i>Taphronota stali</i>	The 'sombre' foam-locust at Sani Lodge, 19 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Ochrophlebia cafra</i>	The orange and black grasshopper, Giant's Castle, 22 <sup>nd</sup>
<i>Maura rubroornata</i>	The black and red grasshoppers near the waterfall, 27 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Phaneroptera sparsa</i>	Large green bushcricket, to light, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Paramantis sacra</i>	Large brown mantis, to light, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Harpagomantis tricolor</i>	The small flower mantis, Golden Gate, 24 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Afromantispa sp</i>	Mantispidae. Mantis fly, to light, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Palpares caffer</i>	<b>Mottled Veld Antlion.</b> to light, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Philoliche sp. (subgenus Ommatiosteres)</i>	Tabanidae. The long-tongued fly on the walk to the waterfall, 27 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Philoliche cf aethiopica</i>	Tabanidae. a long-tongued horsefly, Giant's Castle, 24 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Prosoeca ganglbaueri</i>	Nemestrinidae. a long-tongued tanglewing fly, Sentinel walk, 26 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Pegesimallus sp.</i>	Asilidae. A robber fly, lower Sani Pass, 18 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Notolomatia pictipennis</i>	Bombyliidae. <b>Orange Bee-fly</b> , Nerine field, Underberg, 21 <sup>st</sup>
<i>Dromica sp</i>	Cicindelidae. Tiger beetle, Golden Gate, 25 <sup>th</sup>
<i>Potamonautes danielsi</i>	<b>Pondoland River Crab.</b> Lower Sani Pass, 18 <sup>th</sup>

*thank you for travelling with us*

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