



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

South Africa KwaZulu-Natal day trip Midmar Nature Reserve 2022



Long-tailed Widowbird by Adam Riley



We will set off from Durban this morning, and make our way inland. After leaving the coast and rising in altitude, we will pass Pietermaritzburg – the capital of KwaZulu-Natal. Midmar Nature Reserve lies in the scenic midlands and is a great attraction to both birds and mammals. The Thurlow section of this great reserve is particularly productive and will be the focus of our efforts today.

Bird species associated with water will be abundant and should include White-breasted and Reed Cormorants, Goliath and Purple Herons, African Darter, the endemic South African Shelduck, both White-faced Whistling and Yellow-billed Ducks, African Wattled and Black-throated Lapwings as well as the iconic African Fish Eagle. Raptor species are attracted to all the food source and flocks of Amur Falcon can be seen hawking insects from the boundary fence. A couple of pairs of the stately Jackal Buzzard call this area home and we should see many Black-winged Kite and one or two African Marsh Harriers quartering the marshy areas.

We should encounter many widowbirds in full display, which include Long-tailed and Fan-tailed. Southern Red Bishops are always a great sight and we will have to search harder for Yellow-crowned and Yellow Bishops. Some pairs of Grey Crowned Crane are usually present and sometimes Denham's Bustard is also present. This reserve is an excellent place to find the parasitic Cuckoo-finch and areas with many Levillant's Cisticolas seem to be favored due to their parasitic relationship. Other seedeaters should include flocks of Common Waxbill, Bronze Mannikin, Yellow-fronted, Brimstone and Cape Canaries as well as the uncommon Orange-breasted Waxbill.

Venturing onto the rocky ridges, we will search for the sought-after Black-winged Lapwing as well as some coveys of Red-winged Francolins. African Pipits are plentiful and with some luck we could pick up the less common Plain-backed Pipit. Areas with tall grass will be searched for the shy Fan-tailed Grassbird and Bokmakierie can usually be heard singing from the brush. Many mammal species can also be expected and should include the endemic Black Wildebeest, iconic Plains Zebra amongst many antelope such as Blesbok, Southern Reedbuck and Hartebeest. As the sun starts to head toward the horizon, we will make our way back to Durban after a fantastic outing to this mouth-watering destination.

INCLUSIONS & EXCLUSIONS

The tour price INCLUDES:

- Lunch on the day;
- Ground transportation in a suitable vehicle, driven by a Rockjumper guide;
- All fuel as required by the itinerary & tolls;
- All entrance and conservation fees as required by the itinerary;
- Activities mentioned in the itinerary;
- Guiding services and costs of a Rockjumper leader throughout.

The tour price above EXCLUDES:

- Any bottled drinking water/ beverages/alcoholic drinks;
- Optional activities/excursions not mentioned in the itinerary outline;
- Special gratuities;
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, gift shop purchases, telephone calls, etc.
- Any item not specified above as included.

