



Wildwings

## WILDWINGS SOUTH AFRICA TOUR

MAMMALS AND BIRDS  
NOVEMBER 2016

LEADER – RICHARD WEBB

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African Wild Dogs (Kenny Ross)

### INTRODUCTION

After the success of the first Wildwings' mammal tour to South Africa in July 2016, there were high hopes for another successful trip although I could not have anticipated just how good it would be.

Focusing again on many of Southern Africa's most enigmatic species we saw 56 species of mammal (excluding 'uncountable' introductions and bats only detected ultrasonically) compared to 54 in July. On the bird front we saw 250 species (compared to 191 in July) including Blue Crane and some fabulous displaying Long-tailed and Red-collared Widowbirds, and we also identified 14 species of reptiles and amphibians including a superb Puff Adder.

'Watching a male Red-backed Shrike when an Impala ran out of the bushes with nine Wild Dogs in pursuit' was unquestionably the defining moment of the trip but there were many more highlights including:

- Five **Aardvarks**, two of which reared up on their back legs and sparred like Mad March Hares.
- Multiple sightings of **Black-footed Cat** including a female with three kittens.
- Two young male **Lions** chasing off another male plus three lionesses from the carcass of a female elephant that had unfortunately died while giving birth, and then trying to chase off a mature male only for the latter to double back to the carcass, before all three lions fed together.
- A **Black Rhino** giving us great close range views from the vehicle having been brilliantly tracked by Benson on foot.

- Two **Brown Hyenas** one of which gave good views as it came to investigate our 'bush dinner'!
- Some great encounters with large herds of **African Savanna Elephants** including tiny young at one of the waterholes in Madikwe.
- Close views of two **Cheetah**
- Three **South African Hedgehogs** and a single **Zorilla** at Marrick.

I would like to thank all the group for their good company throughout the trip and for the photographs that accompany this report, and Allan and Kenny for providing details of the bats, butterflies and dragnflies that they recorded during the tour. In particular thanks to the local guides and drivers who supported us during a great trip, Their efforts were really appreciated by everyone.

Roll on the next tour in September 2017.

**Richard Webb**  
**21st November 2016**



**Cape Porcupine (Cat Rayner)**



**South African Hedgehog (Kenny Ross)**

## **MAMMALS (excluding Bats)**

Nomenclature largely follows the six-volume **Mammals of Africa** except for bovids where it follows the recently published **Bovids of the World** which in turn follows the taxonomy of the **Handbook of Mammals of the World**.

-	<b>Western Rock Sengi</b> <i>Elephantulus rupestris</i>	Not seen at Marrick despite quite a bit of searching although Johnny our guide did see one briefly on the first night drive.
1	<b>South African Hedgehog</b> <i>Atelerix frontalis</i>	Two on the first night drive at Marrick and one, probably one of the two seen the night before, on the second night drive.
2	<b>Chacma Baboon</b> <i>Papio ursinus</i>	Two groups seen in Suikerbosrand. Seen daily in small numbers in Madikwe including a nice troop roosting on some cliffs on our last evening in the park.
3	<b>Vervet Monkey</b> <i>Chlorocebus pygerythrus</i>	Surprisingly scarce with two singles seen just outside the grounds of Madikwe River Lodge and about 12 around one of the chalets just before we left the park on our final morning.
4	<b>Southern Lesser Galago</b> <i>Galago moholi</i>	Much more difficult to see than in July with two seen in the grounds of Madikwe River Lodge on our first night there and one briefly the following night.



**Southern Lesser Galagos (Kenny Ross)**

5	<b>Cape Hare</b> <i>Lepus capensis</i>	Up to eight seen on all three night drives at Marrick.
6	<b>Scrub Hare</b> <i>Lepus saxatilis</i>	6+ on the first night drive at Marrick and 3+ on the third night. One also seen during the day.
7	<b>African Savanna Hare</b> <i>Lepus microtis</i>	10+ seen on all four evenings in Madikwe with one seen during the day.
8	<b>Smith's Red Rock Hare</b> <i>Pronolagus rupestris</i>	Two on the first night drive at Marrick, one on the second night drive and another seen briefly during the day.
9	<b>South African Ground Squirrel</b> <i>Xerus inauris</i>	Common at Marrick, one at Kimberley Airport and up to eight seen on three days in Madikwe.
10	<b>Tree Squirrel</b> <i>Paraxerus cepapi</i>	In Madikwe two on the 17 <sup>th</sup> and two more on the 19 <sup>th</sup> .
11	<b>Spring Hare</b> <i>Pedetes capensis</i>	Abundant at Marrick and up to four each evening in Madikwe.
12	<b>Cape Porcupine</b> <i>Hystrix africaeaustralis</i>	Nightly counts of five, three and three at Marrick.
13	<b>Large-eared (Gerbil) Mouse</b> <i>Malacothrix typica</i>	One on the first night drive and two on the following night drive at Marrick.
-	<b>Highveld Gerbil</b> <i>Tatara brantsii</i>	One identified by Johnny on the first night drive at Marrick but not seen well enough to be sure of the identification.
14	<b>Bushveld Gerbil</b> <i>Gerbilliscus leucogaster</i>	One initially identified as a Highveld Gerbil on the second night drive at Marrick was re-identified from a photo as a Bushveld Gerbil.
15	<b>Bat-eared Fox</b> <i>Otocyon megalotis</i>	Marrick: One during the day and nightly counts of six, four and four.
16	<b>Black-backed Jackal</b> <i>Canis mesomelas</i>	Just one at Marrick but seen on three days in Madikwe with two juveniles on the 15 <sup>th</sup> , three adults on the 16 <sup>th</sup> and two adults near the elephant carcass on the 18 <sup>th</sup> .



### Hunting African Wild Dogs (Kenny Ross)

17	<b>African Wild Dog</b> <i>Lycaon pictus</i>	An even better encounter than in July when on our first morning in Madikwe a single animal appeared chasing a Common Impala and was joined by eight other individuals which we were able to drive alongside during a short unsuccessful chase. They were joined by two others, one badly limping, and after a short rest moved off through the bush again. As we followed them, one of the dogs starting calling and three more dogs, the remaining members of the pack came running in to be greeted by the remainder of the pack. A fabulous experience. Later the same morning we saw them again resting up in the shade of some acacias.
18	<b>Spotted-necked Otter</b> <i>Lutra maculicollis</i>	A brief but good sighting of one out of the water and clearly showing its spotted neck at Warrenton. They are rarely seen at this site which is normally a reliable site for African Clawless Otter.
19	<b>Zorilla (Striped Polecat)</b> <i>Ictonyx striatus</i>	A sighting of a single animal on our third night at Marrick although eye-shine from another probable Zorilla had also been seen the night before.
20	<b>Slender Mongoose</b> <i>Herpestes sanguineus</i>	Much commoner than in July. One seen briefly at Marrick, another near the entrance to Marievale, one at Suikerbosrand, and singles on three days in Madikwe including a grey individual.
21	<b>Yellow Mongoose</b> <i>Cynictis penicillata</i>	A total of 13 seen during the six-drives at Marrick, seen both during the day and at night, and two singles seen at Madikwe on the 16 <sup>th</sup> .
22	<b>Meerkat</b> <i>Suricata suricatta</i>	Three at Marrick on the 12 <sup>th</sup> in addition to the tame individuals around the lodge. Less expected were three seen along the game drive at Suikerbosrand.
23	<b>Small-spotted Genet</b> <i>Genetta genetta</i>	One at Marrick on the 13 <sup>th</sup> and eye-shine from a probable on the 14 <sup>th</sup> . A probable in Madikwe on the 15 <sup>th</sup> where singles were also seen on the 16 <sup>th</sup> and 17 <sup>th</sup> , with two being seen on the 19 <sup>th</sup> , one of which showed well in a tree.
24	<b>Common Large-spotted Genet</b> <i>Genetta maculata</i>	One seen briefly in Madikwe on the 15 <sup>th</sup> .
25	<b>Spotted Hyaena</b> <i>Crocuta crocuta</i>	In Madikwe at least nine including four small chocolate-coloured cubs and two larger cubs around a den at dusk on the 15 <sup>th</sup> with an adult and two cubs around the same den on the 18 <sup>th</sup> . Two including one partially immersed at a waterhole on the 16 <sup>th</sup> and two seen pre-dawn on the 19 <sup>th</sup> .
26	<b>Brown Hyaena</b> <i>Hyaena brunnea</i>	One seen briefly and distantly on our first evening drive in Madikwe. A far more obliging individual which appeared close to where we were having a 'bush dinner' on our final night.
27	<b>Aardwolf</b> <i>Proteles cristata</i>	1-2 seen well but not particularly obligingly on all three night drives at Marrick. They always seemed to be moving away.

28	<b>(African) Wildcat</b> <i>Felis silvestris lybica</i>	Two seen on the second night drive in Marrick with a larger individual, thought to be a feral cat seen the same night. One hunting on our second night in Marrick.
29	<b>Black-footed Cat</b> <i>Felis nigripes</i>	Four, a female plus three kittens, seen well on the first night drive at Marrick, five seen the following night and one on the third night.
30	<b>Cheetah</b> <i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>	The two males seen in July were seen at close range again but were extremely lethargic lying in the shade.
31	<b>Lion</b> <i>Panthera leo</i>	An old female and her 'grandson' seen on our first drive in Marrick. Eleven, a male with three lionesses, two lionesses with four cubs, and an old male, not connected to the pride, seen near a zebra kill on the 17 <sup>th</sup> , A fabulous encounter near an elephant carcass the following day with three males feeding together on the carcass but only after the two younger males had chased off the male and three lionesses from the day before and tried to walk the mature male away from the carcass. On the final morning the three males were seen again around the carcass and two additional males were seen nearby.



**Lions (Richard Webb)**

32	<b>Aardvark</b> <i>Orycteropus afer</i>	Four on the first night drive at Marrick including two apparently sparring like Mad March Hares. Johnny our guide said this had only been witnessed once before and the reason for it was unknown but in volume 1 of the six-volume <b><i>Mammals of Africa</i></b> (Kingdon <i>et al.</i> ) it states that 'On approach they sniff each other vigorously especially around the base of the tail. On contact they occasionally rear up on their hind legs as part of the investigative process. Interactions are short, usually lasting less than 10 minutes' so it may be commoner than he thought. The second night drive was Aardvark-free but another was seen on the third night drive.
33	<b>African (Bush) Elephant</b> <i>Loxodonta africana</i>	Common in Madikwe where we saw up to 200 in a day and had some fantastic encounters with large herds particularly around one waterhole where elephants of all ages from new-born young to old bulls and matriachs drunk, washed, bathed and generally frolicked in the water.
34	<b>Rock Hyrax</b> <i>Procavia capensis</i>	An amazing pick-up by Chris of four on an extremely distant cliff in Suikerbosrand. Another six, much closer but again found by Chris, in Madikwe.
35	<b>Plains Zebra</b> <i>Equus quagga</i>	Small numbers at Marrick (introduced) and common in Suikerbosrand and Madikwe.
36	<b>White Rhinoceros</b> <i>Ceratotherium simum</i>	Seen on all five days in Madikwe with counts of one, 10, 10, three and three.

37	<b>Black Rhinoceros</b> <i>Ceratotherium simum</i>	Great close range views of one on our final afternoon in Madikwe.
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**Black Rhino (Kenny Ross)**

38	<b>Common Warthog</b> <i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>	One at Marrick and up to c.20 on four of our five days in Madikwe.
39	<b>South African Giraffe</b> <i>Giraffa giraffe</i>	Two introduced singles at Marrick and up to 15 daily in Madikwe.
40	<b>African Savanna Buffalo</b> <i>Syncerus caffer</i>	In Madikwe a solitary bull on the morning of the 17 <sup>th</sup> and a small herd of at least eight the same evening. A nice herd of c.35 on our final morning in the park.
41	<b>Zambezi Greater Kudu</b> <i>Tragelaphus zambeziensis</i>	A total of seven at Marrick and up to 10 daily in Madikwe.
42	<b>Eland</b> <i>Taurotragus oryx</i>	A total of 32 in Suikerbosrand were unexpected as we didn't see them here in July.
-	<b>Nyala</b> <i>Tragelaphus angasii</i>	Four introduced animals outside their natural range at Marrick.
43	<b>Cape Bushbuck</b> <i>Tragelaphus sylvaticus</i>	Up to six in the grounds of Madikwe River Lodge each day with a single individual seen along the river near the eastern gate.
-	<b>Sable Antelope</b> <i>Hippotragus niger</i>	Up to 12 introduced animals outside their natural range at Marrick.
44	<b>Gemsbok</b> <i>Oryx gazella</i>	Small numbers on three of the four days at Marrick.
45	<b>Ellipsen Waterbuck</b> <i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>	1-2 seen daily at Madikwe, with one seen in the grounds of the lodge on most days.

46	<b>Mountain Reedbuck</b> <i>Redunca arundinum</i>	Two at Suikerbosrand.
47	<b>Black Wildebeest</b> <i>Connochaetes gnou</i>	Up to c.10 each day at Marrick. Common at Suikerbosrand. Farmed animals also seen on route from Johannesburg to Madikwe.
48	<b>Blue Wildebeest</b> <i>Connochaetes taurinus</i>	Common in Madikwe. Small numbers (introductions outside their natural range) at Marrick.
49	<b>Blesbok</b> <i>Damaliscus phillipsi</i>	Common in Suikerbosrand. Farmed animals also seen on route from Johannesburg to Madikwe.
-	<b>Bontebok</b> <i>Damaliscus pygargus</i>	Up to eight seen daily at Marrick were introduced animals outside their natural range.
50	<b>Red Hartebeest</b> <i>Alcelaphus caama</i>	Up to 18 at Marrick, 16 at Suikerbosrand and four in Madikwe. Farmed animals also seen on route from Johannesburg to Madikwe.
51	<b>Common Impala</b> <i>Aepyceros melampus</i>	Common Madikwe.
52	<b>Kalahari Springbok</b> <i>Antidorcas hofmeyri</i>	Common at Suikerbosrand but only two were seen in Madikwe where they were common in July.
53	<b>South African Springbok</b> <i>Antidorcas marsupialis</i>	Common at Marrick.
54	<b>Transvaal Klipspringer</b> <i>Oreotragus transvaalensis</i>	One on the first afternoon in Madikwe and two in the appropriately named Klipspringer Valley on the 17 <sup>th</sup> ,
55	<b>Steenbok</b> <i>Raphicerus campestris</i>	Three on the second night drive at Marrick and daily counts of 10, three, four and two at Madikwe.
56	<b>Common Duiker</b> <i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>	Two at Marrick on the 9 <sup>th</sup> and singles on the 10 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> .



**African Savanna Hare (Kenny Ross)**



**Black-footed Cats (Cat Rayner)**

## BATS

Allan identified several bats using software he had on his phone although most were only heard and not seen.

		Marrick & Warrenton	Heidelberg	Madikwe
Cape Serotine	<i>Neoromicia capensis</i>	X		X
Egyptian Free-tailed Bat	<i>Tadarida aegyptiaca</i>	X	X	
Natal Long-fingered Bat	<i>Miniopterus natalensis</i>	X		X
African Yellow Bat	<i>Scotophilus dinganii</i>			X
Hildebrandt's Horseshoe Bat	<i>Rhinolophus hildebrandtii</i>			X

## REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

		Marrick & Warrenton	Heidelberg	Madikwe
Brown House Snake	<i>Boaedon capensis complex</i>			
Cape Centipede-Eater	<i>Aparallactus capensis</i>			X
Spotted Bush Snake	<i>Philothamus semivariegatus</i>			X
Puff Adder	<i>Bitis arietans</i>	X		
Striped Skink	<i>Trachylepis striata complex</i>		X	X
Spotted Sand Lizard	<i>Pedioplanis lineocellata</i>			X
Water Monitor	<i>Varanus niloticus</i>	X		X
Southern Rock Agama	<i>Agama atra</i>		X	X
Wahlberg's Velvet Gecko	<i>Homopholis walbergii</i>			X
Bibron's Gecko	<i>Chondrodactylus bibronii</i>	X		
Cape Dwarf Gecko	<i>Lygodactylus capensis</i>			X
Serrated Hinged Terrapin	<i>Pelusios sinuatus</i>			X
Cape Marsh Terrapin	<i>Pelomedusa galeata</i>			X
Leopard Tortoise	<i>Stigmochelys pardalis</i>	X		X



Southern Rock Agama (Kenny Ross)