



Wildwings

WILDWINGS SOUTH AFRICA TOUR

MAMMALS AND BIRDS
4th-14th SEPTEMBER 2017

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Leopard

INTRODUCTION

After the success of the two previous Wildwings' mammal tours to South Africa in 2016 we set off on the 2017 tour with high expectations and we were not to be disappointed. Despite longer than usual grass at Marrick which made spotlighting more difficult we still managed to find most of the species found on the two tours in 2016 plus a couple of real bonuses.

The highlights among the 55 species of mammal seen included:

- A fantastic encounter with a pack of at least eight **African Wild Dogs** with seven three-month old puppies, plus another group of three females later the same day.
- A superb female **Leopard** on our first afternoon in Madikwe, with an awesome encounter with the same individual in the grounds of our lodge, including one of the clients finding her sitting on his balcony on our last evening!
- Our best views of **Aardwolf** to date in Marrick and prolonged views of **Aardvark** at the same location.
- Three **Brown Hyenas** including one for over 30 minutes one afternoon.
- Two **Black-footed Cats** and no fewer than nine (recently-split) **African Wildcats** including a female with three kittens.

- Two male **Cheetahs** and eight or nine **Lions**.
- Two **Spotted-necked Otters** feeding on a fish for over an hour at Warrenton.
- A superb **Black Rhino** and over 20 **White Rhinos** including a boisterous group of nine animals.
- Fabulous views of a **Cape Porcupine** on our last night at Madikwe after surprisingly drawing a blank at Marrick.

On the bird front we saw or heard 216 species with highlights including a African Finfoot at Madikwe, three species of bustard, Double-banded Courser, and Double-banded and Yellow-throated Sandgrouse.

I would like to thank all the group for their good company throughout the trip and for the photographs that accompany this report. In particular thanks to the local guides and drivers who supported us during a great trip. Their efforts were really appreciated by everyone.

Note: all photographs in this report are by Nick Cobb unless otherwise indicated.

Richard Webb
17 September 2017

MAMMALS

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**.

- 1 **Western Rock Sengi** One seen very well at a new location near Marrick.
Elephantulus rupestris



- 2 **Southern African Hedgehog** Great views of one at Marrick on the first night drive and three on the third drive were the first that had been seen at Marrick this spring.
Erinaceus frontalis
- 3 **Chacma Baboon** 60+ at Suikerbosrand, five on the outskirts of Heidelberg and c.5 in Madikwe on the 12th.
Papio ursinus
- 4 **Vervet** Seen around the lodge in small numbers on most days at Madikwe with 16 being seen on the 11th.
Chlorocebus pygerythrus
- 5 **Southern Lesser Galago** Eyeshine leaping around a tree in the grounds of the lodge at Madikwe was sadly the best we could manage this year.
Galago moholi
- 6 **Cape Hare** Two, three and five on the three night drives at Marrick.
Lepus capensis

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| 7 | Scrub Hare
<i>Lepus saxatilis</i> | One, four and three on the three night drives at Marrick. |
| 8 | African Savanna Hare
<i>Lepus microtis</i> | Seen on seven out of the eight drives at Madikwe with a maximum of 17 on the afternoon drive on the 12 th . |
| 9 | South African Ground Squirrel <i>Xerus inauris</i> | Up to 10 on the first two days at Marrick and a maximum count of 10+ at Madikwe on the 13 th . |
| 10 | Tree Squirrel
<i>Paraxerus cepapi</i> | Our first was a largely unappreciated distraction while watching the pack of dogs at Madikwe on the 12 th and Nick saw a further one on the 13 th . |
| 11 | Spring Hare
<i>Pedetes capensis</i> | Common at Marrick and up to five on three of the evening drives in Madikwe. |
| 12 | Cape Porcupine
<i>Hystrix africaeaustralis</i> | One performed superbly at close range on the final evening in Madikwe. Amazingly absent from Marrick where they had not been seen for 16 consecutive nights! |



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| 13 | Four-striped Grass Mouse
<i>Rhabdomys pumillo</i> | A probable at Marrick on the 5 th and another in front of the Kingfisher Hide at Marievale during our lunch stop. |
| 14 | Large-eared (Gerbil) Mouse
<i>Malacothrix typica</i> | One at Marrick on the 6 th . |
| - | Pygmy Mouse sp | Two unidentified individuals seen at Marrick. |
| 15 | Bushveld Gerbil
<i>Gerbilliscus leucogaster</i> | One at Madikwe on the 11 th . |
| 16 | Bat-eared Fox
<i>Otocyon megalotis</i> | Counts of four, five and five on the three night drives at Marrick. |
| 17 | Black-backed Jackal
<i>Canis mesomelas</i> | Two singles at Marrick, one during the day and one at night. A total of five seen over three days at Madikwe including 2-3 around the carcass of a giraffe on our last morning. |

18 African Wild Dog
Lycaon pictus

A fantastic encounter with at least eight adults and seven three-month old puppies in Madikwe on the 12th with another group of three adults the same afternoon. The highlight of the trip for everyone and only the second time that our guide had seen puppies in seven years in the park!



19 Spotted-necked Otter
Lutra maculicollis

Two watched for over an hour eating a fish at Warrenton with a probable third seen briefly. Brief sightings of single otters at Marievale, initially by Richard and Ruth, and later in the day by Janty and Nick were also thought to be Spotted-necked Otters based on Nick's photos.

- 20 Banded Mongoose**
Mungos mungo Three seen in the grounds of the lodge at Madikwe on the 12th.
- 21 Slender Mongoose**
Herpestes sanguineus One seen by Johnny at Marrick on the 5th, another briefly on the 6th on the way back from the sengi site near Marrick, and a third brief sighting in Madikwe on the 11th.
- 22 Common Dwarf Mongoose**
Helogale parvula Only one brief sighting this year of a single animal on the drive into Madikwe.
- 23 Yellow Mongoose**
Cynictis penicillata Surprisingly scarce this year with two at Marrick on the 4th and one on the 5th, and two briefly in Suikerbosrand on the 9th.
- Meerkat**
Suricata suricatta Only seen around the lodge at Marrick this year where the 'rescued' pair present in 2016 had raised nine young.
- 24 Small-spotted Genet**
Genetta genetta In Madikwe one seen well on the 12th and further unidentified genets on the 10th and 12th.
- 25 Spotted Hyena**
Crocuta crocuta At Madikwe heard around the lodge on most nights. On the 10th one seen during the late afternoon lazing under an acacia with three seen on the move later that evening. On the final morning at least six in the vicinity of a dead giraffe giving everyone great views.
- 26 Brown Hyena**
Hyaena brunnea Two seen well but relatively briefly on our first evening in Madikwe and great views of another for over 30 minutes on our third afternoon in the park.



- 27 Aardwolf**
Proteles cristata Two singles seen on both the first and third night drives at Marrick with one individual giving everyone great views as it posed for the photographers. Our best views of the species to date.
- 28 African Wildcat**
Felis silvestris lybica This recently split species was extremely common this year. At Marrick one was seen briefly on the first night drive but the third night drive produced seven all of which were seen well, particularly an adult with three kittens watched for over 15 minutes. At Marrick singles were seen on the 11th and 13th, the latter showing well.



29 Black-footed Cat
Felis nigripes

More difficult than on previous tours due to the unusually long grass at Marrick this year but seen on the first and third night drives with the latter showing well. One was also seen by four of the group on an extra drive the night before the rest of the group arrived.

30 Cheetah
Acinonyx jubatus

Two males were seen well near the main gate on our second afternoon in Madikwe. They appeared to be different animals to the two males seen on the two tours in 2016.



31 Lion
Panthera leo

In Madikwe two well-fed males near one of the waterholes on the 10th, an amorous pair on the way back from the Cheetahs on the 11th, and a single female, and a group of four lionesses near another waterhole on the 13th.

32 Leopard
Panthera pardus

Great prolonged views of a young female at close range on our first afternoon at Madikwe. An even better experience on our final evening when one was found in the lodge grounds just as we were about to get off the vehicle. We watched her at close range for about 15 minutes before she was disturbed by another jeep and disappeared behind the lodge only for Nick to find her sitting on his balcony minutes later and for me to re-find her in the lodge grounds 10 minutes later. Not seen on either of the 2016 tours and one of the highlights of the trip.



- 33 **Aardvark**
Orycteropus afer Excellent views of one on the first night drive at Marrick. One was also seen by four of the group on an extra drive the night before the rest of the group arrived.
- 34 **African (Bush) Elephant**
Loxodonta africana Seen on all eight drives at Madikwe with a maximum of 30+ on the 11th.
- 35 **Plains Zebra**
Equus quagga Common at Suikerbosrand and Madikwe with reintroduced animals also seen at Marrick.
- 36 **White Rhinoceros**
Ceratotherium simum At Madikwe, one seen at the lodge on the 10th, a group of six on the 11th, four on the 12th, thirteen on the 13th and one on the 14th. The thirteen on the 13th included a superb group of nine animals including jousting between a number of the individuals.





37	Black Rhinoceros <i>Diceros bicornis</i>	Nice views of one showing at close range in Madikwe on the 11 th .
38	Common Warthog <i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>	Unusually scarce this year with a maximum of 14 in Madikwe on the 11 th , most sightings being around the river at the lodge.
39	South African Giraffe <i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>	Up to 10 per day seen at Madikwe with four introduced animals at Marrick on the 4 th .
40	African (Savanna) Buffalo <i>Syncerus caffer</i>	A fabulous herd of at least 220 animals in Madikwe on the 13 th .
41	Zambezi (Greater) Kudu <i>Tragelaphus zambeziensis</i>	Up to 20 per day at Madikwe including some fine bulls.
42	Eland <i>Taurotragus oryx</i>	One at Eendracht Road at Suikerbosrand on the 7 th was the only wild one seen, although farmed herds were seen on route to Madikwe.
43	Cape Bushbuck <i>Tragelaphus sylvaticus</i>	Up to six in and around the lodge at Madikwe on most days.
44	Gemsbok <i>Oryx gazella</i>	Only one seen by Pat on the drive into Madikwe.
45	Ellipsen Waterbuck <i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>	Up to 10 seen on all five days at Madikwe including one disturbing Derek and Helen's swim at the rock pool in the lodge grounds. Most were seen drinking just outside the lodge grounds during the heat of the day.
46	Black Wildebeest <i>Connochaetes gnou</i>	50+ Suikerbosrand with 60+ including reintroduced animals at Marrick.
47	Blue Wildebeest <i>Connochaetes taurinus</i>	Small numbers seen every day at Marrick.
48	Blesbok <i>Damaliscus pygargus</i>	20+ Eendracht Road near Suikerbosrand on the 7 th and 20+ at Suikerbosrand on the 9 th .
49	Red Hartebeest <i>Alcelaphus caama</i>	Three seen in Suikerbosrand on the 9 th and nine in Madikwe on the 13 th . Reintroduced animals at Marrick and on the drive to Warrenton.
50	Common Impala <i>Aepyceros melampus</i>	Common Madikwe.
51	Kalahari Springbok <i>Antidorcas hofmeyri</i>	Up to five on two days in Madikwe.

52	South African Springbok <i>Antidorcas marsupialis</i>	Two Suikerbosrand and reintroduced animals each day in and around Marrick.
53	Transvaal Klipspringer <i>Oreotragus transvaalensis</i>	Three, two adults and a young one, in Madikwe on the 13 th .
54	Steenbok <i>Raphicerus campestris</i>	Up to four every day at Marrick, and up to six per day at Madikwe.
55	Common Duiker <i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>	Two, three and one on the three night drives at Marrick.

Introduced species seen outside their natural range at Marrick.

- **Nyala** *Tragelaphus angasii*
- **Roan Antelope** *Hippotragus equinus*
- **Sable Antelope** *Hippotragus niger*



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