

Wildwings

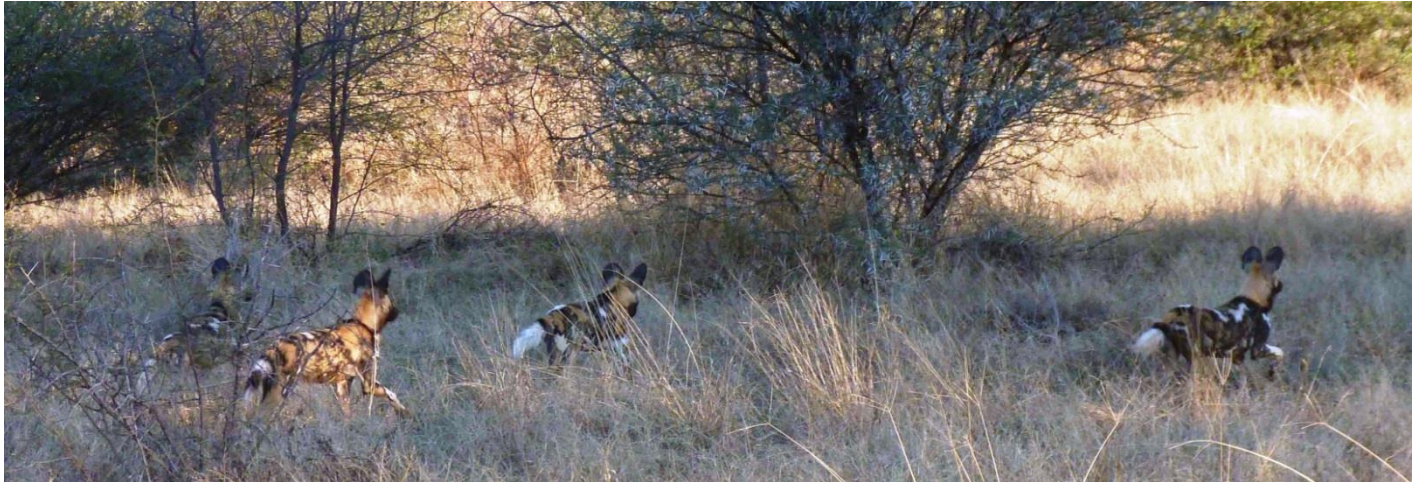
## WILDWINGS SOUTH AFRICA TOUR

**MAMMALS AND BIRDS**  
**5<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018**

**LEADER – RICHARD WEBB**

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**African Wild Dogs (Mervyn Griffin)**

## INTRODUCTION

After the success of the first three Wildwings' mammal tours to South Africa we set off on the 2018 tour with high hopes and once again we were not to be disappointed despite extremely inclement unseasonal weather at Marrick where night time temperatures fell to below zero on two nights. This was particularly surprising given that it was 32C when we arrived in Kimberley on the 5th. The cold night time temperatures meant that South African Hedgehogs had not emerged from hibernation and small rodents were non-existent. We managed to see a record 58 species of mammal. We also saw an additional four introduced ungulates at Marrick that are outside their natural range, i.e. **Sable, Roan, Bontebok** and **Nyala**. Species not seen on the three previous tours included a superb **Caracal** and for some people **Small Grey** and **Marsh Mongooses**. The highlights included:

- A superb **Caracal** in Suikerbosrand.
- Another fantastic encounter with a group of five **African Wild Dogs** which chased off two **Brown Hyenas**.
- No fewer than nine different **Brown Hyenas**.
- A female **Leopard** walking along the river bank near our lodge in Madikwe on the last afternoon.
- Even better views of **Aardwolf** than in 2017 with four being seen in total at Marrick and Madikwe.
- Two **Aardvarks** at Marrick with another being stalked briefly by two **Lionesses** in Madikwe.
- Excellent views of a **Black-footed Cat** at Marrick.
- Four **Cheetahs** including two on a recently killed kudu.
- Both **Cape Clawless** and **Spotted-necked Otters** at Warrenton.
- **Black Rhino** and over 30 **White Rhinos** at Madikwe.

The full trip report including the checklists of birds and reptiles seen on the tour, day-by-day accounts and further photos is available on the Wildwings' website [www.wildwings.co.uk](http://www.wildwings.co.uk).

Richard Webb  
18 September 2018





**Aardvark (Anita Lloyd)**



**Karoo Rock Sengi (Anita Lloyd)**



**Red Hartebeest (Mervyn Griffin)**



**Caracal (Anita Lloyd)**





**African Wild Dogs (Anita Lloyd/Fiona McHugh)**



**Cheetah (Anita Lloyd, top left and bottom / Fiona McHugh top right)**





**Brown Hyaenas (Fiona McHugh)**



**Aardwolf (Anita Lloyd)**

## 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**. In addition **African Wildcat** has recently been split by the IUCN Cat Specialist Group.

The list excludes the four introduced ungulates at Marrick which are outside their natural range:

**Nyala** *Tragelaphus angasii*, **Sable** *Hippotragus niger*, **Roan** *Hippotragus equinus* and **Bontebok** *Damaliscus pygargus*

<b>1</b>	<b>Karoo Rock Sengi</b> <i>Elephantulus pilicaudus</i>	One sheltering from the elements on a kjoie at Marrick with another seen briefly on an adjacent kjoie. Previously thought to be Western Rock Sengi <i>E. rupestris</i> .
<b>2</b>	<b>Chacma Baboon</b> <i>Papio ursinus</i>	Common at Suikerbosrand, small numbers on three days in Madikwe and a small number in Pilanesburg National Park, seen from the main road on the drive back to Johannesburg from Madikwe.

3	<b>Vervet</b> <i>Chlorocebus pygerythrus</i>	Small numbers seen daily around the lodge, particularly around the restaurant, on most days at Madikwe.
4	<b>Southern Lesser Galago</b> <i>Galago moholi</i>	Eyeshine from one close to the reception at Madikwe on the first night was slightly disappointing but everyone was able to enjoy a showy individual the following night.
5	<b>Cape Hare</b> <i>Lepus capensis</i>	Seen on all three night drives at Marick with a maximum of 10+ on the pre-dawn drive on the 7th.
6	<b>African Savanna Hare</b> <i>Lepus microtis</i>	Exceptional numbers at Madikwe this year with 25+ on three of the four night drives.
7	<b>Scrub Hare</b> <i>Lepus saxatilis</i>	Up to five each day at Marrick.
8	<b>South African Ground Squirrel</b> <i>Xerus inauris</i>	Up to c.20 each day at Marrick and common in Madikwe this year.
9	<b>Tree Squirrel</b> <i>Paraxerus cepapi</i>	A much better year for this species at Madikwe with Kevin seeing one on the 11 <sup>th</sup> , two being seen on the 12 <sup>th</sup> and an exceptional eight being seen on the 13 <sup>th</sup> .
10	<b>Spring Hare</b> <i>Pedetes capensis</i>	Abundant at Marrick and up to three on three of the evening drives in Madikwe.
11	<b>Cape Porcupine</b> <i>Hystrix africaeaustralis</i>	Two on the first night drive at Marrick and another three on the final drive there.
12	<b>Bat-eared Fox</b> <i>Otocyon megalotis</i>	Counts of five, five and three on the three days at Marrick.
13	<b>Black-backed Jackal</b> <i>Canis mesomelas</i>	Three at Marrick on the 5th and three on the 7th. One at Eendracht Road on the 8th and a total of seven seen on four of the days at Madikwe.
14	<b>African Wild Dog</b> <i>Lycaon pictus</i>	Another great encounter with five young members of a pack of 14 at Madikwe shortly after dawn on the 12 <sup>th</sup> . Better still was being able to see their reaction to nearby <b>Brown Hyaenas</b> , the five dogs chasing off one hyaena and then returning to chase off the other.
15	<b>Cape Clawless Otter</b> <i>Aonyx capensis</i>	Three spotted by Anita minutes after our arrival at Warrenton gave everyone good views but sadly disappeared quickly although one was seen again briefly half an hour or so later.
16	<b>Spotted-necked Otter</b> <i>Lutra maculicollis</i>	One seen for a couple of minutes by five of the group at Warrenton a couple of hours after our encounter with <b>Cape Clawless Otters</b> . The animal was clearly seen and behaved very differently to the clawless otters feeding among the water hyacinths of a slower-flowing stretch of the river rather than fishing in the open waters.
17	<b>Small Grey Mongoose</b> <i>Herpestes pulverulentus</i>	One seen by Kevin and Fiona near the lodge at Marrick on the 6 <sup>th</sup> .
18	<b>Marsh Mongoose</b> <i>Atilax paludinosus</i>	One seen briefly along Eendracht Road. A first for the tour.
19	<b>Slender Mongoose</b> <i>Herpestes sanguineus</i>	One at Marrick on the 7 <sup>th</sup> , one in the grounds of Heidelberg Kloof Lodge on the 8 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> , one briefly at Marievale on the 9 <sup>th</sup> and another crossing the road as we drove to the lodge in Madikwe on the 10 <sup>th</sup> .
20	<b>Common Dwarf Mongoose</b> <i>Helogale parvula</i>	A nice group of 10 watched for some time on our last afternoon in Madikwe.

21	<b>Yellow Mongoose</b> <i>Cynictis penicillata</i>	7+ at Marrick on the 5th and one there on the 6th, two at Marievale on the 9th, with one at Heidelberg Kloof Lodge and 5+ at Suikerbosrand on the 10th.
22	<b>Meerkat</b> <i>Suricata suricatta</i>	A group of c.20 seen distantly in Suikerbosrand and the habituated group around the lodge at Marrick as usual.
23	<b>Small-spotted Genet</b> <i>Genetta genetta</i>	Two at Marrick on the 5th with one showing well as it climbed a tree and one showing well in a tree at Madikwe on the 13th with a second probable being seen on the same drive.
24	<b>Common Large-spotted Genet</b> <i>Genetta maculata</i>	A genet at Madikwe on the 11 <sup>th</sup> appeared to be this species seemingly having a black-tipped tail and larger darker spotting than the other genets seen.
25	<b>Spotted Hyaena</b> <i>Crocuta crocuta</i>	Astonishingly only seen by Kevin this year and only during the middle of the night when small groups crossed the river near his chalet. Three were seen at 0400 on the 12 <sup>th</sup> and groups of six and four on the night of the 12 <sup>th</sup> /13 <sup>th</sup> . Heard by other members of the group on the same nights.
26	<b>Brown Hyaena</b> <i>Hyaena brunnea</i>	In complete contrast to its normally commoner relative Brown Hyaenas were incredibly common at Madikwe this year with a minimum of nine different individuals being seen. On the 11 <sup>th</sup> one was seen at dusk with another seen while spotlighting an hour or so later. On the 12 <sup>th</sup> Kevin had one by the restaurant just before 0500 as he headed to the restaurant for the early morning drive. What was assumed to be the same individual crossed the river near his chalet on two other nights. On the same day two seen near the southern boundary of the park were individually chased up into the hills by five <b>African Wild Dogs</b> . On the 13 <sup>th</sup> two separate individuals were seen as we headed back the lodge at dusk. Finally on the 14 <sup>th</sup> two, probably sub-adult animals were seen 30 minutes after dawn as we drove towards the western gate.
27	<b>Aardwolf</b> <i>Proteles cristata</i>	One seen relatively briefly at Marrick on the 5 <sup>th</sup> . Good views of one in Madikwe on the 11 <sup>th</sup> , brief views of another on the 13 <sup>th</sup> and superb views of the fourth of the trip as we drove back to the lodge on the 14 <sup>th</sup> .
28	<b>African Wildcat</b> <i>Felis lybica</i>	An adult and a juvenile were briefly seen at Marrick on the 7th, an even briefer sighting of one at Madikwe on the 11th and another showing much better prior to dawn on the 12th.
29	<b>Black-footed Cat</b> <i>Felis nigripes</i>	Only one seen at Madikwe this year but seen very well prior to dawn on the 7 <sup>th</sup> . The loss of one night drive to heavy rain and the extremely cold conditions on the subsequent drives certainly didn't help as there was a distinct lack of rodent activity at Marrick while we were there.
30	<b>Cheetah</b> <i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>	Two males on the remains of a young kudu near the southern boundary of Madikwe on the 12 <sup>th</sup> with two different males lazing by a waterhole in the north-west of the park the following evening. Also two radio-collared 'rescued' animals outside the reserve on a neighbouring property were seen admiring the <b>Common Impala</b> on the Madikwe side of the fence.
31	<b>Caracal</b> <i>Caracal caracal</i>	One spotted close to the road in Suikerbosrand stayed there long enough for the minibus to reverse and for everyone to get good views before it bolted up the hillside. Judging from its appearance it seemed to be a large male. One of the highlights of the trip and a first for the Wildwings' South Africa tour.
32	<b>Lion</b> <i>Panthera leo</i>	In Madikwe a pride of seven late on the first afternoon and two lionesses with a large male in tow briefly stalking an Aardvark later in the evening.
33	<b>Leopard</b> <i>Panthera pardus</i>	A female seen walking along the river bank near the lodge in Madikwe on the final afternoon.

34	<b>Aardvark</b> <i>Orycteropus afer</i>	Excellent views of one on the first night drive at Marrick and even closer views of another which exploded out of a termite mound later the same evening and immediately disappeared down a burrow where we were able to watch it digging furiously. Another being briefly stalked by two <b>lionesses</b> at Madikwe was unfortunately only visible to two or three of the group.
35	<b>African (Bush) Elephant</b> <i>Loxodonta africana</i>	Seen in small numbers on all eight drives at Madikwe.
36	<b>Rock Hyrax</b> <i>Procavia capensis</i>	Three at Marrick on the 6 <sup>th</sup> . 1-2 daily in the grounds of Heidelberg Kloof Lodge and 4+ in Klipspringer valley at Madikwe on the 13 <sup>th</sup> . Not seen at all in 2017
37	<b>Plains Zebra</b> <i>Equus quagga</i>	Common at Suikerbosrand (including small numbers at Eendracht Road) and Madikwe, particularly in the west of the park, with reintroduced animals also seen at Marrick.
38	<b>White Rhinoceros</b> <i>Ceratotherium simum</i>	Another good year at Madikwe with one on the 11th, four on the 12th, eight on the 13th, 17 on the 14th including one group of six, and four on the 15th, with very little duplication of individuals. A minimum of 31 individuals.
39	<b>Black Rhinoceros</b> <i>Diceros bicornis</i>	One seen briefly but well by most of the group at dusk on our final afternoon in Madikwe thanks to Benson's refusal to accept defeat. Benson's off-track rallying to try to re-find was also an experience.
40	<b>Common Warthog</b> <i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>	Three at Marrick on the 3rd and up to 10 daily in Madikwe.
41	<b>South African Giraffe</b> <i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>	Up to 20 per day seen at Madikwe with four introduced animals at Marrick on the 6 <sup>th</sup> .
42	<b>African (Savanna) Buffalo</b> <i>Syncerus caffer</i>	Just one group of four bulls at Madikwe on the 12 <sup>th</sup> with a recently introduced group also being seen at Madikwe.
43	<b>Zambezi (Greater) Kudu</b> <i>Tragelaphus zambeziensis</i>	Nine at Marrick over the three days there, four in Suikerbosrand and seen daily in Madikwe with a maximum count of at least 18 on the 14th.
44	<b>Eland</b> <i>Taurotragus oryx</i>	Three in Marrick on the 6th, 30+ in Suikerbosrand on the 10th, five in Marrick on the 14th and two seen by Richard in a private game reserve near Pretoria on the drive back to Johannesburg from Madikwe.
45	<b>Cape Bushbuck</b> <i>Tragelaphus sylvaticus</i>	Up to five in and around the lodge at Madikwe every day.
46	<b>Gemsbok</b> <i>Oryx gazella</i>	A better year than in 2017 with a total of at least eight at Marrick over the three days, one at Madikwe on the 13 <sup>th</sup> with at least three on the 14 <sup>th</sup> .
47	<b>Ellipsen Waterbuck</b> <i>Kobus ellipsiprymnus</i>	At Madikwe two on the 12 <sup>th</sup> and 13 <sup>th</sup> and at least 14 including young animals around the river crossing near the lodge on the 14 <sup>th</sup> while we looked for the <b>Leopard</b> . One in Pilanesburg National Park, seen from the main road on the drive back to Johannesburg from Madikwe.
48	<b>Mountain Reedbuck</b> <i>Redunca fulvorufula</i>	Two at Marrick.
49	<b>Black Wildebeest</b> <i>Connochaetes gnou</i>	Large numbers encountered in Suikerbosrand both in the hills and on the plains areas, with another 50+ including introduced animals at Marrick.
50	<b>Blue Wildebeest</b> <i>Connochaetes taurinus</i>	Small numbers seen every day at Marrick with the largest numbers in the western parts of the park on the 14th. Introduced animals outside their natural range were also seen at Marrick.
52	<b>Blesbok</b> <i>Damaliscus pygargus</i>	Eight at Marrick and common in Suikerbosrand.
52	<b>Red Hartebeest</b> <i>Alcelaphus caama</i>	Common in Suikerbosrand on the 9 <sup>th</sup> and three in the west of Madikwe on the 14 <sup>th</sup> . Reintroduced animals at Marrick.



53	<b>Common Impala</b> <i>Aepyceros melampus</i>	Common at Madikwe with small numbers in Marrick.
54	<b>Kalahari Springbok</b> <i>Antidorcas hofmeyri</i>	Only a single in Madikwe this year.
55	<b>South African Springbok</b> <i>Antidorcas marsupialis</i>	Small numbers Suikerbosrand and reintroduced animals each day in and around Marrick.
56	<b>Transvaal Klipspringer</b> <i>Oreotragus transvaalensis</i>	Two in Klipspringer Valley in Madikwe on the 13 <sup>th</sup> .
57	<b>Steenbok</b> <i>Raphicerus campestris</i>	Two distantly at Eendracht Road on the 9 <sup>th</sup> and up to eight per day at Madikwe. None at Marrick this year.
58	<b>Common Duiker</b> <i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>	Two at Marrick on the 5 <sup>th</sup> and 2+ on the 7 <sup>th</sup> . Singles in Suikerbosrand on the 10 <sup>th</sup> and in Madikwe on the 11 <sup>th</sup> .



**Southern African Giraffe (Fiona McHugh)**

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