

SOUTH AFRICAN FLOWERS & FEATHERS: BIRDING TOUR

**SOUTHERN SKY
ADVENTURES**
AFRICA...IN YOUR WILDEST DREAMS.



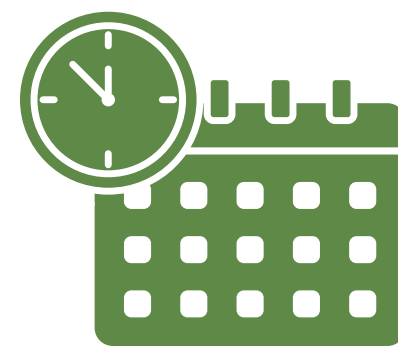
**100% Tailor
Made
Itineraries**



Availability: During
August -
September



www.southernskyadventures.com



12 Days / 11 Nights



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We will also visit the Carnarvon area where the Kalahari, Karoo and Bushmanland come together, resulting in some incredible biodiversity. While here, we will link up with local biodiversity experts. The estimated total distance travelled will be about 3 000km, but daily travel will be limited to between 300km and 400km.



A circular inset image showing a dish of yellow rice with red lentils and a brown sauce, garnished with green leaves, served in a brown ceramic dish.

A man wearing a tan cap, sunglasses, and a dark jacket is standing in a grassy field. He is holding a surveying instrument mounted on a tripod. The image is framed by a large orange circle. Below the circle, the text "Expert guide:" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Flower filled fields

Day to Day

Day 1

Arrive in Cape Town and spend your first day immersed in the exquisite beauty of Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens. An oasis of nature and birding in the middle of the vibrant city. With over 100 bird species recorded, this is one of the top birding areas in Cape town. While walking the "Boomslang aerial boardwalk" ('Boomslang' meaning 'tree snake') you might see birds such as the Olive thrush, Cape White-eye, Swee Waxbill, Cape Sugarbird, Malachite Sunbird and Olive Woodpecker. Spend your first night in South Africa settling in and be lulled to sleep by the calming waves.



Day 2

We catch a morning flight from Cape Town International Airport to Bram Fischer International Airport, Bloemfontein, from where we will travel to the Khoisan Karoo Conservancy. We should arrive in time to settle in to our comfortable accommodation before enjoying a light lunch. Here, we will be in for a truly amazing Karoo experience; the tranquillity of this place is unforgettable, as is the hospitality of our hosts, PC and Marisca Ferreira. We will be treated to an afternoon nature drive, where we may witness flocks of Blue Cranes flying in to roost at sunset, followed by a sumptuous Karoo dinner. After dinner we will head out for a night drive to look for the elusive nocturnal 'Shy 5' such as Aardvark, Aardwolf, Bat-eared Fox, Porcupine and the diminutive Black-footed Cat.

Day 4

We will enjoy a full day immersing ourselves in the floral bounty and beauty of this area. This will include a visit to the local Hantam National Botanical Garden on the outskirts of town and travelling the back roads to the nearby waterfall and Quiver Tree Forest. We will also keep a look out for birds such as the Malachite Sunbird and Cape Weaver, butterflies (like the Painted Lady) and other interesting biodiversity. After what promises to be a thrilling day, we will again enjoy a pleasant dinner at a local restaurant before returning to our Guest House for a good night's rest.



Day 3

After an early morning game/birding drive we will enjoy a hearty breakfast. Then we will depart for Nieuwoudtville, the 'bulb capital of the world', hosting the highest density of bulb plants per square metre in the world. Following our arrival, there should be ample time for us to spend the afternoon exploring the village and its immediate surrounds to take in the wonderful spectacle of the area's unique plants in flower. The floral richness is unparalleled and, unlike the summer rainfall areas of the country which are still dry and brown with very low levels of bird activity apparent, this winter rainfall area, in contrast, is abuzz with birds busily displaying and breeding, decked out in their finest colours.



Day 5

We will spend another day enjoying the incredible floral diversity, landscapes and birdlife of this amazing area. During the morning we will visit the Kliprand area to the north-east of Nieuwoudtville, which is host to some very special endemic bird species such as Ludwig's Bustard, Red Lark, Karoo Eremomela, Cinnamon-breasted Warbler and Black-eared Sparrow Lark. In seasons of good winter rainfall, this area in particular is a must for displaying birds at the peak of their breeding activities.



Day 6

We leave Nieuwoudtville during the late morning, heading west and descending the Bokkeveld escarpment via the spectacular Van Rhyn's Pass to the lower-lying Knersvlakte and the town of Vanrhynsdorp. This area hosts an extraordinary botanical heritage ranging from the blooming 'vygieveld' in Spring to the eccentric miniature succulents and obscure soil lichens of the Knersvlakte. Between the white quartz pebbles are about 1500 plant species, with 190 endemic to the Knersvlakte, of which 155 are threatened with extinction. These plants represent one of the world's most unique collections of plant species. Our comfortable accommodation for the next 3 nights will be at Botuin Cottages & Olive Farm, situated on the outskirts of Vanrhynsdorp.

Day 8

Today we will head south towards Clanwilliam, before heading over the Pakhuis Pass in the Cederburg Mountains and on to the Biedouw Valley with its carpets of colourful spring flowers. After taking in this natural spectacle, we travel west along the Paleisheuvel Road, where we will search for the endemic Protea Canary. This is all en route to Lambert's Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, where we will enjoy not only the display of the local Cape Gannet breeding colony, but also a tasty seafood lunch, together with a glass or two of local wine.



Day 7

We will spend the day exploring the natural wonders of this area. These include the nearby Gifberg ('Poison Mountain') landmark, named after the endemic, poisonous tree species that grow only here. Further incredible plant diversity and spectacular mountain views await us. We may also experience the quartz pebble plains of the Knersvlakte, with its amazing miniature succulents. We will keep a lookout for many of the special birds of this area, including the endemic Black Harrier, Ludwig's Bustard, Karoo Korhaan, Karoo Lark, Cape Clapper Lark, Cape Long-billed Lark, Karoo Chat and Layard's Warbler (Tit-Babbler).

Day 9

After breakfast we leave Vanrhynsdorp and start our return journey east, past Nieuwoudtville, heading to the town of Carnarvon which is located at the intersection of the Kalahari, Karoo and Bushmanland. This will be a rare opportunity to experience not only some of the fascinating biodiversity that calls this area home, but also wonderful rural peace, tranquillity and vast open spaces. We will arrive in the early afternoon, with ample time to relax and take in the calmness of the surrounding areas.

Depending on circumstances, we may go on a slow night drive, searching for nocturnal creatures such as geckos, snakes, spiders and scorpions.

Day 11

After enjoying a hearty breakfast we bid farewell to Carnarvon and return to Khoisan Karoo Conservancy to spend another night with the wonderful PC & Marisca Ferreira. On the evening drive, we might have yet another chance to encounter some of the mysterious nocturnal 'Shy 5'; one of these being the Aardvark, which is an insectivorous mammal. Some say it looks like they were made from parts of other animals, including a pig-like nose, rabbit-like ears and a tail resembling that of a kangaroo.

Day to Day

Day 10

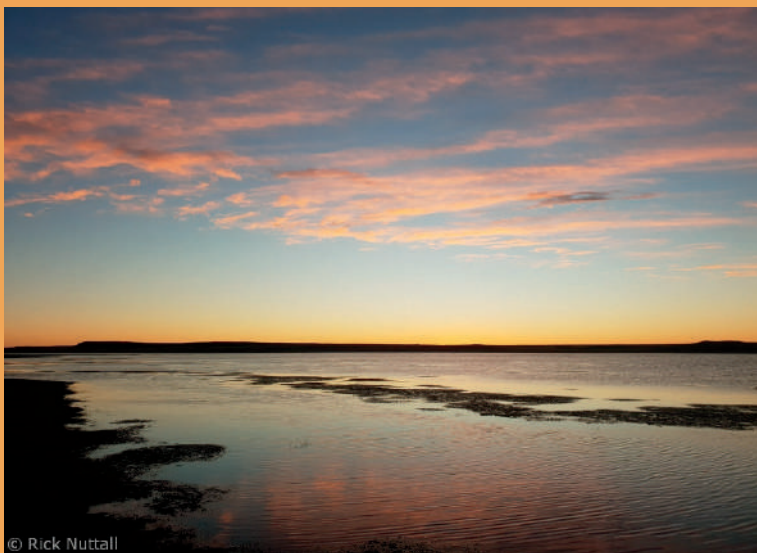
Today we enjoy this remote Karoo destination. It offers a variety of interesting shrubs, known as 'Karoo Bossies', with breathtaking views of windmills and Karoo hills, rolling as far as the eye can see.

For such a small town, there are a number of culinary options, from the iconic Karoo lamb to pizza and steak.

Day 12

After enjoying a generous breakfast, we bid farewell to our wonderful hosts and Khoisan Karoo Conservancy, Hanover, and return to Bloemfontein, where our tour ends. We should arrive no later than 14h00.

After this amazing experience, we all head home.





Aardvark



Aardwolf



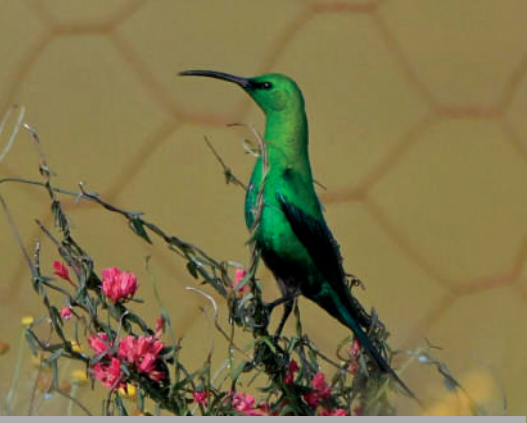
Cape Porcupine



Black-footed Cat



Bat-eared Fox



Malachite Sunbird



Giant Ground Gecko



Karoo Korhaan



Cinnamon-breasted Warbler



Cape Gannet



Black-eared Sparrow Lark



Cape Clapper Lark



Blue Korhaan



Painted Lady



Black Harrier

Included

- 1-night stay at Monkey Valley Beach Nature Resort
- 2-night stay at Karoo Gariep New Holme Karoo Guest House on a Half-Board+ basis (dinner, bed, breakfast & selected activities)
- 3-nights stay at Linda Se Dop (D,B&B)
- 3-night stay at Botuin Cottages (Self-catering)
- 2-night stay at Lord Carnarvon Guest House (B&B)
- Ground transfers
- Selected activities
- Full day guides

Excluded

- Dinners at Botuin Cottages and Lord Carnarvon Guest House
- All lunches
- All meals at Botuin Cottages
- Items of a personal nature
- International flights



South African Ground Squirrel



Scaly-feathered Weaver



Namaqua Sandgrouse



Blue Crane



Red Lark

WHY SOUTH AFRICA?



South Africa, on the continent's southern tip, is the 25th-largest country in the world – slightly less than twice the size of Texas. It boasts a lengthy coastline, stretching more than 1,500 miles along two oceans, the South Atlantic on the west and the Indian on the south and east. South Africa is neighboured by Namibia in the northwest, Zimbabwe and Botswana in the north, with Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho in the northeast.

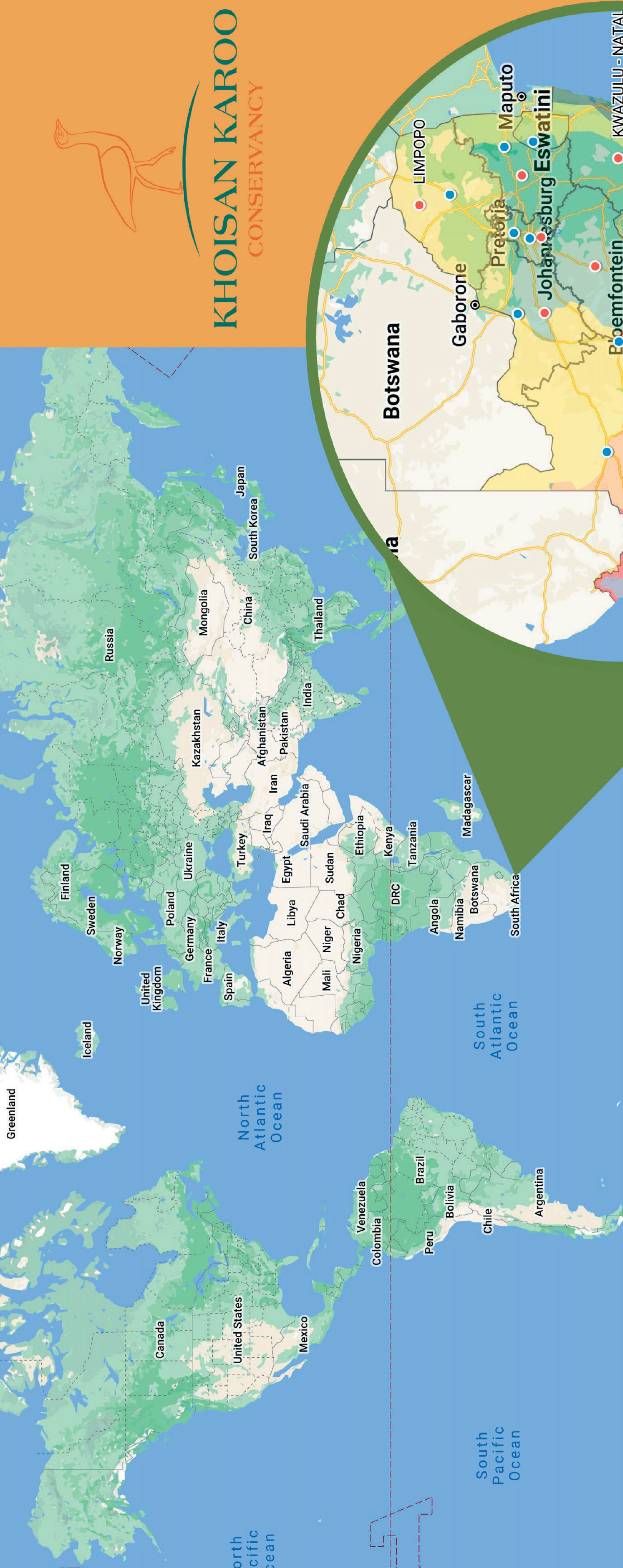
Its natural beauty and scenic wonders are legendary, from its soaring mountain peaks and passes, dense and ancient forests, to its miles of unspoiled coastline and rolling flower fields and grasslands of every hue. South Africa truly offers something to lift everyone's spirits.

South Africa is known as the adventure capital of the world. Whether it's seeing the big game animals, diving with Great White Sharks, death defying adventure sports or discovering the humanity and generosity of other cultures. Game viewing and safari in South Africa is as up-close and wild as it gets. Almost anywhere you travel in South Africa you will experience an overwhelming abundance of nature, wildlife, culture, adventure, heritage and good vibes.

One of the world's most captivating cities, Cape Town – and the Cape Peninsula up to Cape Point – are famous for its scenic beauty and celebrity beaches, 3,500 foot Table Mountain rising above the city, whale-watching, world-class shopping, nightlife, food & wine, and a laid-back atmosphere. Indeed, with wine regions stretching from the Western to the far Northern Cape and the edge of the Karoo, one can almost taste their way around South Africa.

South Africa's 'City of Gold' is Johannesburg, which pulsates with an African heartbeat felt in its endless opportunities for shopping, entertainment, freedom tours and eating out, while the world-renowned Kruger National Park is as large as Massachusetts, and consists of nearly 5 million acres and features 16 ecosystems.

When it's time to plan the most exotic golf getaway imaginable, think South Africa. The quintet of Sun City, Johannesburg, Cape Town, the Garden Route and Durban will provide the trip of a lifetime and memories for a lifetime too.



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***All itineraries can be adjusted/customised to suit your specific needs**

***Contact us to enquire about special student deals**

Photos were provided by Rick Nuttall, Jamie Paterson, Pc Ferreira and Southern Sky Adventures , unless otherwise indicated.

ABOUT Us

Southern Sky Adventures

For almost two decades Southern Sky Adventures has introduced discerning travellers to the sheer magnificence of AFRICA. A land of warm welcomes, breath-taking sunsets, pristine wilderness areas and diversity as colourful as the local artwork.

Our tailormade- and expertly-guided safaris showcase Africa's finest hidden gems, the elusive BIG 5, wild remote locations and a natural space to unplug from the stress of modern day living. We pride ourselves on the delivery of exceptional, once-in-a-lifetime and truly memorable travel experiences for not only families, honeymooners and friends but also business travellers, school- & university groups and adventure seekers.

Although passionate about travel, we care deeply for the preservation of these untouched wild areas, the inhabiting wildlife and the surrounding communities.

Sit back, relax and allow our team of destination specialists to design and deliver your dream vacation!



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Khoisan Karoo Conservancy

KhoiSan Karoo Conservancy includes the Karoo Gariep Nature Reserve and the Hanover Aardvark Nature Reserve. New Holme Nature Lodge is the main lodge at Karoo Gariep Nature Reserve with Stoffels Rus and Karoo Gariep tented camp as additional accommodation options.

At Karoo Gariep Nature reserve we offer a variety of activities, from bird watching, night drives, a 3-day horse trail, fishing and mountain biking. On these two Reserves we also host and organize eight different events per year. We have four social- and two nature orientated projects we initiate under the Karoo Gariep Wildlife Conservation and Rhino Project (NPO).

Come and enjoy the finest the Karoo has to offer.



**Khoisan Karoo
Conservancy**



www.khoisankaroo.co.za



**@khoisankaroo
conservancy**

Rick Nuttall Birding & Nature

Rick Nuttall has been sharing his knowledge and passion for birds with like-minded people from a young age. His MSc degree involved behaviour studies of waxbills and their close relatives (Estrildid finches). Rick joined the National Museum, Bloemfontein, as Ornithologist in 1991, undertaking research for ten years before his appointment as Director, a position held until November 2017.

Rick has authored scientific, semi-scientific and popular ornithological publications and contributes regularly to national bird monitoring and citizen science projects. He has led small group birding trips in South Africa and Lesotho on occasion since 1993 and has travelled widely in Southern Africa; he now leads general nature- and birding tours full time. An avid amateur photographer and sound recordist, Rick is fascinated by the natural sound environment and always has his recording equipment at hand when he is out and about. He has been recording birds and their sounds since the early 1980s and has a particular interest in vocal imitation or mimicry, an aspect of avian behaviour prevalent in a surprising number of bird species.



**Rick Nuttall Birding & Nature
Adventures**



@ricknuttall_birding_and_nature