

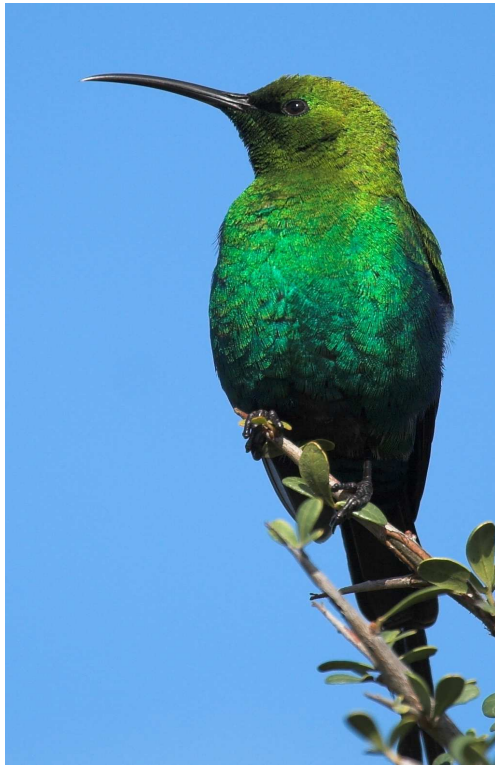


Sasol Birding Bonanza

23-25 October 2009

Addo Elephant National Park

**Presented by:
Honorary Rangers – Addo Region**



The Addo Elephant National Park must be one of the most ecologically diverse areas in the Eastern Cape. There are five biomes to be found, from the estuary to the top of the Zuurberg Mountain and on to the freshwater lake in the Karoo. As a

result the birding is fantastic with over 400 species, which makes this a birding paradise.

The Park's **MARINE SECTION** includes two island groups, where one can view en route a variety of coastal and pelagic birds, like African penguin - the largest colony of which is on St Croix island - Roseate Terns, Petrels, Storm Petrels, Skuas, Shearwaters and if lucky an Albatross. Terns, Gulls and Cormorants abound. Whales, Dolphins and Big Sharks are to be seen in the Bay. The world's largest breeding colony of Gannets occurs on Bird Island

The **SUNDAYS RIVER ESTUARY** offers good Wader and Tern sightings.



Moving away from the sea, you can see the elusive Brown Robin in the dune forest. Various forms of **SUBTROPICAL THICKET** are continuous in the park all the way to Addo and beyond to Kirkwood, adjacent to the perennial Sundays River. This is hot and dry country. The vegetation is a succulent, thorny, tangled low-canopy forest, impenetrable in places. A bird community consisting of six Sunbird species, several Shrikes (including the Redbacked and Greyheaded), Southern Tchagra, Titbabbler, Prinia's, Karoo Robin, several seedeaters and fruit eaters such as the Bulbuls and Mousebirds and a host of Flycatchers like the Dusky, Spotted, Fairy, Black, Fiscal, Blue-Mantled, Paradise as well as Drongo's and Batis's.

In summer the distinctive calls of 5 different Cuckoos and the Pied and Black Collared Barbets and the Red Fronted Tinkerbarbet can be heard.

There are open Karroid areas in the thicket where Black Korhaan, Stanley's, Ludwig's and Kori



sasol
reaching new frontiers



GLENDOWER
PURE MALT
SCOTCH WHISKY
EIGHT YEARS OLD



Bustards can be seen, as well as Secretary birds, Blue Cranes and Black-headed Herons. There is **GRASSLAND** - both natural and reclaimed farming land - where Larks, Pipits, Chats, Buntings and a variety of seed-eaters occur. Raptors such as Steppe, Jackal and Mountain Buzzards are common as are the Pale Chanting Goshawks, Rock, Lesser and Red-footed Kestrels, Kites, Sparrowhawks, Lanners, Harriers, Booted, Martial and Fish Eagles. Osprey is sometimes seen near the river.

The **RIVER** is flanked by 'Acacia Forest' where Whitebrowed Robin, Willow Warbler, Penduline Tits, Bleating Warbler, Terrestrial Bulbul and other 'Forestry' species can be seen.

In the river basin, the reed beds are home to the Reed, Marsh and Sedge Warblers as well as Crake, Bitterns, Egrets, various Herons (including Goliath and Purple), Gallinule,



African Finfoot, Cormorants, Darters, Bishops, Weavers, Duck, Geese and Waders on the exposed mud and sand flats. The riverbank houses thousands of Sand Martins, Pied Starlings and Bee-eaters. There are five species of Kingfisher, including Pygmy, on the Coerney tributary in the

Park, near Riverbend Lodge.

The Zuurberg offers birders the opportunity to see **FYNBOS** birds, **GRASSLAND** birds, thicket birds and birds of the **AFRICAN MONTANE FOREST** as well as **SCRUB FOREST**. In the Protea veld on top of the mountain, you can see Sugarbirds, Sunbirds, Grassbirds and Wailing Cisticolas.

The Forest Kloofs are a birding wonderland with glorious Crowned Eagle hunting in and above the forest canopy, while the majestic Black Eagle patrols the cliffs above. At a lower level, the African Goshawk attacks between the trees. The Knysna Turaco's distinctive call echoes through the forest. Puffbacks, Scaly-throated Honeyguides, Forest Weavers, Narina Trogon, Yellow-Throated Warblers, a few Woodpeckers (including Knysna and Olive), Grey Cuckooshrikes, Chorister Robin and many more can be seen and heard.

At forest streams, Long Tailed Wagtails feed along the stones and Half-collared Kingfishers can be seen diving for Minnows.

The Park extends along the Zuurberg up to the **NAMA KAROO** with its **NOORSVELD** at Darlington Lake. This area can be accessed by 4x4 vehicles and is an unforgettable experience.

The recent vulture sightings in the Nyathi section of the park are expected to increase over time as the conservation area increases and reintroduced predators provide kills and carcasses.



NOCTURNAL BIRDING is also good. Barn, Spotted Eagle, Cape Eagle, Marsh, Wood and Scops Owls are recorded along with Nightjars and Dikkops. Accommodation is available to suit every budget in Addo Elephant National Park and surrounds.

Photos by:

Chris Fourie & Tarryn-Leigh Deysel

Birding information:

addobirdbonanza@webmail.co.za
charlesmarais@mweb.co.za

Bookings:

Mileen de Vos
041 966 1297 or 082 775 4998
Judy Bouwer
083 610 1090

Sponsors:

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