



## 1-DAY DRAKENSBERG & LESOTHO BIRDING TOUR



*Drakensberg Siskin* only occurs at high altitudes in the Drakensberg Mountains.

The ascent up Sani Pass, one of the most famed birding routes in South Africa, provides easy access to most of the birds endemic to the Drakensberg Escarpment and highlands, plus spectacular mountain scenery.

We leave very early in the morning (around 5:30) with a packed breakfast and lunch to ascend the Sani Pass by 4-wheel drive with a local guide. Before we ascend the pass, we will keep a look out as we drive through the grasslands below the pass for **Denham's Bustard**, **Ant-eating Chat**, **Grey Crowned Crane** and **Secretarybird**. At the lower elevations, small patches of temperate forest and scrub, will be searched for the sought-after **Bush Blackcap**, **Drakensberg Prinia**, **Chorister Robin-Chat**, **Sweet Waxbill** and **Brown-backed Honeybird**. This habitat is soon replaced by *Protea* stands a little higher up, where **Gurney's Sugarbird** and **Malachite Sunbird** occur alongside **Ground Woodpecker**, **Red-throated Wryneck**, **Cape Rock Thrush** and **Buff-streaked Chat**. Small wetlands will be checked for **Fan-tailed Grassbird** with **Red-winged Francolin**, **Long-billed Pipit**, **Cape Grassbird** and **Wailing Cisticola** occurring in the nearby grasslands.

At little higher up the large stands of trees will be investigated for **Barratt's Warbler**, **Drakensberg Prinia**, **Greater Double-collared Sunbird** and a little higher up **Karoo Prinia**. Above the tree-line **Drakensberg Siskin** and **Drakensberg Rockjumper** start to appear, as well as **Bearded** (Lammergeier) and **Cape Vultures**. Once we cross into the Kingdom of Lesotho the habitat consists of vast open plains with small scrubby bushes which hold **Large-billed Lark**, **Fairy Flycatcher**, **Grey Tit**, **Layard's Warbler** (Tit-babbler), **Sickle-winged Chat**, **Yellow Canary**, **Sentinel Rock Thrush** and **Southern Bald Ibis**. In summer we will search the grassy areas of the plateau for the range-restricted **Mountain Pipit**.



*Another Drakensberg endemic; Drakensberg Rockjumper.*

We will spend a full day ascending to the top of the escarpment and into the beautiful mountain kingdom of Lesotho, with frequent stops along the way, in a quest to find all the localized specials.

**Duration:** 1 day

**Start:** Underberg/Himeville

**End:** Underberg/Himeville

**Price:** On request