



2-DAY AGULHAS PLAINS BIRDING TOUR



Denham's Bustards are regularly encountered in the farmlands of the Agulhas Plains.

This trip forms part of the 12-day Western Cape Birding Tour. This is a trip in which a disproportionate number of large and spectacular birds are encountered. We bird the stronghold of the world's population of **Blue Crane** (South Africa's national bird) and should see many hundred individuals of this species (sometimes with youngsters in early summer).

The Agulhas Plains are one of the few areas where **Denham's Bustard** and **Secretarybird** are still common. Hundreds of White Stork visit in summer. The stunning, endangered, endemic **Black Harrier** quarters low over the plains. The endemic **Jackal Buzzard** is common, along with many other raptors that sometimes include **Lanner Falcon** and **Amur Falcon**. The rolling hills and flat plains are also home to two extremely localized lark species, i.e. **Cape Clapper Lark** (with its bizarre breeding display) and **Agulhas Long-billed Lark**. Other slightly more widespread larks (but still endemic to southern Africa) such as, for example, **Large-billed Lark** also abound. We will bird the De Hoop Nature Reserve for **Cape Vulture**, the uncommon **Knysna Woodpecker**, **Southern Tchagra**, a host of waterbirds (including **Maccoa Duck** and other difficult species) and shorebirds, **Grey-winged Francolin**, **Cape Spurfowl**, **African Hoopoe**, and a host of others.



*We'll look out for the endemic **Knysna Woodpecker** in De Hoop Nature Reserve.*

Big mammals such as **Bontebok**, **Springbok**, the neat **Cape Mountain Zebra**, and close inshore **Southern Right Whale** (seasonal) also occur. Overnight accommodation can be at the Buchu Bush Camp or Potteberg Guest House. Potteberg is slightly more budget, but hosts resident **Barn Owl** and **Spotted Eagle-Owl** plus **Secretarybirds**. The more luxurious Buchu Bush Camp has become one of the best-known sites for **Hottentot Buttonquail** and **Striped Flufftail**, but both species need lots of luck.

Time permitting, we can also visit De Mond Nature Reserve for the endangered endemic **Damara Tern**, a tiny and beautiful species. At this pleasant site we should also find several other species not yet encountered.

We can add a third day to this trip, which will allow us to spend a night at Grootvadersbosch Forest at the base of the Langeberg Mountains, which form the inland backdrop to the Agulhas Plains. Here we can find good numbers of forest and forest-edge endemics and other desirable species. The exciting list includes **Forest Canary**, **Sweet Waxbill**, **Cape Siskin**, **Victorin's Warbler**, **Olive Woodpecker** (also **Knysna Woodpecker**, but we may have already found this on the Agulhas Plains), **Buff-spotted Flufftail**, **Narina Trogon**, up to three different honeyguide species, **Olive Bushshrike**, **Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler**, the endangered **Knysna Warbler**, and many others. We would spend the night at the beautiful Honeywood Farm cottages.



Forest Canary are common in Grootvadersbosch Forest.

The guide for day trips is allocated only after you have booked, as all of them are run as private trips. But we always use the country's top birding guides.

Duration: 1 day

Start: Cape Town

End: Cape Town

Price: R4,500 per person, the R500 per extra person

Price includes:

Guiding fees
Vehicle hire and fuel
Entrance fees to most destinations

Price excludes:

Meals