



2-DAY AGULHAS PLAINS BIRDING TOUR



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

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**. 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 **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. Our accommodation often hosts resident **Western Barn Owl** and **Spotted Eagle-Owl** plus **Secretarybirds** in the nearby plains.

For those who are keen to see **Fynbos Buttonquail**, we can visit a nearby fynbos reserve which hosts this rarely-seen endemic, however please note this involves long walks (often a few hours long) through tough terrain!

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), **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: 2 days

Start: Cape Town

End: Cape Town

Price: On request