



ROCKJUMPER

Worldwide Birding Adventures

Rockjumper Family Birding Weekend

Central Drakensberg, KwaZulu-Natal

23rd to 25th February 2018



Southern Bald Ibis by Adam Riley

RATES FOR THE WEEKEND...

2 night's Accommodation: Adults at R2910.00 per person sharing on a dinner, bed & breakfast basis

Children 3-5 years R750.00 per person sharing on a dinner, bed & breakfast basis

6-12 years R1350.00 per person sharing on a dinner, bed & breakfast basis

13-17 years R2300.00 per person sharing on a dinner, bed & breakfast basis

Birding supplement (only if you partake in birding activities): Adults R950.00 per person

Children no charge

A donation to BirdLife South Africa's conservation causes is included in the above rates.

THE WEEKEND AT A GLANCE...

CHAMPAGNE SPORTS RESORT

Day 1	Arrival, guided walk and presentation by BirdLife South Africa CEO Mark Anderson
Day 2	Morning guided walk, bird identification course, afternoon guided walk and a presentation on the Endemic birds of South Africa by Adam Riley
Day 3	Morning guided bird walk

Family Birding Weekend

THE TOUR IN DETAIL...

Have you ever wanted to enjoy a weekend where you can mix guided birdwatching, quality family time, world-class accommodation and spectacular scenery? Well, Rockjumper Birding Tours has put together an offering that will combine all of these to deliver a truly memorable experience. Champagne Sports Resort in the Central Drakensberg will play host to our first ever Family Birding Weekend. Our aim is to offer a weekend getaway for birders that can share the weekend with their non-birding spouses and kids, who will enjoy the comfort and facilities of a world-class resort. Birders of all levels are welcome, from absolute beginners who may have not looked at birds through binoculars before, to experienced birders who may even find a new bird for their list on the weekend.



Malachite Sunbird by Rich Lindie

Champagne Sports Resort, our host venue for the weekend, offers something for everyone. From an award-winning golf course, newly renovated spa and gym, and arguably the best kids' facilities in the country to an exceptional restaurant offering amazing buffet meals. Guests can expect comfort and entertainment to suit all tastes. The surrounding area offers leisure activities, such as horse-riding, zip line tours, falconry displays, a reptile centre and a wide range of hiking trails, for those who won't be partaking in birding activities.

For the birders, the resort is bisected by the Sterkspruit River and boasts a variety of habitats, such as grasslands, gullies and marshes. Some of our target species for the weekend will be Barratt's Warbler, Malachite Sunbird and Southern Bald Ibis. A key focus will be on learning how to identify LBJs (Little Brown Jobs) by sight and sound. The birding supplement charged to guests participating in the birding activities covers 4 guided walks given by our expert bird guides, 2 presentations, and a basic bird photography lecture.

Day 1: Arrival at Champagne Sports Resort. After arriving and settling in at the resort in the early afternoon, we will begin our exploration of this picturesque venue. The grounds around the resort will give us an opportunity for a casual walk with an introduction to the local species, and for you to start getting to know your bird guides. Species we



could encounter in the manicured gardens include the likes of Red-throated Wryneck, Olive Woodpecker, Groundscraper Thrush, Southern Boubou, Greater Double-collared Sunbird, African Dusky Flycatcher, the stunning Violet-backed (previously Plum-coloured) Starling, Brimstone Canary and Streaky-headed Seedeater. Looking above could yield the likes of Rock, Common House and Banded Martins, South African Cliff, White-throated and Greater Striped Swallows or Alpine, African Black, White-rumped and Horus Swifts. The attractive Bokmakierie, Bar-throated Apalis and noisy Arrow-marked Babbler may be found in areas of more dense cover. We will watch out for African Goshawk and Cape Vulture, which occasionally can be seen returning to roost in the early evening.

After our dinner, we will enjoy the company of BirdLife South Africa's CEO, Mark Anderson as he explains how contributions by ordinary South Africans are driving the protection and rescue of our local bird species.



Violet-backed Starling by Adam Riley

Day 2: Morning guided walk, bird photography lecture, afternoon guided walk and a presentation on the Endemic birds of South Africa by Adam Riley: An early morning start will see us greeted by the stunning scenery of the Central Drakensberg. Arriving at more densely wooded areas we could encounter Afromontane species such as Cape Batis, Chorister Robin-chat, Forest Canary, the skulking Barratt's Warbler or possibly the sought-after Bush Blackcap. Red-chested, Klaas's and Black Cuckoo might be seen higher up on the treetops before they begin their intra-African migration. We may try our luck by trying to coax a Buff-spotted Flufftail into view. As we start making our way closer to the river, we will look for the scarce Half-collared and noisy Giant Kingfishers, African Black Duck and Mountain Wagtail.



African Yellow Warbler by Markus Lilje

Making our way back to the resort for a well-deserved breakfast, the action picks up again thereafter with a few optional activities including a basic bird photography lecture.

Late morning, lunch and the early afternoon will be at your own leisure and time can be shared with friends and family around one of the many tranquil spaces or activities in and around the hotel complex. The late afternoon outing will concentrate on the various grassland, scrub and wetland areas on the estate grounds. Target grassland species such as Cape Grassbird, Cape Canary, Drakensberg Prinia, Yellow Bishop and a variety of tricky cisticolas (options include Lazy, Wailing, Croaking, Wing-snapping, Zitting, Pale-crowned and Cloud, as well as Neddicky) will be sought. We will look closely for species such as Purple Heron, Black Crane, Levaillant's Cisticola, African Yellow, Little Rush and African Reed Warblers. Our target species for this walk will certainly be the Southern Bald Ibis. This vulnerable species is endemic (only occurring in) to the Great Escarpment region of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland. Importantly, a small colony



of Southern Bald Ibis breeds on the grounds of our lodge.

Our scheduled evening activity after dinner on our second day will include a presentation by Rockjumper Birding Tours founder, Adam Riley, on the endemic birds of South Africa. After enjoying the presentation, guests will then have time for a social nightcap or retire early in preparation for the final morning outing.

Day 3: Morning guided bird walk. Waking up on the morning of our final day, we will waste no time in getting the most out of the weekend. We will again explore more of the expansive grounds of Champagne Sports Resort or maybe revisit some of the more productive areas we have already been to. Further targets could include some rare species that we would have to have a lot of luck to see such as Corn Crane, Broad-tailed Warbler or Cuckoo Finch. We will certainly be keeping an eye out for raptors as well and possibilities include Verreaux's and Booted Eagles, Lanner, Peregrine and migrant Amur Falcons, Eurasian Hobby and Black and Rufous-chested Sparrowhawks. Other tougher species we may encounter include Brown-backed Honeybird, Lemon Dove, African Emerald Cuckoo and Zebra Waxbill.

Thereafter we will return to the resort for a final hearty breakfast, we will have to say our fond farewells as we wrap up our Family Birding Weekend. We will remember how we gained birding skills, expanded our knowledge, but most importantly, had fun and made new friends.

For those with time to spare, additional species may be found at nearby Monk's Cowl reserve (including Gurney's Sugarbird). Other facilities in the valley include a falconry show and a reptile centre and various adventure activities.



African Emerald Cuckoo by Adam Riley

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

The cost of the weekend includes:

1. All meals from dinner on Friday to breakfast on Sunday but excludes any lunches;
2. All lodgings in double/twin share rooms;
3. Access to numerous Champagne Sports Resort facilities including the kids club, pools and various sports facilities
4. A donation to BirdLife South Africa's conservation causes

The birding supplement includes:

5. 4 guided bird walks by professional birding tour leaders;
6. Lectures by BirdLife South Africa's CEO Mark Anderson and Rockjumper's founder Adam Riley;
7. Beginner bird photography lecture



The fee does not include:

1. Any transport;
2. Any drinks;
3. Any lunches;
4. Any extra activities or activities that Champagne Sports Resort usually charge for eg golf

Single Supplement:

The single supplement cost for this event will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. **The event price is quoted in South African Rands (ZAR).**
2. **We may be forced to change or alter the itinerary and / or the designated Rockjumper leader at short or no notice due to unforeseen circumstances; please be aware that we will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.**

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