

EXCLUSIVE NORTH-EASTERN SOUTH AFRICA

**Zaagkuilsdrift – Nylsvley – Polokwane – Soutpanesberg –
Mapungubwe – Kruger (Far North to Central) – Blyde River –
Dullstroom**

BIRDING AND WILDLIFE SAFARI

**01 January – 31 December 2022
11 Days, 10 Nights**

TRIP GUIDE



EXCLUSIVE NORTH-EASTERN SOUTH AFRICA
Zaagkuilsdrift – Nylsvley – Polokwane – Soutpanesberg – Mapungubwe – Kruger (Far North to Central) – Mariepskop – Blyde River Canyon – Mount Anderson – Dullstroom

1. Tour Summary

Duration: 11 days, 10 nights.

Price: **ZAR 48,690.00 per person sharing, ZAR 9,850.00 single supplement.**
Price may be subject to change based on factors beyond our control.

Distance: Total driving distance (including around sites) = 2,570km.

Includes:

- Accommodation;
- All breakfasts, lunches, dinners, tea and coffee;
- Ground transport – max 3 participants and 1 guide per 4x4 vehicle;
- Bottled water in vehicles whilst travelling – 3 per person per day;
- Entrance fees;
- Conservation levies;
- Personalized checklists;
- Specialist guide fees – 1 day with Samson Mulaudzi in the Soutpanesberg.

Excludes:

- All airfares;
- Travel and medical insurance;
- All drinks;
- Optional excursions where applicable;
- Gratuities;
- Items of a personal nature.

Note:

- Minimum of 2 participants per vehicle required to undertake the trip;
- Tour starts and ends in Johannesburg to depart from OR Tambo International Airport or Sandton;
- This itinerary is subject to change due to weather conditions at the time and other factors beyond our control;
- The species mentioned in the itinerary represent only some of those we may possibly view on the tour, however, none of these can be guaranteed even though every effort will be made where possible to locate them. A full list of possible species appears on your checklist, although vagrants and rarities may also surprise us.



2. Tour Highlights

- *Group size:* maximum of 3 participants and 1 guide per vehicle.
- *Birding in brief:* Sightings goal of 300+. Excellent variety of birds to be seen, with a good chance of large birds of prey and many special and endemic species.
- *Wildlife in brief:* Sightings goal of 60+ mammals. Excellent variety of mammals, reptiles, amphibians and butterflies to be seen across a wide variety of habitats. Kruger National Park and Mapungubwe National Park especially offer very good chance of the Big 5.
- *Areas visited:* Zaagkuilsdrift, Nylsvley Nature Reserve, Polokwane Game Reserve, Soutpanesberg (East) area, Mapungubwe National Park, Kruger National Park (Far North to Central), Mariepskop, Blyde River Canyon, Mount Anderson Reserve, Dullstroom area.
- *Expected weather conditions:* Subtropical with occasional rain, warm to hot most of the time. Rain is possible, usually in the form of summer convection thunderstorms, and cool wet weather is possible in the event of a cold front moving up from the south.
- *Tour tempo:* medium, optional mid-day breaks (advisable on hot days), no serious walking.
- *Accommodation standards:* medium-plus – private guesthouses and lodges, and public rest camps.
- *Top birds:* Taita Falcon, Dickinson's Kestrel, African Hobby, African Grass-Owl, Pel's Fishing-Owl, Blue-spotted Wood-Dove, Short-clawed Lark, Dwarf Bittern, Slaty Egret, White-backed Night-Heron, Mottled Spinetail, Bohm's Spinetail, Southern Hyliota, Racket-tailed Roller, Grey-headed Parrot, Meyer's Parrot, Meves's Starling, Miombo Blue-eared Starling, Senegal Coucal, Three-banded Courser, Tropical Boubou, African Broadbill, Black-fronted Bush-Shrike, Arnot's Chat, Verreaux's Eagle, Bat Hawk, African Finfoot, Orange Ground-Thrush, Thrush Nightingale, Yellow-billed Oxpecker, White-breasted Cuckoo-shrike, Green Malkoha, Orange-winged Pytilia.
- *Mammal viewing:* Lion, Leopard, Elephant, Black Rhino, White Rhino, Buffalo, Cheetah, African Wild Dog, Brown Hyena, Spotted Hyena, Pangolin, Honey Badger, Hippo, Giraffe, Jameson's Red Rock Hare, Roan, Sable, Sharpe's Grysbok, Eland, Lichtenstein's Hartebeest, Tsessebe, Oribi, Mountain Reedbuck, Klipspringer, African Wild Cat, Yellow Mongoose, Cape Clawless Otter, and other typical savannah and grassland general game, and good chances for uncommon smaller species.
- *Special interests:* birding, wildlife, photography.
- *Specialist guiding:* Samson Mulaudzi will guide the group for a day in the Soutpanesberg region.
- *Add-ons:* this tour can be combined with extensions to Magoebaskloof and Gonarezhou National Park (south-eastern Zimbabwe), or with extensions to Wakkerstroom and KwaZulu-Natal.



3. Birding and Wildlife Regions

3.1. Zaagkuilsdrift and Nylsvley

Description:

The 25km Zaagkuilsdrift stretch of gravel road, situated in the beautiful Pienaars River area, connects the town of Pienaars River to the village at Kgomo-Kgomo. It has earned a name for itself amongst local birders as one of the area's best birding spots and, in the latter part of summer, a warbler stakeout of note, boasting about 430 different bird species. The habitat along the route starts with open well grazed grassy plains in the east, followed by a long mosaic stretch of Acacia thornveld, and ends with swampland in the west at the confluence of the Apies, Pienaars and Moretele Rivers. The route therefore offers a variety of bushveld species and dry biome specials, with good waterbirds congregating on the floodplain in the wet season. Most of the land adjacent to the road is privately owned which, for the most part, restricts birding to the immediate vicinity of the road. In addition, although the river is mostly out of view along the route, the good riparian habitat serves as the keystone for much of the birding.

Nylsvley is the largest inland floodplain in South Africa, reaching 16,000 hectares when fully inundated, and floods every 3 to 4 years. 10% of this floodplain is formally conserved as Nylsvley Nature Reserve, and was listed as a RAMSAR site, an internationally important habitat for waterfowl, in July 1998. Nylsvley is one of the top birding spots in southern Africa, with at least 365 species recorded. Over 104 water bird species visit (and 87 breed) during extensive flooding, which only occurs every three or four years. In high rainfall years, it is best to visit in February to May. The floodplain comprises extensive reed beds and grassveld that is adjoined by broadleaved woodland and bushveld that host over 200 other species. Habitats include short grassy plains, reed beds, stands of long rice grass, open water patches, marshes, acacia savanna and broadleaved woodlands.



Target birds:

Southern Pale Chanting Goshawk, Dwarf Bittern, Eurasian Bittern, Little Bittern, Montagu's Harrier, Pallid Harrier, Western Marsh-Harrier, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, African Grass-Owl, Marsh Owl, Southern White-faced Scops-Owl, Pearl-spotted Owlet, Temminck's Courser, Greater Painted-snipe, Allen's Gallinule, Striped Crane, Spotted Crane, Baillon's Crane, African Crane, Lesser Moorhen, Black-winged Pratincole, Northern Black Korhaan, Southern Pied Babbler, Bennett's Woodpecker, White-backed Mousebird, Thrush Nightingale, Shaft-tailed Whydah, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Crimson-breasted Shrike, Red-capped Lark, Common Whitethroat, River Warbler, Olive-tree Warbler, Icterine Warbler, Barred Wren-Warbler, Red-headed Finch, Burnt-necked Eremomela, Great Sparrow, Violet-eared Waxbill, Black-faced Waxbill, Cape Penduline-Tit, Larklike Bunting, Chestnut-backed Sparrowlark, Cut-throat Finch, Yellow Canary, Ashy Tit, Cape Penduline-Tit.

Target mammals:

Roan, Sable, Leopard, Brown Hyena, Eland, Kudu, Tsessebe, Giraffe, Plains Zebra, Blue Wildebeest, Bushpig and many more.

3.2. Polokwane Game Reserve

Description:

Polokwane Game Reserve is one of the most notable municipal reserves in the country. Unusually large, at 3,200 hectares, it protects a comparatively rare vegetation type and is home to at least 250 bird species and some rare mammal species. It offers an excellent network of roads, but due to the non-dangerous nature of the game, it presents the good option of birding and game viewing on foot, with a 21km-long trail network route. The habitat is characterised by flatish open broadleaved savanna and grassland, with the odd smattering of trees and shrubs, rocky outcrops, riparian areas and termitaria zones.



Target birds:

Short-clawed Lark, Verreaux's Eagle, Secretarybird, Coqui Francolin, Northern Black Korhaan, Shelly's Francolin, Bushveld Pipit, Crimson-breasted Shrike, Desert Cisticola, Barred Wren-Warbler, Burnt-necked Eremomela, Kalahari Scrub-Robin, Tinkling Cisticola, Black-faced Waxbill.

Target mammals:

Striped Polecat, Aardwolf, Aardvark, Leopard, Brown Hyena, White Rhino, African Hedgehog, Jameson's Red Rock Rabbit, Tsessebe, Sable, Gemsbok, Mountain Reedbuck, Eland, Giraffe, Plains Zebra, Yellow Mongoose, Cape Clawless Otter and many more.

3.3. Soutpansberg

Soutpansberg and Albasini Levubu, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Description:

The Soutpansberg is an enigmatic and beautiful mountain range that extends from east to west across the otherwise flat plains in Limpopo. It is named for the salt pan located at its western end. The area is littered with yellowwood trees, forest fever trees, giant cabbage trees, proteas, ancient tree ferns, and another 500 or so tree species that make this terrain pretty unique and worth protecting. It is also a key area to understanding the early relationships between Khoi, San and Bantu cultures, not least because of the plethora of rock art that litters caves and overhangs in the Soutpansberg. The mountains are noted for their high levels of species endemism and unique ecosystems. They form part of the core area of the UNESCO Vhembe Biosphere Reserve that also includes the northern Kruger National Park and Mapungubwe National Park and Cultural Landscape. Five different biomes are present in the Soutpansberg Protected Area – namely forest, thicket, savannah, grassland and wetland. All the vegetation types that occur here are endemic to Limpopo Province, or the Soutpansberg Mountains alone, and have a relatively limited range, with less than 1% under formal conservation.

North-eastern Venda stretches from Thohoyandou across to the Kruger National Park boundary and up north to the Limpopo valley. The vegetation type that dominates the North-eastern Venda area is Arid Mountain Bushveld and Mopane Woodland. Along all the major rivers one will find Lowveld Riverine Forest with elements of Semi-deciduous Forest. This is also the area where the isolated patch of Miombo (*Brachystegia*) Woodland is found.

Happy-Rest Nature Reserve – Buzzard Mountain Retreat

Buzzard Mountain Retreat is situated on the southern slopes of Happy-Rest Nature Reserve, and the top of the Soutpansberg. The reserve forms part of the greater 20,000 hectare Soutpansberg Protected Area. Although best known for its many habitat types, it offers a bird list of over 250 species. Birds range from typical bushveld species to a variety of forest birds with habitats varying from sweet mixed bushveld to mistbelt forest and Afromontane grassland.

Muirhead Dams and Reserve

Muirhead Dams and forest is situated along the central Soutpansberg, and is another great place to discover great forest and water birds.

Entabeni Forest

Entabeni Forest is an area of Afromontane mistbelt forest situated in the Entabeni Plantation. The forest is extensive, but only parts of it are easily accessible. The extensive forest boasts really good specials, but only parts of it are easily accessible.



Luvuvhu River – Springfield Farm

The habitat in this region harbours numerous sought-after riverine forest and water specials.

Target birds:

Mottled Spinetail, Bohm's Spinetail, Arnot's Chat, White-breasted Cuckoo-shrike, Grey Cuckoo-shrike, Bat Hawk, Orange Ground-Thrush, Black-fronted Bush-Shrike, Senegal Coucal, Black Coucal, Blue-spotted Wood-Dove, Collared Pratincole, Caspian Plover, Lemon-breasted Canary, Pink-throated Twinspot, Green Twinspot, Brown Scrub-Robin, Lemon Dove, Forest Buzzard, African Crowned Eagle, Mountain Wagtail, Blue-mantled Crested-Flycatcher, Forest Canary, African Broadbill, Scaly-throated Honeyguide, Narina Trogon, White-starred Robin, Knysna Turaco, Yellow-streaked Greenbul, Olive Woodpecker, Buff-spotted Flufftail, Magpie Mannikin, Chorister Robin-Chat, Thrush Nightingale, Dark-capped Yellow-Warbler, African Pygmy-Goose, Lesser Moorhen, White-backed Duck, White-backed Night-Heron, Half-collared Kingfisher, Malachite Sunbird, Gurney's Sugarbird, African Yellow White-eye.

Target mammals:

Eland, Mountain Reedbuck, Bushbuck, Springhare, Samango Monkey, Rock Hyrax, Giant Rat, Red Duiker, Cape Clawless Otter and many more.

3.4. **Mapungubwe National Park to Pafuri** Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Description:

Mapungubwe National Park

Mapungubwe National Park and World Heritage Site is located near the Kolope River, south of the confluence of the Limpopo and Shashe rivers. The Park borders Mapesu Private Game Reserve to the south, abuts on the border with Botswana and Zimbabwe, and forms part of the Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area. It was established in 1995 and covers an area of over 28,000 hectares. The park protects the historical site of Mapungubwe Hill, which was the capital of the Kingdom of Mapungubwe, as well as the wildlife and riverine forests along the Limpopo River. The Mapungubwe Hill was the site of a prosperous community dating back to the Iron Age. It is one of the few places in Africa that has both Meerkats and Nile crocodiles. The Park is renowned for its scenic landscape, which includes unique sandstone formations, woodlands, riverine forest and baobab trees that combine to give it a fascinating look.

Awelani Conservancy

The Awelani Conservancy provides guests an ideal opportunity to walk, hike or mountain-bike through an area surrounded with baobab and other plants and bushes endemic to the Limpopo river-basin area.

Sagole Big Tree

This magnificent specimen has been recorded as the largest Baobab tree in the world and is the best place to see Mottled Spinetail in the late evening and early morning.



Gundani Mutsiwa Brachystegia Woodland

Miombo (*Brachystegia*) Woodland is common in Zimbabwe and countries further north, but this is the only known patch in South Africa, and as such numerous highly sought-after bird associated with Miombo woodland are present here.

Target birds:

Dwarf Bittern, Black Stork, Saddle-billed Stork, African Pygmy-Goose, Verreaux's Eagle, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Pallid Harrier, Montagu's Harrier, African Hobby, Red-footed Falcon, Thick-billed Cuckoo, Harlequin Quail, Allen's Gallinule, Greater Painted-Snipe, Grey Crowned Crane, Kori Bustard, White-backed Night-Heron, Slaty Egret, Caspian Plover, White-crowned Lapwing, Corn Crake, Black-winged Pratincole, Bronze-winged Courser, Three-banded Courser, Burchell's Sandgrouse, African Mourning Dove, Meyer's Parrot, Senegal Coucal, Pel's Fishing-Owl, African Barred Owllet, Square-tailed Nightjar, Grey-headed Kingfisher, Southern Carmine Bee-eater, Swallow-tailed Bee-eater, Broad-billed Roller, Southern Ground-Hornbill, Dusky Lark, Eurasian Golden Oriole, Southern Pied Babbler, Olive-tree Warbler, Icterine Warbler, Barred Wren-Warbler, Striped Pipit, Tropical Boubou, Retz's Helmet-Shrike, Meves's Starling, Cuckoo Finch, Great Sparrow, Purple Indigobird.

Target mammals: (Over 90 species)

Elephant, Lion, Leopard, Black Rhino, White Rhino, African Buffalo, African Wild Dog, Cheetah, Brown Hyena, Spotted Hyena, Caracal, Hippo, Gemsbok, Aardvark, Klipspringer, Eland, Red Hartebeest, Bushbuck, Bushpig, Egyptian Fruit Bat and many more.

3.5. Kruger National Park (Far North, North, and Central)
North-eastern Venda, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Description:

About the Far North Region of the Park

The eastern tip of the Soutpansberg mountains ends near Punda Maria in the Far Northern region of the Kruger National Park. This region of the Kruger extends south from the Limpopo River (the international boundary between Zimbabwe and South Africa) to the Tropic of Capricorn. Habitats in this vast northern section are surprisingly diverse – The area is mostly arid, flat and dominated by Mopane Trees, however, zones with higher localized rainfall give rise to the formation of dense Mopane groves, especially around Punda Maria.

To the north of Punda Maria the impressive vista is broken by craggy sandstone hills and the plentiful, giant Baobab trees. It offers one of the best areas for spotting several rare birds, as it is an unusual ecological mix of sandy alluvial plains and riverine forests. Far removed from the more popular and bustling areas of the Park, this is a haven for the rarer animals, seldom spotted in other areas. The game viewing is most advantageous along the river systems of this region – especially in the Mphongolo/Shingwedzi complex and the Luvuvhu/Limpopo complex.



Image: Garth Kingwill

The low-lying hills around Punda Maria, and the tall Mopane and broad-leaved woodland expanding out from the base of these hills into the damp, low-lying areas holds some great species. One of the most exciting areas in which to bird is up in the north, along the Luvuvhu River, and the Pafuri Picnic Site is one of the best-known birding spots in this area. Certain bird special which are normally only found further north and east can be seen in this area, because of its proximity to the Mozambique coast and the Limpopo River, which acts as a migration corridor. The bridge over the Luvuvhu River is particularly rewarding and Crooks Corner is well worth a visit.

About the North Region of the Park

The Northern Region is the area ranging southward from Capricorn to the Olifants River, bounded in the east by the Lebombo Mountains. This less explored area is made up of sandy expanses, mopane trees and riverine forest. The sparse, isolated hills in the west are rich in pre-historic artefacts. This region is a true wilderness, and gives visitors a feeling of being 'off the beaten track' as it is much quieter than the central and southern regions, with far fewer visitors.

About the Central Region of the Park

The Central Region is by far the most game rich of the four regions and offers some of the best scenery. Although it makes up only 30% of the park's surface area, it accounts for 40% of its total biomass. Bounded by the Sabi River in the south and the Olifants River in the north it is essentially grassland plain, interspersed with river valleys and woodland areas, stretching west to the Lebombo Mountains which form the boundary with Mozambique. In addition, due to its location it is a bit more remote and thus typically holds slightly fewer visitors.

Target birds:

Dickinson's Kestrel, Southern Hylia, Orange-winged Pytilia, Racket-tailed Roller, Grey-headed Parrot, Meyer's Parrot, Brown-headed Parrot, African Finfoot, Ayres's Hawk-Eagle, Eurasian Hobby, Bateleur, Yellow-billed Oxpecker, Grey Penduline Tit, Dusky Indigobird, Village Indigobird, African Golden Oriole, European Golden Oriole, Stierling's Wren-Warbler, Chestnut-backed Sparrowlark, Grey-backed Sparrowlark, Verreaux's Eagle Owl, African Cuckoo Hawk, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Montagu's Harrier, Pallid Harrier, African Scops-Owl, Tropical Boubou, Thrush Nightingale, White-crowned Lapwing, Mosque Swallow, Eastern Nicator, Black-throated Wattle-eye, Gorgeous Bush-Shrike, Meves's Starling, Thick-billed Cuckoo, Three-banded Courser, Corn Crake, African Crake, African Mourning Dove, Broad-billed Roller, Dusky Lark, Southern Ground-Hornbill, Crested Guineafowl, Bennett's Woodpecker, Crimson-breasted Shrike, Red-billed Helmetshrike, Double-banded Sandgrouse, Kori Bustard, Black-bellied Bustard, Dwarf Bittern, Little Bittern.

Target mammals:

Lion, Leopard, Cheetah, Elephant, White Rhino, Black Rhino, Cape Buffalo, African Wild Dog, Hippo, Spotted Hyena, Brown Hyena, Pangolin, Honey Badger, Roan, Sable, Sharpe's Grysbok, Lichtenstein's Hartebeest, Jameson's Red Rock Hare, Eland, Tsessebe, Samango Monkey, Kudu, Nyala, Bushbuck, Giraffe, Red Hartebeest, Mountain Reedbuck, Common Reedbuck and many more.

3.6. Mariepskop and Blyde River Canyon

Description:

On the eastern side of the Drakensberg Escarpment, facing away from the Blyde River Canyon, is the Mariepskop complex – a mountain enclave and centre of endemism of unsurpassed beauty. You can ascend to the top where, at 1,945m above sea level, you can see the Indian Ocean and Maputo on a clear day. Mariepskop is the highest peak in the northern Drakensberg Escarpment. The view is one of the finest in all of South Africa, providing the mountain is free of cloud and mist. This decisively steep pass is 13.7km long and climbs 1,100m to the summit.



Image: William van Zyl

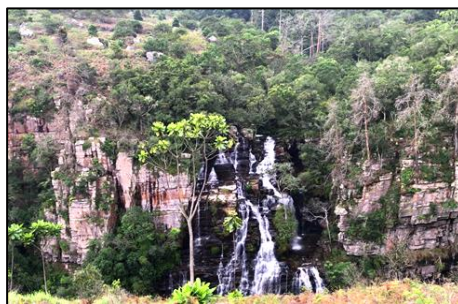


Image: Trygve Roberts

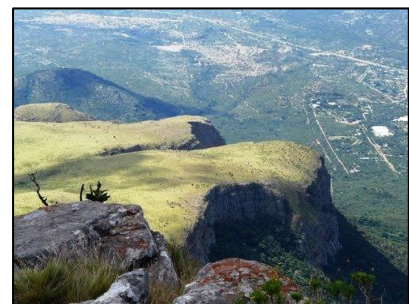


Image: Panoramio

Mariepskop is situated at the junction of three conservation areas, namely the Mariepskop Forest Reserve, Mariepskop State Forest, and the Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve. The mountain is bordered by sheer cliff faces on several sides, and is composed of sedimentary rocks. The Mariepskop-Magalieskop complex is separated from the rest of the Drakensberg by the Blyde River and its canyon,

and by a tributary of the Klaserie River. These two valleys are seen as floral migration routes between the mountain and lowveld.

Several distinguishable plant communities have been described: The foothills are covered in low altitude woodlands, which are distinguished as lowveld gallery forest, savanna on mountain slopes, savanna on rocky terrain and sub-montane forest. In the mountain's higher reaches the high mountain grassland is locally replaced by a type of fynbos vegetation, while the highest elevations are home to the mountain plateau, Widdringtonia and montane forest plant communities. This all provides an unusual and unique array of habitats that cater to a vast array of special bird species.

Target birds:

Taita Falcon, Black-fronted Bush-Shrike, African Emerald Cuckoo, Green Malkoha, Narina Trogon, Olive Woodpecker, Grey Cuckooshrike, Lemon Dove, Olive Woodpecker, Yellow-streaked Greenbul, Olive Bush-Shrike, Southern Tchagra, Bush Blackcap, African Finfoot, White-backed Night-Heron, Half-collared Kingfisher, Southern Bald Ibis, Cape Vulture, African Cuckoo Hawk, Bat Hawk, Red-necked Spurfowl, African Crowned Eagle, Buff-spotted Flufftail, Striped Flufftail, Scaly-throated Honeyguide, Square-tailed Drongo, Blue Swallow, Brown Scrub-Robin, White-starred Robin, White-browed Robin-Chat, White-throated Robin-Chat, Orange Ground Thrush, Green Twinspot, Mountain Wagtail, Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher, Barratt's Warbler, Yellow-throated Woodland-warbler, Red-backed Mannikin, Sweet Waxbill, Cuckoo Finch, Forest Canary.

Target mammals:

Chacma Baboon, Rock Hyrax, Brants's Climbing Mouse, Four-striped Grass Mouse, Woodland Thicket Rat.

3.7. Mount Anderson and Verloren Valle

Description:

Mount Anderson Wildlife and Water Catchment Reserve is a unique and exclusive getaway set in the dramatic landscape of the mountains above the town of Mashishing (Lydenburg). It is an idyllic retreat and one of South Africa's most unique private nature reserves. The property offers spectacular scenery and breath-taking views, and carries rare and endangered wildlife as well as some of the most unique vegetation in the country. The property is also steeped in history, currently owned by Michael and Norma Rattray. Successfully proclaimed in 1990, today it is South Africa's first-ever private water catchment reserve, Mount Anderson is a classic conservation story and today protects some of the major river catchments that are the lifeblood of the Kruger National Park and local communities.



The Verloren Valle Nature Reserve is an internationally recognized wetland reserve with high biological diversity. This 6,000ha highveld grassland reserve is located just 13km from Dullstroom in an undisturbed area of the Steenkampsberg Plateau. The Reserve, comprising open grasslands and rocky outcrops, is made up of over 30 wetland areas that create a large inter-linked wetland system. It caters to abundant

birdlife and many rare and special plant species, with the best time to visit being during the warmer summer months when an array of orchid species flower.

Target birds:

Cape Eagle-Owl, African Grass-Owl, Wattled Crane, Blue Crane, Grey Crowned Crane, Blue Korhaan, Barrow's Korhaan, Cape Vulture, Black Harrier, Southern Bald Ibis, Sentinel Rock-Thrush, Grey-winged Francolin, Red-winged Francolin, Ground Woodpecker, Gurney's Sugarbird, Eastern Long-billed Lark, Eastern Clapper Lark, Mountain Wheatear, Ant-eating Chat, Buff-streaked Chat, Yellow-breasted Pipit, Yellow-tufted Pipit, Malachite Sunbird.

Target mammals:

Grey Rhebok, Mountain Reedbuck, Oribi, Black-backed Jackal, Black Wildebeest, Plains Zebra, Eland, Blesbuck, Spotted-necked Otter, Cape Clawless Otter, Rock Hyrax, Bushpig, Red Hartebeest, Grey Duiker, Vlei Rat, Water Mongoose.



4. Trip Itinerary

Day	Accommodation	Location	Habitats	Sites	Distance (kms)	Driving Time (hrs)
1	Nyl Retreat (S/C)	Near Nyslvley Nature Reserve	Floodplain, Grassveld, Broad-leaved Woodland, Bushveld	Zaagkuilsdrift, Nyslvley Nature Reserve	177	1.75
2	Misty Mountain Guesthouse (C)	Soutpansberg (East)	Riverine Forest, Mountain Sour Veld, Arid Mountain Bushveld	Polokwane, Happy-Rest Nature Reserve, Muirhead Dam, Entabeni Forest, Luvuvhu River	265	3
3	Leokwe Camp (C)	Mapungubwe National Park	Sandstone Formations, Woodland, Riverine Forest and Baobab trees	Hanglip Forest, Mapungubwe National Park	185	2.25
4	Leokwe Camp (C)	Mapungubwe National Park	Sandstone Formations, Woodland, Riverine Forest and Baobab trees	Mapungubwe National Park	65	4
5	Punda Maria Rest Camp (C)	Kruger National Park (Far North)	Limpopo Ridge Bushveld, Soutpanesberg Mountain Bushveld, Makuleke Sandy Bushveld	Mapungubwe, Malapati Safari Area, Sagole Big Tree, Nwanetsi River, Pafuri, Crooks Corner, Kopperfontein, Punda Maria	302	4.5
6	Punda Maria Rest Camp (C)	Kruger National Park (Far North)	Sandveld, Tree Mopane Savanna, Mopane Shrubveld, Alluvial Plains, Mopane/Bushwillow Woodlands, Riverine Bush.	Punda Maria, Kopperfontein, Pafuri, Crooks Corner, Mahonie Loop	180	7
7	Shingwedzi Rest Camp (C)	Kruger National Park (North)	Sandy expanses, Mopane Trees and Riverine Forest	Punda Maria, Mahonie Loop, Shingwedzi	70	3.5
8	Letaba Rest Camp (C)	Kruger National Park (Central)	Grassland plains, Savanna, River Valleys, Woodland areas	Shingwedzi, Nyawutsi, Mopani, Letaba	108	4.5
9	Moholoholo Mountain View (C)	Blyde River Canyon	Lowveld Gallery Forest, Savanna, Mountain Slopes, Rocky Terrain, Sub-montane Forest	Letaba, Masorini, Sable Dam, Mariepskop	225	4.75
10	Valley of the Rainbow Estate (C)	Dullstroom	Altitudinal Open Grassland, Rocky Outcrops, Wetlands, Valley Bushveld	Blyde River Canyon, Abel Erasmus Pass, Mount Sheba, Mount Anderson, Dullstroom	217	3.5
11	Depart Valley of the Rainbow Estate for OR Tambo International Airport			Verloren Vallei, Tonteldoos Road, OR Tambo International Airport	330	5

* Accommodation may change subject to availability, in which case similar accommodation will be found.

** Total driving distance (including around sites) = 2,570km.

Note: C = Catered, S/C = Self-catered

5. Accommodation

Note: Accommodation may change subject to availability, in which case similar accommodation will be found.

Day 1: Nyl Retreat

<https://www.nylretreat.com>

Nyl Retreat is a self-catering country retreat situated on a working farm 8 km from Modimolle (Nylstroom). Enjoy fresh air and wide-open spaces in this great countryside setting. Guests can relax on their patio and anticipate the magnificent sunset, make a wood fire in their private braai's, watch the incredible night sky and savour the heady scents and wild night sounds of the bushveld, such as jackals and owls.

This great country getaway is near the Nylsvley Nature Reserve close to the picturesque Waterberg mountains, and is a paradise for nature lovers. Guests can expect luxury accommodation and warm hospitality along with peace and quiet. Wake up to the sounds of birds singing in the spacious, stunning garden with swimming pools.



Nyl Retreat offers the guest a choice between the 2 luxurious cottages and 5 thatched chalets that overlook the typical Waterberg bushveld. Each unit has been individually decorated and is equipped with quality mattresses, fine white linen, and towels.

Day 2: Misty Mountain Guesthouse – Soutpansberg

<https://mistymountainsguesthouse.co.za/>

Misty Mountains Guesthouse is set in the beautiful Soutpansberg Mountains of Limpopo, South Africa. The picturesque backdrop of the mountain and the captivating view of the plantations that stretch into the far distance keep you company during your stay with us.

Each room is decorated with a personal touch to make you feel at home. Book your overnight, corporate or leisure stay at Misty Mountains Guesthouse for an unforgettable experience.

The picturesque backdrop of the mountain and the captivating view of the plantations that stretch into the far distance keep you company during your stay with us.



The original old barn on this property has been converted into spacious rooms opening up onto a verandah stretching the length of this building. The rooms each has 2 single beds that can be joined (per

arrangement) into a large king-size bed. The en-suite bathroom is set against the original old stonewall and has a great size shower. Big wooden, stable style doors and high ceilings emphasizes the space in these beautiful, but rustic style rooms. DSTV in each room and tea/coffee facilities in dining room next to your room. Braai facilities available.

Day 3 and 4: Leokwe Rest Camp

https://www.sanparks.org/parks/mapungubwe/tourism/availability.php?resort=162&camp_id=71

Mapungubwe National Park and World Heritage Site is the ideal location for anyone interested in wildlife and birds, to those in search of serenity, identity and the extraordinary history of this Park. The Park is divided into an eastern and western section, separated by private lands in between which does not form part of the Park.

Leokwe is Mapungubwe's main camp, located in the eastern section of the Park, 11km from the Main Gate, in the spectacular sandstone hills. Close to the camp guests can enjoy the Treetop Hide and the Confluence View Site & Picnic Area. The camp itself has a swimming pool and sundeck, as well as a central braai area. The camp includes a restaurant and curio shop selling basic necessities. There is no filling station or ATM available in the Park, and there is no cellphone reception in all the camps, only at the main Park gate.



Accommodation at Leokwe Rest Camp caters to a variety of guest requirements and is well-suited for those guests who are looking for a self-catering bushveld experience. Below are the suitable accommodation options:

Safari Tents

- 7 x 2-bed permanent furnished canvas tents on stilts, fully equipped, with shower, fridge, cooking and braai facilities.

Day 5 and 6: Punda Maria Rest Camp – Kruger National Park (Far North)

<https://www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/camps/punda/>

Punda Maria lies in the northern most part of the Kruger National Park, 8km from Punda Maria Gate. The camp is situated in the Sandveld region that is often described as the botanical garden of the Kruger National Park. There are numerous plant species which occur that are unique to the area. Game species most likely to be sighted include impala, zebra, buffalo, elephant, eland and sable and the area is a bird paradise.

Accommodation at Punda Maria Rest Camp caters to a variety of guest requirements and is well-suited for those guests who are looking for a self-catering bushveld experience. Below are the suitable accommodation options:

Safari Tents

- 7 x 2-bed permanent furnished canvas tents on stilts, fully equipped, with shower, fridge, cooking and braai facilities.



Bungalows

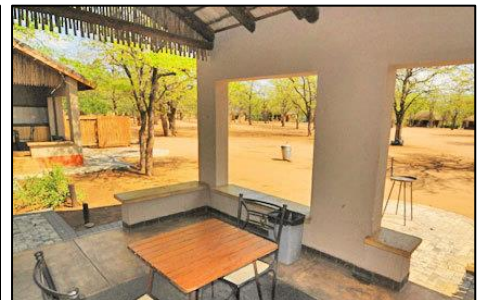
- 18 x 2-bed units, equipped with en-suite ablutions (all with showers), air-conditioning and communal braai area. There are no cooking utensils, crockery or cutlery, but a communal kitchen with scullery and electrical hotplate stoves is available.
- 4 x 3-bed units, equipped with en-suite ablutions (all with showers) and air-conditioning. All have sinks and hotplates with kitchenette and communal braai (barbeque) area.

Day 7 – Shingwedzi Rest Camp

<https://www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/camps/shingwedzi/>

Shingwedzi lies in the northern part of the Kruger in the heart of mopane country. A scenic game drive along the Shingwedzi River in a south-easterly direction towards the Kanniedood Dam is one of the most rewarding drives in the Park. Waterbuck, nyala, kudu and elephant are often seen here and the bird life is prolific. Staying overnight at Shingwedzi is an experience that will last a lifetime. It is a rustic camp that still carries the essence of the bush and is untouched by modern technology. Experience magical evenings where the accommodation is arranged in two separate circles. Species likely to be sighted include Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, Elephant, African Rock Python, Spotted Hyena, African Green-Pigeon.

The area is associated first and foremost with Elephant, with breeding herds of 50 to 60 animals being common in this region. During the 1970s and 1980s some of the Kruger National Park's biggest tuskers, named the Magnificent Seven, roamed this area.



Bungalows

- 14 x 2-bed units with communal kitchen. Bungalows are equipped with ablutions (most with showers, but some with baths), toilet and wash basin. All bungalows have air-conditioning. A limited number of fully equipped utensil boxes (cutlery, crockery, glasses and frying pan) are available for hire.
- 22 x 2-bed modern units (one room with 2 single beds). Bungalows each have an open-air kitchen with cooker top, combined fridge/freezer and fully equipped with cutlery, crockery and utensils. All units have air conditioning.
- 2 x double bed units. Equipped with en-suite bathroom containing shower, toilet and wash basin. Bungalows each have an open-air kitchen with cooker top, microwave, combined fridge/freezer and are fully equipped with cutlery, crockery and utensils. Both bungalows are equipped with air-conditioning.

Day 8 – Letaba Rest Camp

<https://www.sanparks.org/parks/kruger/camps/letaba/>

The idyllic Letaba Rest Camp is situated on a sweeping bend of the Letaba River, midway between the southern and northern boundaries of the Kruger National Park. The name means “river of sand”, and the sandy riverbed is an excellent location for game viewing, particularly elephant, which thrive in the area. The character of Letaba Camp depends heavily on the tall shady trees (Sycamore Fig, Natal Mahogany, Sausage Tree and Apple Leaf), expansive lawns and indigenous gardens where tame Bushbuck wander.

Visit in winter and you will find the gardens a riot of colour, with several species of Aloe and the Impala lily in full bloom and attracting a variety of nectarivores and frugivores. Year round you can also enjoy Pearl-spotted Owlet, African Barred Owlet and African Scops-Owl in camp, while the Verreaux’s Eagle-Owl is regularly recorded along the river. African Green-Pigeon and Brown-headed Parrot can also be found high in the tree canopies.

Letaba means 'river of sand' and the sandy riverbed makes for excellent game viewing, particularly Elephant, which abound in the area. Letaba Camp is a green oasis in the surrounding mopane veld, and remains a firm favourite with holiday visitors for accommodation Kruger Park.



Accommodation at Letaba Rest Camp caters to a variety of guest requirements and is well-suited for those guests who are looking for a self-catering bushveld experience. Below are the suitable accommodation options:

Safari Tents

- 10 x 2-bed and 10 x 4-bed permanent furnished canvas tents on stilts, including a fridge, standing fan inside tent and small veranda. Communal ablutions and communal kitchens available.

Bungalows

- 86 x round-walled, single-room African style units with thatched roofs, 2 or 3 beds per unit, equipped with en-suite ablutions (most with showers, but some with baths). All units have air-conditioning, some have fans. Kitchenettes vary: some have hotplates and sinks; some have only sinks, while some have neither. Cutlery and crockery can be provided and hired from reception. Moreover, you have a choice of with or without perimeter or riverside view. Please confirm when booking.

Day 9 – Moholoholo Mountain View

<http://www.moholoholo.co.za/facility/mountain-view-2/>

Located in a lowveld acacia woodland, Mountain View is ideal for a bush breakaway. The reserve has become a preferred destination for nature enthusiasts and wildlife interest groups. The reserve is home to a wide variety of birds and animals like, Buffalo, Rhino, Hippo and Leopard only to name a few. The camp offers basic but neat and comfortable accommodation in well-appointed thatched chalets.



The lodge can accommodate up to 28 guests in thatched chalets which have all the standard amenities and en-suite bathrooms consisting of a shower, toilet and wash basin. Mountain View offers: full-catering and bed & breakfast. The chalets have no kitchens but its own small fridge, kettle, cutlery and outside braai area (side dishes can be arranged with your braai). There is cellphone reception at the camp.

Day 10: Valley of the Rainbow Country Estate and Nature Reserve

<https://www.rainbowvalley.co.za/>

Whether you're a nature lover or an outdoor enthusiast, Valley of the Rainbow is an incredible place to visit all year round. Surrounded by mountains, indigenous forests and rivers, Valley of the Rainbow offers the perfect getaway to experience peace and tranquillity.

A variety of accommodation options are on offer:

- The Manor House offers guests a choice of five rooms, two luxury, two classic and one standard, each with an en-suite bathroom. It also boasts a bar, a dining room, a conference room and a spacious lounge with an open fireplace for cold winter evenings, whilst its open deck overlooks a river running through the valley and gardens.
- The picturesque Watermill, which was built in the 19th century has been renovated into two separate rooms (The Mill and the Mill room) with incredible views of the dams, mountains and forests. Daily five course dinners and full breakfasts are included for guests staying in the Manor Guest House and the Watermill rooms.
- The Tented Chalets are for our more adventurous guests. Experience all nature has to offer, in comfortable tented accommodation. Each Tented Chalet is fitted with an en-suite bathroom, kitchenette and seating deck with stunning views of the hills, dams and valley.
- Encounter the countryside from the Nature Log Cabins. These cabins are hidden within an indigenous forest and allow guests a secluded space to enjoy the tranquillity of nature. These one-bedroom cabins accommodate two people with a king size bed, en-suite bathroom fitted with a lovely tub and shower and a separate toilet. The closed combustion wood fireplace in the lounge area of the cabin creates an intimate atmosphere.



Guests can participate in organized outdoor activities, including fly-fishing in the river and lakes, or can explore the mountains along the walking trails on which one can expect to find rock pools and a variety of small game including Grey Duiker, Steenbok, Grey Rhebok and Vervet Monkey, over 200 species of birds, and an abundance of wild flowers and plants.

Day 11 – None

No accommodation required.





Address: 23 Beech Road, Glen Anil, Durban North, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, 4051

Cell: +27 83 670 1436

Fax: +27 86 551 5736

Email: info@sustainsafaris.com

Web: www.sustainsafaris.com

Facebook: SustainSafaris

Contact: Michael Wright

michael@sustainsafaris.com