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My first choice would have been a visit in the summer when all the migrants are there but because I was accompanied by Gillian, my wife, I had to take her preferences into account. She will only go with me in the winter. This turned out to be most fortunate from a birding point of view as will appear later. We had toured Augrabies National Park, Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park and southern Namibia with our son Dirk and his family. On Wednesday 10 July 2013 we parted company with them in Lüderitz; they went south, and we went north.

Our first overnight stop was at River Chalets (www.riverchalets.com) just outside of Mariental. Here we were joined by Eric and Alison. We also did an incidental pentad (*for the bird atlas – Ed.*) and duly received an out of range form [ORF] regarding Scarlet-Chested Sunbird (*Chalcomitra senegalensis*). Our next overnight stay was at Rustig Toko Lodge (www.TokoLodge.com) some 30 km north of Kamanjab. *En route* to Kamanjab we saw Damara Hornbill (*Tockus damarensis*) [our first lifer]. At the lodge we did an incidental pentad and we duly received an ORF in respect of Chinspot Batis (*Batis molitor*). We also saw, *inter alia*, White-tailed Shrike (*Lanioturdus torquatus*), Monteiro’s Hornbill (*Tockus monteiri*), Red-billed Spurfowl (*Pternistis adpersus*), Rüppell’s Parrot (*Poicephalus rueppelli*), Carp’s Tit (*Parus carpi*), Bare-cheeked Babbler (*Turdoides gymnogenys*), Pearl-spotted Owlet (*Glaucidium perlatum*). We were hoping to see Hartlaub’s Spurfowl (*Pternistis hartlaubi*) and we got directions from the previous owner. After a sumptuous breakfast on Friday 12 July we went on a 4x4 trail to search for the spurfowl. We were unsuccessful.

We then departed and, via Opuwo, arrived at Kunene River Lodge (www.kuneneriverlodge.com) at 16h00 where we had booked for four nights. The Lodge is right next to the slow flowing Kunene and is set amongst some enormous trees. It is a true paradise. Birds were flying to and fro all the time. The next day, 13 July, we went to the western part of the camp where we saw amongst long grass Black-faced Waxbill (*Estrilda erythronotos*) and then, hello, Cinderella Waxbill (*Estrilda thomensis*) [lifer]. In the camp Rufous-tailed Palm-Thrush (*Cichladusa ruficaudata*) and White-browed Coucal (*Centropus superciliosus*) were very active. On Sunday 14 July we woke to the call of the Yellow-bellied Greenbul (*Chlorocichla flaviventris*) which was followed by a true dawn chorus. Later that day I walked west of the camp area and was hoping to see Hartlaub’s Spurfowl again.
I saw African Green-Pigeon (*Treron calvus*) and Blue Waxbill (*Uraeginthus angolensis*). I saw Cinderella Waxbill again.

We had planned to go with Peter Morgan, the owner of the Lodge, to search for Angola Cave-Chat (*Xenocopsychus ansorgei*). On Monday 15 July we got up at 04h30 and met Peter at 04h50. We then went west in his Toyota until we came to the Zebra Mountains in time for sunrise at 06h40. Peter saw an Angola Cave-Chat a long way off but it was not seen by us. After a most welcome breakfast Peter first walked north and then he went south. He came back in a rush to inform us that he had heard and seen the bird and that it was responding to his whistle. We followed Peter and the bird seemed to be ahead of us. Gill got a full view of the bird through her binoculars, and eventually I got crippling views of the bird [lifer] at 09h10 whilst it was feeding. We had also seen, *inter alia*, Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill (*Tockus leucomelas*), Grey-backed Camaroptera (*Camaroptera brevicaudata*), White-browed Scrub-Robin (*Erythropygia leucophris*), Pale-winged Starling (*Onychognathus nabouroup*), Rosy-faced Lovebird (*Agapornis roseicollis*).

We did an incidental pentad. Peter was aware that we were missing Hartlaub’s Spurfowl and on the way back he went to a rock face where he had seen the bird. One of his dogs [a Jack Russell] saw something and charged into the bush and up flew two birds which Peter said were Hartlaub’s. Sadly we could not locate these birds again.

Peter stated that because a section of the road/track to the Zebra Mountain is on black clay, he cannot do the trip after the first summer rains. Just as well we were there in the winter. That night we had dinner on the deck at the restaurant.

![Figure 2: Angola Cave Chat © Werner Sinclair](image)

At Kunene River Lodge we also did a pentad and we received two ORF’s regarding African Green-Pigeon and Black-faced Waxbill. The next morning, Tuesday 16 July, we sadly left Kunene River Lodge. Peter and Hilary Morgan are fantastic hosts. We proceeded east and apart from two tricky river crossings we found the road in good condition. We visited the campsite Hippo Pools [N$ 20 entrance fee] where we did an incidental pentad and afterwards went past customs to the parking site to look at the dry rock-face of the Ruacana Falls. We played the tape for Hartlaub’s Spurfowl, but received no response.

At about 11h00 we proceeded south and ultimately arrived at Roy’s Rest Camp (www.roysrestcamp.com) which is 55 km north of Grootfontein. We did an incidental pentad. The next morning we had a sumptuous breakfast and then proceeded north on the B8 and ultimately arrived at Shamvura Camp, run by Mark and Charlie Paxton (www.shamvura.com) at 13h30. We were booked for three nights.

In the camp and from the deck overlooking the Okavango River we saw Shelley’s Sunbird (*Cinnyris*
shelleyi) [lifer]. On Thursday 18 July at 06h50 we were ready to go birding with Mark Paxton. We eventually got going at 07h20 after Mark had located his shoes. We had stressed to Mark that our target bird was Souza’s Shrike (Lanius souzae) and eventually at 09h30 Mark directed us to the B8 [we were travelling in my car] and we parked the car next to the road. Mark then proceeded to walk south into the bush and led us in a circle. As we approached the B8 and at 10h20 I saw Souza’s Shrike [lifer] sitting in a tree which was about 100 metres east of my parked car. Close by we saw a second male Souza’s Shrike and again Shelley’s Sunbird. We also saw some other interesting birds i.e. Violet-backed Starling (Cinnyricinclus leucogaster), Retz’s Helmetshrike (Prionops retzi), Golden Weaver (Ploceus xanthops), Bradfield’s Hornbill (Tockus bradfieldi), Swamp Boubou (Laniarius bicolor), Ashy Flycatcher (Muscinica caerulescens). The next day we birded on our own and we added Dark Chanting Goshawk (Melierax metabates). At Shamvura we also did a pentad and we received ORF’s in respect of Neddicky (Cisticola fulvicapilla), White-browed Robin-Chat (Cossypha heuglini), Kalahari Scrub-Robin (Erythropygia paena), Souza’s Shrike, Shelley’s Sunbird, Collared Sunbird (Hedydipna collaris) and African Mourning Dove (Streptopelia decipiens).

After three nights at Shamvura we departed on Saturday 20 July and proceeded east. At Divundu we turned south to visit Popa Falls. At the turnoff to the falls we were stopped at the security gate and we proceeded further south instead and turned in at Divava Okavango Lodge and Spa, (www.divava.com) where we were met by the manager [originally from Scotland]. We arranged a boat trip from the lodge to the Popa Falls which was a fantastic visual experience. We were able to walk on the pure white sand amongst the 1.2 km wide falls. We also did an incidental pentad and we added, inter alia, Gabar Goshawk (Micronisus gabar), Magpie Shrike (Urolestes melanoleucus), Meyer’s Parrot (Poicephalus meyeri), Wire-tailed Swallow (Hirundo smithii), White-fronted Bee-eater (Merops bullockoides), African Yellow White-eye (Zosterops senegalensis) and Pied Wagtail (Motacilla aquimp). After coffee and cake we proceeded east and we ultimately arrived at Kalizo Lodge (www.kalizolodge.com) at 16h30. It is about 40 km east of Katima Mulilo. The siting of this camp is idyllic because it is right next to the vast Zambezi River.

We booked a bird guide for the next morning. The bird guide, Calvin, was ready at what we thought was 06h30, but it was 07h30. I was informed that the clocks in the eastern Caprivi [now...
Zambezi] were one hour ahead of the rest of Namibia. At 08h00 we got going and at 0820 we had our first lifer, Western Banded Snake-Eagle (*Circaetus cinerascens*), sitting sedately in a tree. With Calvin we also saw, *inter alia*, Coppery-tailed Coucal (*Centropus cupreicaudus*), African Wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus senegallus*), Hartlaub's Babbler (*Turdoides hartlaubii*), Brown Firefinch (*Lagonosticta nitidula*), Little Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter minullus*) and Fan-tailed Widowbird (*Euplectes axillaris*). At 10h00 we finished with Calvin. From the southern side of the Zambezi we saw African Skimmer (*Rynchops flavirostris*) and Rufous-bellied Heron (*Ardeola rufiventris*).

**Figure 5: Western Banded Snake-Eagle**

Calvin had told us that we could get our other target bird, Schalow's Turaco (*Tauraco schalowi*), at Island River Lodge. At 14h00 we drove about 10 km to the Island River Lodge where the staff members were extremely helpful and they suggested that the bird had been seen in the trees around the swimming pool. We saw, *inter alia*, Great Egret (*Ardea alba*), White-browed Robin-Chat. After an hour I suggested to the rest of our party that as we could not locate the bird, we depart at 15h30. At 15h25 I had crippling views of Schalow’s Turaco [lifer]. The rest of our party missed out on the bird. About an hour later I saw another Schalow’s Turaco. By now I had memorised its contacting call and found the tree to which it had moved. Here the rest of my party had crippling views. We left Island River Lodge most satisfied. On the way back to Kalizo we saw amongst others Coppery-tailed Coucal and Senegal Coucal (*Centropus senegalensis*).

**Figure 6: Schalow’s Turaco**

On Monday 22 July at 07h30 we went on a boat ride with Kevin our guide/driver. Wire-tailed Swallow came to sit on the front of the boat. From the boat we saw, *inter alia*, African Skimmer, Grey-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus cirrocephalus*), Great Egret, Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*), Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*), Green-backed Heron (*Butorides striata*), Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) and Southern-Brown-throated Weaver (*Ploceus xanthopterus*). In the camp I was searching for Northern Grey-headed Sparrow (*Passer griseus*) [lifer] and in the process saw Red-billed Firefinch (*Lagonosticta senegala*). Eventually all of us saw Northern Grey-headed Sparrow. We did a pentad and received ORF’s for Little Sparrowhawk, African Goshawk (*Accipiter tachiro*), Little Swift (*Apus affinis*), Grey Tit-Flycatcher (*Myioparus plumbeus*) and Southern Carmine Bee-eater (*Merops nubicoides*).
After three days at Kalizo we sadly left on Tuesday 23 July to commence our long trip home. At 15h30 we arrived at our first overnight stop at Kavango River Lodge (www.tripadvisor.com), Rundu. The lodge has a stunning view over the Okavango River. We did an incidental pentad. We received no ORF’s. On Wednesday 24 July we had a fantastic breakfast and got going at 09h00. We arrived at our next overnight stop Ombo Rest Camp, (www.ombo-rest-camp.com) at 15h30. The camp is 10 km north of Okahandja. We did an incidental pentad and received ORF’s in respect of Rattling Cisticola (Cisticola chiniana) and Kalahari Scrub-Robin. On Thursday 25 July we got going at 07h30 and at 15h00 arrived at our last overnight stop, The White House, 11 km north of Grünau, (www.withuis.iway.na) . We did a final incidental pentad, this time no ORF’s. On Friday 26 July we got going at 07h00 and ten hours later at 17h00 we arrived home. I had added eight species to my life list and Gillian had added fifteen. The people in Namibia are extremely helpful and friendly. We had satisfactorily resolved all the ORF’s save Shelley’s Sunbird which kept in abeyance.