

AYAMA FARM - Birdwatching Brochure

Paardeberg Mountain area, offers a large variety of bird-friendly habitats. This ensures that a diverse variety of birds can be observed within a relatively short walk from our Farm.

All the habitats host their own specially adapted birds, some of which are species endemic to the Western Cape.

These habitats include vegetation along permanent streams, the thickets on the slopes of hills, the fynbos which is found on the tops of hills and man-made habitats such as dams, and cultivated areas (vineyards, olive grove and fruit trees).

1. **Egyptian Goose** (*Alopochen aegyptiaca*)

The Egyptian Goose is related to the shelduck, and is a cross between a duck and a goose. A shelduck is defined as being semi-terrestrial, and they are found in areas that have an abundant water supply as well as dry, safe places in which to feed, breed and nest. The Egyptian goose has vivid markings that are striking and impressive. In fact, they were considered to be holy by the Egyptians, who often included them in works of art due to their undeniable beauty. This bird is pale brown and grey, with rich brown or chestnut markings around the eyes, around the neck (resembling a collar), on a portion of the



wings, and under the otherwise black tail. In stark contrast, there are crisp white markings on the wings, complemented by an intense emerald on the secondary feathers of the males. There is also a well-defined brown patch right in the centre of the chest. The female of the species is slightly smaller than her male counterparts. Apart from this, there are few to no clear differences between the sexes.



HABITAT – The Egyptian goose favours a habitat that offers plenty of water, as well as some dry spots. So, they can usually be found in inland regions (even open

plains) that have wetlands, lagoons or lakes nearby. They are also partial to ornamental water features (like ponds). They enjoy perching in trees and exploring long grasses for food.

DISTRIBUTION – These birds are endemic to Africa, south of the Sahara Desert. In South Africa, they can be found almost everywhere, with the exception of desert or arid places. It can also be found in the southern part of Israel and in limited areas through the United States of America.

2. **Cape Spurfowl or Cape Francolin** (*Pternistis capensis*)

The Cape Spurfowl has a beautiful plumage that is characterised by a brownish-grey colour that has fine white wavy patterns or markings. The crown and nape are less detailed. The birds have red legs, which are clearly seen, even from a distance. The males are slightly larger than their female counterparts, but are distinguished by the two spurs on their legs (as opposed to the female, which may have one short spur, if anything). Younger birds can be spotted by their dull-coloured legs and clearer markings (known as vermiculations). This bird is often confused with other francolins. An effective way of differentiating it, though, is to look for its pale cheeks and dark cap.



HABITAT – The Cape Spurrow favours scrubby areas that have good access to running water. They are frequently found in the fynbos scrub of the Western Cape and the bushes of the Karoo, as well as in people's gardens and on farmlands.

DISTRIBUTION – Although endemic to the Western Cape Province, this francolin is also found in parts of the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and southern Namibia.

3. **Helmeted Guinea Fowl** (*Numida meleagris*)



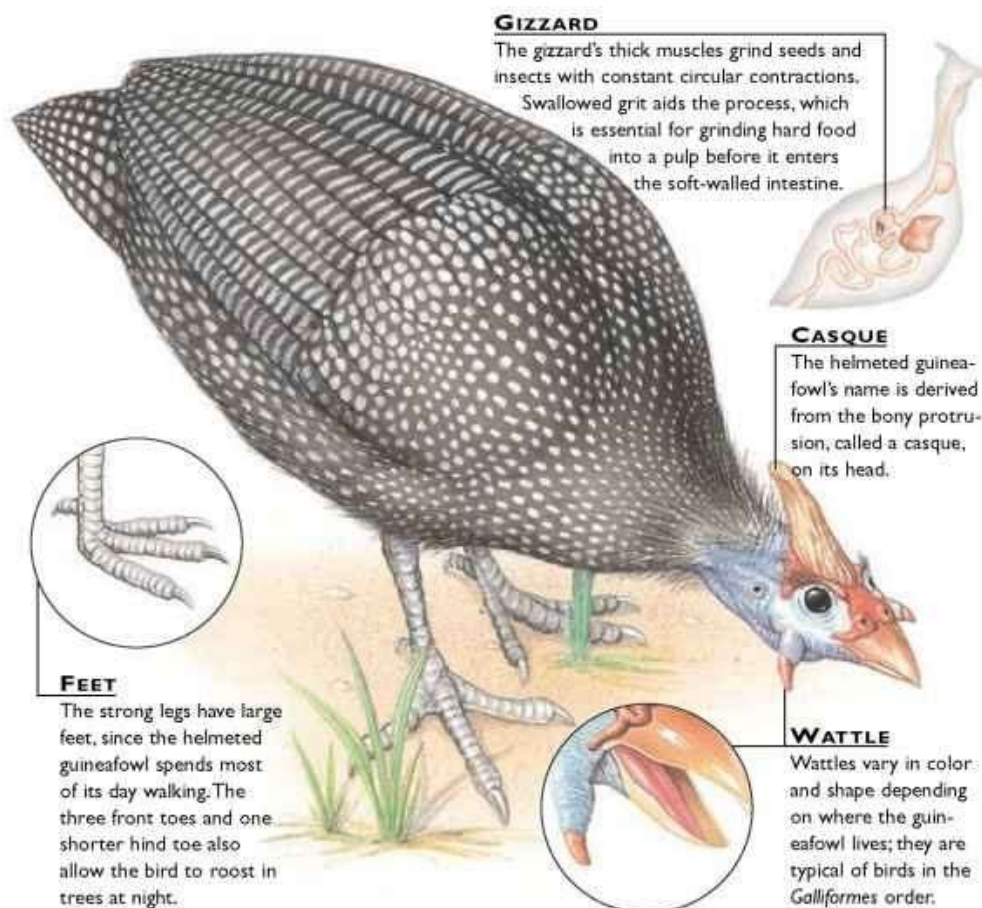
The helmeted guinea fowl, commonly known as the tarantaal in South Africa (an Afrikaans term), is a beautiful member of the guineafowl family, and is often seen in groups in the wild and in residential areas. The wings are medium in size, with a rounded edge. Although they are accomplished flyers, they prefer to run on the ground. Helmeted guinea fowl are characterised by their black or grey plumage with vivid white spots. Their bald faces and necks have blue skin with red wattles (males' wattles are larger than those of the females). The beak is

short and stout and there is a brown or orange helmet on their crown that has a triangular horn shape.

HABITAT – The helmeted guinea fowl certainly shows a tendency towards open countryside and shrubby savannahs. However, it is flexible, and can be found in a variety of habitat types. Still, it is not found in rain forests or in arid areas.



DISTRIBUTION – The helmeted guinea fowl is found throughout the whole of South Africa.



4. **Spotted Eagle Owl** (*Bubo Agricanus*)



Nocturnal hunters, the spotted eagle owl spends most of the day concealed in trees, rock ledges or abandoned burrows. The Spotted Eagle Owl is a medium to large owl with prominent ear tufts. The upper-parts of the body are dusky brown with pale spots, the under-parts are whitish and finely barred. Despite being one of the smaller eagle-owl species, the spotted eagle owl has an impressive one metre wingspan. The facial disk is whitish to pale ochre and the eyes are yellow. The Spotted Eagle owl can easily be mistaken for the Cape Eagle owl. Differences are the yellow eyes, smaller claws and striped legs.



HABITAT – Savannah, rocky outcrops, scrub, open and semi-open woodland, semi-deserts.

DISTRIBUTION – Sub-equatorial Africa from Kenya and Uganda south to the Western Cape in South Africa.

5. **Red-eyed Dove** (*Streptopelia semitorquata*)

Red-eyed Dove is a pigeon which is a widespread resident breeding bird in Africa south of the Sahara. It is a common, if not abundant, species in most habitats other than desert. This species builds a stick nest in a tree and lays two white eggs. Its flight is quick, with the regular beats and an occasional sharp flick of the wings which are characteristic of pigeons in general. Red-eyed Dove is a largish, stocky pigeon, typically 34cm in length. Its back, wings and tail are pale brown. When flying, it shows blackish flight feathers. The head and underparts are dark vinous-pink, shading to pale grey on the face. There is a black hind neck patch edged with white. The legs and a patch of bare skin around the eye are red. The call is a loud *doo-doo-du-du*. Males and females look alike, but juveniles are duller than adults, and have scalloping on the body feathers. Red-eyed Doves eat grass seeds, grains and other vegetation. They often forage on the ground. Like several other species in this genus, they are not particularly gregarious and often feed alone, or in pairs.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – It is distributed through most of Sub-Saharan Africa, except in desert zones. It is a common, if not abundant, species in most habitats other than deserts. Like several other species in this genus, they are not particularly gregarious and often feed alone or in pairs. They can be found in forests near rivers.

6. **Cape Turtle Dove** (*Streptopelia capicola*)

The Cape Turtle Dove is one of the most common birds in South Africa. It may be found virtually anywhere and in some areas it is present in large numbers. It is found in a variety of habitats and is a common site in parks and gardens. The Cape Turtle Dove mainly feeds on seeds but they also will take fruit, termites and earthworms. The female Cape Turtle Dove is responsible for making the nest. Typically she will make it amongst dense foliage in a tree. The normal clutch size is 1 or 2 eggs but sometimes there are more. Both parents tend to the eggs and chicks. The Cape Turtle Dove is dependent on water sources and may often be seen drinking or bathing.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Cape Turtle Doves are present in the eastern and southern parts of Africa. It is widely present in various habitats, including Boscia and Acacia savanna, woodland areas, farmlands, open plantations, alien acacia thickets, and semi-desert scrubs. Dry, waterless areas like the dune fields and gravel plains of Namibia are not suitable for them.

7. **Laughing Dove** (*Spilopelia senegalensis*)



The laughing dove is a long-tailed, slim member of the pigeon family, usually around 25cm long. It is pinkish brown on the underside with a lilac tinged head and neck. The head and underparts are pinkish, shading to buff on the lower abdomen. A chequered rufous and grey patch is found on the sides of the neck and are made up of split feathers. The upper parts are brownish with a bluish-grey band along the wing. They have a bluish grey rump and upper tail coverts. The tail is graduated and the outer feathers are tipped in white. The legs are red. The populations vary slightly in plumage with those from more arid zones being paler. The sexes are indistinguishable in the field, but young birds lack the chequered neck markings.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – These little doves can be sighted across Africa, the Middle East, and several parts of Asia, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India. Laughing Doves frequent a wide array of habitats, including woodland savannahs, thickets of acacias, bushlands, and suburban areas. They are usually seen in large towns, parks, gardens, and villages.

8. **Klaas's Cuckoo** (*Chrysococcyx klaas*)



Klaas's Cuckoo is a species of cuckoo in the family Cuculidae which is native to the wooded regions of sub-Saharan Africa. The species was named by French explorer François Le Vaillant after his Khoikhoi servant. Le Vaillant was the only colonial biologist to



name some bird species after local people.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Fairly common across sub-Saharan Africa, absent only from arid desert. In southern Africa it is fairly common in central and northern Namibia, northern and eastern Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland and southern and eastern South Africa. It generally prefers open broad-leaved woodland, especially miombo (*Brachystegia*) and Mopane (*Colospermum mopane*) woodland, but it also occupies dense *Acacia* thickets, forest edges, gardens and alien tree stands around farmsteads.

9. **Acacia Pied Barbet** (*Tricholaema leucomelas*)



The Acacia pied barbet is nearly endemic to southern Africa, as its range extends marginally into Angola and Zambia. It mainly occurs in semi-arid savanna, but it has recently colonised grasslands, fynbos, orchards and suburban gardens, due to the introduction of alien tree species, especially *Acacia*. It feeds mainly on fruit, as well as insects, Aloe nectar and flower petals.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Nearly endemic to southern Africa, marginally extending into Angola and Zambia. It is

common in Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, southern Mozambique and South Africa. It generally prefers semi-arid savanna, but in the past century it has colonised grasslands, fynbos, orchards and suburban gardens, due to the introduction of alien tree species, especially Acacia.

10. Fork Tailed Drongo (*Dicrurus adsimilis*)



The fork-tailed drongo is a medium sized bird at 25 cm in length, including the tail. The fork-tailed drongo has a mainly glossy black plumage, with the wings being a little duller. This bird has a large head with a hooked black bill and a red eye. The tail is deeply forked. It can be easily mistaken for a southern black flycatcher (*melaenornis pammelaina*) as the two birds are very similar in appearance, except the drongo has a red eye and the flycatcher has a brown eye.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – The fork-tailed drongo has a wide distribution across South Africa, and can be found in most woodlands and forests and is a common visitor to urban gardens.



11. Pied Crow (*Corvus albus*)

Both sexes are alike with a black head, neck and upper breast. The wings and tail are uniform black. The pied crow has a white collar on its upper mantle, extending to the breast and sides of the body. Legs and feet are black. The eyes are dark brown.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – The pied crow is found throughout South Africa. Occurring in most habitats, but not in the very arid regions of the southern Kalahari and the Karoo. It is rarely seen far from human settlements. The pied crow numbers and distribution is increasing, mainly in parts of the Western Cape and into the Karoo. Recent studies have suggested that this is due to global warming and addition nesting sites. Pied crows are tree nesters and with the expansion of the electrical supply, the crows are using the electrical infrastructure of the power lines to nest. With global warming, the climate has warmed in the arid midwest of South Africa and cooled in the north-east, opening new habitats for the crows.

12. Cape Bulbul (*Pycnonotus capensis*)

The Cape Bulbul is easily identified by its white eye-rings, black bill, and bright yellow feathers under its tail. Overall, its colouration is a dull blackish brown. It has a small crest on its head and black legs and feet. Males and females look alike.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – It occurs in coastal bush, open forest, fynbos and garden habitats. It generally prefers thickly vegetated fynbos, succulent Karoo, and gardens or parks with trees and bushes. The Cape Bulbul is Endemic to South Africa. It is very common across much of the Western Cape, with its range extending along the coast to the Northern and Eastern Cape Provinces.



13. **Olive Thrush** (*Turdus olivaceus*)

The olive thrush is, in its range, one of the most common members of the thrush family . It occurs in African highlands from southern Malawi and Mozambique in the north to the Cape of Good Hope in the south. It is a bird of forest and woodland, but has locally adapted to parks and large gardens in suburban areas.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Endemic to southern Africa, with the bulk of its distribution centered on South Africa's eastern and southern coast extending to Limpopo Province and Lesotho, with a smaller population in Zimbabwe's eastern highlands. It generally prefers evergreen forest, forest edges, and suburban and rural gardens, in fact it is the 8th most common bird in Cape Town.

It also occupies alien Acacia thickets and commercial orchards.

14. **African Stonechat** (*Saxicola torquatus*)

The African Stonechat is a widespread species that can be found over most of sub-Saharan Africa. It can be found over most of South Africa except for the north-western regions of the country. Males are more brightly coloured than females. African Stonechats are normally seen sitting on a low perch keeping an eye out for food. They will then drop to the ground to catch food. They mainly eat insects but will also take small reptiles and seeds.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Occurs in patches across sub-Saharan Africa, but with the bulk of its population



located from eastern Sudan and Ethiopia through southern DRC, Angola and Tanzania to southern Africa. Here it is common across much of Zimbabwe, northern Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Caprivi Strip, Namibia. It generally prefers montane or open grassland (with scattered shrubs and bushes), fynbos shrubland, grassy hillsides, edges of high altitude forest, swamp edges and cultivated land.

15. **Cape Robin-Chat** (*Cossypha caffra*)

The Cape robin-chat has an orange breast and grey belly. The bird has a white eyebrow and a black band across the face. The Cape robin-chat has black legs. Orange tail feathers and back are visible in flight. Both sexes look alike. Juveniles are brown and heavily mottled.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – This species is found throughout South Africa and is a common garden bird. The Cape robin-chat is a bird of thickets, forest edges, parks and gardens. Often absent from inland forests. The Cape Robin-Chat occurs in patches from southern Sudan to Kenya, Tanzania, and eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, with its biggest population being in southern Africa. In southern Africa, it is common across South Africa, Eswatini, Lesotho, southern Mozambique and southern Namibia, and has an isolated population in the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe.

16. Bar-Throated Apalis (*Apalis thoracica*)

The Bar-Throated Apalis is a small African passerine bird belonging to the genus *Apalis* of the family Cisticolidae. It is native to the eastern and southern Afrotropics. It is similar in size, shape and behavior to the Carolina Wren in North America, but has a longer tail. It is endemic to South Africa, and feeds almost entirely on insects. The Bar-Throated apalis is a slender bird with a long tail and is 11 to 13 cm in length. The plumage varies depending on the subspecies: the upper parts can be grey or green while the underparts are white or pale yellow. All forms have a narrow black band across the breast, white outer tail-feathers and a pale eye. The black bill is fairly long and slender and is slightly curved. Females are similar to males but have a narrower breast band.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – It inhabits forest and scrub in Southern and East Africa from southern and eastern parts of South Africa north as far as the Chyulu Hills in Kenya. In the northern part of its range it is found only in highland areas where there are a number of subspecies restricted to isolated mountain ranges. Some of these may be treated as separate species including the Namuli apalis in Mozambique, yellow-throated apalis of Malawi and Taita apalis in Kenya.

17. Karoo Prinia (*Prinia maculosa*)

The Karoo prinia or spotted prinia is a small passerine bird. It is a resident breeder in South Africa, Lesotho and far southern Namibia. It is a species of karoo scrub, fynbos and bracken covered slopes in semi-desert and mountains.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Endemic to southern Africa, occurring from the extreme south of Namibia to the Northern, Western and Eastern Cape, extending into the Free State and Lesotho. It is common to locally very common, preferring shrubland such as fynbos, Karoo scrub and renosterveld but also occupying gardens, thickets of a *Acacia* trees and strandveld.



18. Fiscal Flycatcher (*Sigelus silens*)



It is a small passerine bird in the Old World flycatcher family. It is a resident breeder in Botswana, South Africa, Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland, and a vagrant to Namibia. This species is found in subtropical open woodland, dry savanna, shrubland and suburban gardens.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Open woodland from moist to semi-arid regions. Frequent garden visitors. Endemic to southern Africa where they are common. Sedentary in the south but altitudinal movements are made by northern populations in winter.

19. Cape White Eye (*Zosterops virens*)



The Cape white-eye is a monogamous small passerine bird in the white-eye family and native to southern Africa. The species is about 12cm long with rounded wings, strong legs, and a conspicuous ring of white feathers round the eyes. Both parents build a nest in the form of a little cup. They use various plant materials in the vicinity to build the nest, such as dry grass, tendrils and rootlets. The young will stay in the vicinity of the nest for some time before leaving the area completely.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Near-endemic to South-Africa, occurring across much of the country, excluding the Kalahari Desert and extending into south-eastern Botswana. It is very common in a wide variety of habitats, including Karoo, fynbos, suburban gardens and parks, evergreen forest, dune scrub, *Acacia* veld and *Eucalyptus* plantations.

20. Common Fiscal (*Lanius collaris*)

It is also known as the Fiscal Shrike. It can be found in virtually all areas of South Africa. These shrikes are commonly seen sitting on exposed perches such as telephone wires, signs and the edge or tops of bushes. From these vantage points they scour the surrounding area for food. The Common Fiscal will eat virtually any prey small enough to swallow. They will take insects, reptiles, frogs and even small birds or mammals. They have earned the name of "Butcher Bird" with their habit of impaling some of their food onto thorns or other spikes such as those on a barbed wire fence. Females normally make the nest, choosing sites in a thorn tree or other protected spot. Males defend the surrounding territory aggressively against other Common Fiscals. They can be confused with the Fiscal Flycatcher which is shorter-tailed and narrower-billed.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Widespread across sub-Saharan Africa, absent from much of the DRC, Somalia and Ethiopia. In southern Africa it occurs almost everywhere in South Africa, extending into much of Namibia, Zimbabwe and southern Botswana. It occupies a wide variety of habitats but generally prefers open habitats with scattered trees, such as savanna, open woodland, shrubland and grassland. It is also extremely common in man-made habitats such as gardens, parks, farmland and roadsides.

21. Bokmakierie (*Telophorus zeylonus*)



The bokmakierie is a bushshrike around 23 cm in length. The bokmakierie has olive-green underparts, with a bright yellow tip on its black tail. The head is grey with a yellow eyebrow or supercilium. A broad black collar separates the breast from the throat. The back and wings are an olive green. The bill is black and the upper mandible has a hook on the end. The legs and feet are grey. The bokmakierie is a secretive bird and is



more often heard than seen. Its most common call is “bok-bok-mak-kik”, the origin of its common name. This bushshrike will often call or sing in “duet”. Bokmakeries are not gregarious and are normally found singly or in pairs.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – The bokmakerie is near endemic and is found throughout South Africa. It is most common in the Karoo and fynbos areas. It is also frequently found in parks and gardens.

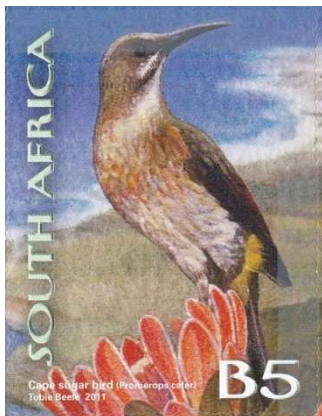
22. Common Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

21-22cm in length. Common starling has a wide variation in plumage. Both sexes are similar, although the female is less glossy than the male. In autumn, when the plumage is new, birds are glossed black, with a purple and green shine, and the tips of the body feathers have large white spots. At this time the bill is dark and the legs are brown. With wear, the white spots are lost, while the bill and legs turn yellow. During the breeding season adults become glossy-black without any spots. Young birds are dull grey-brown.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – The Common Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* has progressively expanded its range in South Africa since its introduction into Cape Town in the late 19th century. In the past few decades it has extended this range into Gauteng province. Agricultural fields, deciduous woodlands. Their main requirements are open, grassy areas in which to forage, a water source, and trees or buildings that contain suitable cavities or niches for nesting.

23. Cape Sugarbird (*Promerops cafer*)



The Cape Sugarbird, also known as the Promerops cafer, is a beautiful bird that is indigenous to South Africa. It is a noisy, conspicuous bird that is considered a vital pollinator of various plants. The Cape Sugarbird is regarded as one of the eight birds that are commonly found in the Fynbos biome of Eastern Cape and

Western Cape of South Africa. One of only two sugarbirds found in South Africa, the Cape sugarbird is easy to recognise. They are a buffy-grey colour, with a yellow vent (under tail) and a long flowing tail. The bill is long and decurved. A conspicuous malar strip is visible. The male is around 40 cm in length and the female, with the shorter tail, is around 30 cm in length. The female has a paler breast than the male.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Cape sugarbird are endemic to South Africa and are restricted to the fynbos biome, between the Cederberg Mountains and the Buffalo River in the Eastern Cape. The Cape sugarbird's distribution is dependent on the Protea flower, used both for food and nesting. Also commonly seen in rural gardens and urban areas especially in and around Cape Town and the Cape Winelands.



24. Malachite Sunbird (*Nectarinia famosa*)

Malachite sunbirds are a sexual dichromatism species. (The male and female have different plumage). The male malachite sunbird is 25 cm in length, this includes the central tail feathers. The breeding male's plumage is bright metallic green in colour, with darker wings and a small yellow pectoral patch. The eclipse colouring (non-breeding), upper parts are brown, and the underparts are yellow, speckled with green. The wing tips and tail are green. The feet, legs and bill are black. The female malachite sunbird's plumage is brown on the upperparts and a dull yellow below. Some indistinct streaking is visible on the chest. The female is around 15 cm in length, as she has a shorter tail.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Malachite sunbirds are found in riverine woodlands and fynbos areas. This bird is a common park and garden visitor. The malachite sunbird can be seen in the southern parts of South Africa and along the West Coast where fynbos is present.



25. Orange Breasted Sunbird (*Anthobaphes violacea*)



It is a species of small, predominantly nectar-feeding bird. Measuring in at only around 15cms in length the Orange-Breasted Sunbird has to be one of the Cape Floristic Kingdom's most attractive endemic species. The male's spectacular coloration of metal-green head and neck, blue collar and orange belly make it unmistakable, while the female is a much drabber olive-green in color. It is mainly found in dense stands of proteas and ericas with some altitudinal migration taking place between summer and winter.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Endemic to the fynbos biome of the Western and Eastern Cape, South Africa, generally preferring dense stands of *Protea* and *Erica*. It also occurs in coastal renosterveld and occasionally gardens, provided that there are enough nectar producing plants such as *Aloe*.

26. Southern Double Collared Sunbird (*Cinnyris chalybeus*)

Is a small sunbird in the family Nectariniidae. The male and female look different from one another. The male has a pale grey belly and relatively narrow red breast band. The female is overall grey-brown. The Southern Double-collared Sunbird is usually seen singly or in small groups. Its flight is fast and direct on its short wings. It feeds mainly on nectar from flowers, but also eats fruit, and, especially when feeding young, insects and spiders.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Endemic to southern Africa, occurring from the far south of Namibia to South Africa, with the bulk of its population centered around the Western Cape extending east and

north to KwaZulu-Natal, Swaziland, Mpumalanga and Limpopo Province. It generally prefers fynbos and Karoo shrubland, woodland, Afro montane Forest, gardens and Eucalyptus plantations.

27. **Cape Weaver** (*Ploceus capensis*)

Common endemic resident. Larger weaver with a long pointed bill and pale eye. Breeding male distinguished from female spectacled weaver by large size and black eye-line not extending behind the eye. Orange-brown wash over the face and throat. Non-breeding male is duller and without chestnut wash on face and throat. Female has dark brown



eyes, rarely cream and duller than the male, chin and throat is creamy and the breast has a yellow wash. The bill is brown. Juvenile is similar to the female but has brown eyes.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – The Cape weaver is endemic to South Africa and is found across the country, excluding very arid areas. It occurs in open grassland, lowland fynbos, around farms and along the coast in coastal thickets, close to permanent water.

28. **Yellow Bishop** (*Euplectes capensis*)

Chunky and large-billed bishop. Male shows yellow shoulders and rump in all plumages, but is otherwise the black in breeding plumage and streaky brown in non-breeding plumage. The female is brown and heavily streaked below, without yellow highlights. Found in grassland, open woodland, heathland, and cultivation. Usually in flocks, especially when not breeding. Song consists of simple twitters and sizzling notes. Females could be confused with many other species but usually associate with males, which show distinctive yellow shoulders and rump.



HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Although it occurs in areas of Ethiopia and Nigeria, the bulk of its population extends from Uganda and southern DRC through Tanzania, Angola and Zambia to southern Africa. Here it is fairly common in north-central Mozambique, Zimbabwe and in South Africa along the Escarpment, through Lesotho and the Eastern Cape to the Western Cape. It occupies a wide array of habitats, including fynbos, cultivated land, dense vegetation along streams, forest edges and montane grassland.



29. **Brimstone Canary** (*Crithagra sulphurata*)



The Brimstone Canary or bully canary is a small passerine bird in the finch family. It is 15–16 cm in length with a heavy bill, which is short, conical and very stout at the base. The bill is light brown with a pinkish or yellowish base. The legs and feet are pinkish-brown. It has yellow-green upper parts with dark green streaking, yellow-green ear coverts and malar stripe, and two yellow wing bars. The underparts are yellow, with a greenish wash on the flanks, and breast. The sexes are similar, but the male is brighter, with a bigger bill, better defined face

pattern, brighter yellow wing bars and a greenish rump. Young birds are duller, greyer and less yellow below than the adults.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Occurs in patches from Uganda through southern and eastern DRC, Tanzania, Angola and Zambia to southern Africa. Here it is fairly common in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland and eastern and southern South Africa, from Limpopo Province south to KwaZulu-Natal and west to the Western Cape. It generally prefers thickets, edges and clearings in coastal forest, montane shrubland, old croplands, gardens and edges of alien tree plantations.

30. **Cape Canary** (*Serinus canicollis*)



The Cape Canary is a beautiful little passerine bird (11–13 cm in length) found in Southern Africa. It is also often referred to by its French name, Serin du cap. This species has been further introduced to Réunion and even Mauritius. The distribution of this breeding bird has also been observed in parts of Asia. This species is often confused with the yellow-fronted canary, however, the Cape



canary lacks the black facial marks. Its habitat is fynbos, grassland and gardens, preferably in highland areas. It builds a compact cup nest in a scrub. The Cape canary is a common and gregarious seed-eater.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Endemic to southern Africa, occurring in Zimbabwe's eastern highlands and adjacent Mozambique as well as in Swaziland, Lesotho and South Africa, from Limpopo Province south to KwaZulu-Natal and west through the Free State and the Eastern Cape to the Western Cape. It generally prefers montane grassland with scattered shrubs and patches of Ouhout (*Leucosidea sericea*), open savanna, *Protea* woodland, borders between drainage line woodland and Karoo shrubland, coastal dunes, edges of cultivated land and occasionally alien thickets of Port Jackson (*Acacia saligna*) and Rooikrans (*Acacia cyclops*).

31. **Streaky Headed Seedeater** (*Crithagra gularis*)

The streaky-headed seedeater or streaky-headed canary is a small passerine bird in the finch family. It is a common resident breeder in suitable habitats in southern Africa. It is 13–14 cm in length. The adult has brown upperparts with some faint streaking and a plain brown rump. The head has a finely white-streaked crown, dark face, and white supercilium and chin. The underparts are warm buff. The sexes are similar, but some females show a little breast streaking. The juvenile has less head streaking, a dull supercilium, more heavily streaked upperparts, and heavy streaking on the pale grey underparts. The streaky-headed seedeater is usually seen in pairs, but can be gregarious, forming large flocks, alone or with other canary species. It feeds on soft fruit, weed seeds and buds, and sometimes takes insects.

HABITAT and DISTRIBUTION – Although it has an isolated population in Angola, it mainly occurs in southern Africa from Zimbabwe, eastern Botswana and Mozambique to South Africa, excluding most of the Northern Cape, Free State and North-West Province. It generally prefers woodland and plains and hillsides, such as *Acacia*, broad-leaved and dry riverine woodland, also occupy forest edges, grassy protea scrub and the border between natural vegetation and cultivated land and gardens.

