

# CRANE'S CAPE TOURS & TRAVEL

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CAPE TOWN \* SOUTH AFRICA

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# Honeyguide

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*This is one of several sample itineraries available on [www.honeyguide.co.uk/yoursouthafrica.htm](http://www.honeyguide.co.uk/yoursouthafrica.htm) run by Crane's Cape Tours and Travel with Honeyguide Wildlife Holidays. We can also adapt itineraries to suit you – please contact us so together we can plan your South African wildlife holiday.*

## *Spring Flowers & Cape Town*

This natural history safari takes in a broad interest in the environment, but concentrates on the spring flowers of the Western Cape. During our 14 day safari we will spend seven days experiencing the wonders of the spring flowers of the Western Cape area. We go to some of the most beautiful wilderness areas of the Western Cape in pursuit of the birds, wild flowers and wildlife of the area. We also visit many flower reserves, botanical gardens and nature reserves along the way. We visit private remote farms as well as venturing into the natural areas of Namaqualand.

We then spend eight days in Cape Town enjoying spring in the *fynbos*. We will visit many reserves and gardens in the pursuit of birds & flowers.

The holiday will be based in two centres. Depending on where the best spring flowers are, we will spend six nights at a guest house in Namaqualand and seven nights in Cape Town in a guesthouse on the Cape Peninsula. Two further nights will be spent on overnight flights from the UK to Cape Town.

### **Namaqualand – 6 nights.**

The spring flowers of the Western Cape have a worldwide reputation. The area receives little rain throughout the year but after our winter rains, the landscape is swathed with a vibrant carpet of flowers. We will be able to enjoy this natural display at many places in the area.

Nieuwoudtville - the geophyte capital of the world, Namaqua National Park, Kamieskroon, Goegap Nature Reserve and Namaqualand, we will spend seven days going where the flowers are in bloom. The route that we take each day is very much dependent on where the best flowers are at the time. The spring flowers are very dependent on the vagaries of the weather.



In between the flower stops, we will be looking out for many of the local bird species and mammal species. The Goegap Nature Reserve features many of Namaqualand's natural riches, is an area of 15,000 hectares of granitic, rocky hills and sandy flats that support close on 600 indigenous flower species, 45 mammal species including Springbok, Gemsbok, and the Hartmann's Mountain Zebra. 94 bird species have been recorded in the reserve, which include the Black-headed Canary, Red Lark and Sickle-winged Chat. We spend some time walking along some of the back roads looking at / identifying and photographing the spring flowers. The Quiver Tree Forest is particularly photogenic.

we will also visit some San rock art paintings while on a full day walk through the dramatic red sandstone rock formations that characterise the Cederberg Mountains. The Cape Gannet Colony at Lambert's Bay is also on our tour agenda. Here we can see Terns, Cormorants, African Penguins and Cape Fur Seals from very close quarters. There are 6,000 breeding pairs of the endemic Cape Gannets on the 'island'. We follow the old West Coast road back to Cape Town, via the saltpans at Wadrif and the wetland at Verlorenvlei, Rocherpan Nature Reserve and the Berg River estuary at Velddrif.

At Darling we will visit the Waylands Wild Flower Reserve which has been set up to protect a rare type of vegetation called renosterveld. We will also botanize at the Tienie Versveld Flora Reserve. This small botanical reserve is particularly noted for its Gladioli, Babiana and Lachenalias. We will be driving through the wheat fields of the 'Swartland' where we will be looking out for Southern Black Korhaan, White Stork, Secretarybird and some of the many lark species.

#### **Cape Town – 7 nights.**

On the Cape Peninsula We will visit Silvermine Nature Reserve, which has excellent *fynbos* and is a great place to introduce you to the *fynbos* flora of the Cape. We will also visit the Cape of Good Hope Nature reserve, which is now part of the Table Mountain National Park. This windswept park has many indigenous plant species. Indeed the 7,750 hectare reserve has as many plant species as the whole of Great Britain. The park also has a variety of mammals such as the Chacma Baboon, Cape Mountain Zebra (*right*), Bontebok, Red Hartebeest, Eland and Cape Grysbok. The African Penguin colony at Simon's Town is always a highlight to visit.



Strandfontein Water Purification Plant (sewage works!) and Rondevlei Nature Reserve were both naturally occurring wetlands. With bird hides and observation towers, which will aid in our seeing and identifying an impressive amount of birds. Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, which must surely be one of the finest Botanical Gardens in the world and Table Mountain, Bloubergstrand and Rietvlei Reserve are all destinations that are on our tour agenda.



**Left: Chacma baboon. Right: Strandfontein**

Cape Town is famous throughout the world for its majestic mountain setting, and the many places and sights that both the city and the Cape Peninsula offer the visitor. Over the centuries, visitors have marveled not only at the Peninsulas natural splendor but also at the cultural diversity of the Mother City - the blending of Eastern, African and Western ways of life, which is constantly evident in architecture, dress and local customs. There is so much that we can recommend to visit in Cape Town that we schedule in a day at leisure so that you can visit a few of the many sights on offer.

We will spend a day at the Whale watching town of Hermanus and Fernkloof Nature Reserve. The Harold Porter National Botanical Gardens has one of the densest concentrations of fynbos in the Western Cape, with many beautiful ericas, proteas and pincushions. The Gardens have many paths that wind among the manicured lawns and flower beds, as well as through the forested kloofs.

The dramatic backdrop of the Hottentots Holland Mountains and the tree-lined streets, with the white gabled Cape Dutch homesteads all blend in tranquil harmony to make Stellenbosch one of the most beautiful towns in South Africa. The Paarl Bird Reserve with its many different water birds and the Paarl Mountain Reserve will afford us excellent birding opportunities.



**Cape weaver**

**When to visit: from 25<sup>th</sup> July to 10<sup>th</sup> September.**