

Reach Africa Birding and Getaways



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NTSIKENI

5 DAY TRIP: 24 to 28 October 2012

This trip promises to be an absolute winner! The tremendous diversity of birding habitats is sure to yield many interesting and sought after species.

We spend our first night in the village of Creighton, between Underberg and Ixopo. En route we will be travelling through some good birding country and visiting some interesting birding spots, including the Free State grasslands and Xumeni Forest, Donnybrook.

We spend the next morning birding in the vicinity of Creighton in pristine forest, grassland and farmland habitats. After a hearty brunch we head for the raw, untamed and exquisitely beautiful birding paradise of Ntsikeni.



Where and what is Ntsikeni?

With its extensive mountain top wetlands, rocky slopes and mistbelt grasslands, Ntsikeni is one of the most exciting birding destinations in southern Africa

Regarded as one of the highest priority wetlands in KwaZulu Natal, Ntsikeni is situated on a high plateau between Franklin & Creighton in southern KZN, near the source of the Lubhukwini River in the Umzimkulu catchment. The total area of the reserve is 9200ha, with the wetland covering an area of some 1070ha.



Although a provincial reserve since 1978, Ntsikeni has enjoyed a natural protection and secrecy due to its remoteness, isolation and inaccessibility until recently, when a reasonable access road and lodge were built.

Accommodation is in a self catering lodge, which has four comfortable chalets and a large kitchen and central dining area

Undoubtedly the prime birding attraction of Ntsikeni is the Eurasian Bittern, whose booming call is often heard at dawn and dusk. Whilst a sighting of this elusive mega is not guaranteed, one's chances are arguably greater here than anywhere else in southern Africa

BIRDING ATTRACTIONS

Creighton and surrounds

Black Sparrowhawk, Forest Buzzard, Bush Blackcap, Cape Parrot, Orange Ground-Thrush, Knysna Turaco, Grey Cuckooshrike, Forest Canary, Black-rumped Buttonquail, Blue Swallow, Black-winged Lapwing, Cuckoo Finch, Red-chested Flufftail.

Ntsikeni

Eurasian Bittern, Cape Eagle-Owl, African Grass-Owl, Black Harrier, Western Marsh-Harrier, Rufous-chested Sparrowhawk, Denham's Bustard, Wattled Crane, Grey Crowned Crane, African Rail, Striped Flufftail, Red-chested Flufftail, Broad-tailed Warbler, Pale-crowned Cisticola, Yellow-breasted Pipit, Ground Woodpecker, Sentinel Rock-Thrush

