

**B**irding on Mount Edgecombe Country Club Estate offers a fantastic opportunity to view and enjoy some of the region's most beautiful birds. With a bird list of over 220 species recorded within the grounds, it allows the observer some of the safest and most diverse birding in residential Durban. Along with the more commonly associated species of a developed environment, come numerous more secretive and sought after species as well as the odd rare vagrant to the area.

A casual stroll along the 8th and 9th cart paths on course two will take one along the edge of Pani Forest, undoubtedly the jewel in the crown of Mount Edgecombe's birding areas. The large dead tree near the 9th green often hosts White-eared Barbets and Rose-ringed Parakeets, a colourful but introduced species to the sub region. Further along the path one may encounter Red-capped Robin-Chat and Black-throated Wattle Eye, as well as Tambourine Dove which flush from the path when approached. Narina Trogon is an occasional visitor whilst Spotted Ground Thrush is a regular to the forest in winter months. Sunbirds are well represented by Amethyst, Grey, Olive and Collared and the raucous calls of the Purple Crested Turaco will often give away their presence. Raptors to the area include Black Sparrowhawk and African Goshawk, whilst African Fish-Eagles are frequently heard overhead, or from one of the many nearby dams. Heading towards the 8th tee box, the wetter areas often produce calling Red-chested Flufftail and African Rail though both these species will be difficult to see due to their secretive nature. The reeds around the dams host many Warbler species, best identified by their calls in summer, including Little Rush, Lesser Swamp and Great Reed.

Starting at the Merrick Hills Community Centre, a stroll along the boundary fence takes one along a patch of Acacia Woodland. Although not as populated as Pani Forest, this stretch often holds some unusual visitors including Fiscal Flycatcher in winter, Violet-backed Starling, Long billed Crombec and the stunning Orange-breasted Bush Shrike. Neddicky and Tawnyflanked Prinia are the common LBJ's whilst Yellow-fronted and Brimstone Canaries are also fairly common. Listen also for White-browed Robin-Chat calling loudly from one of the many thickets.



Moving north along the fence one comes to the Merrick Hills Nature Area, an expanse of grassland and emerging bush clumps where numerous Cisticolas and Widows are found. The tall seeding grasses around the little dam hold both Red-billed and Red-headed Quelea in summer, and flocks of Waxbills and Mannikins. Plans are in progress to enlarge this dam to develop a more extensive wetland.

Any of the Estate dams hold an interesting selection of waterfowl but of particular interest are the lily covered ponds at Cherry Hills which are often visited by a pair of Pygmy Geese. Black Crakes, Purple Swamphen, African Jacana and White-faced Ducks can usually be seen here too. With some luck a Little Bittern may be spotted flying across the water, and further towards the Stoney Bridge area in Quail Valley, Shelley's Francolin can be heard calling in the evenings or early mornings along the estate boundary fence nearby.

On Estate One, Duma Dam is the main attraction. Both Pink-backed and Great White Pelicans occur here and a colony of Black-crowned Night Herons can be seen emerging from the dam side vegetation at dusk. The surrounding flowering foliage attracts Purplebanded Sunbird and it is also a great spot to see one of the Egret and many other Heron species that frequent the Estates. A walk through the leafy streets of St Andrews and the wooded area between the 7th and 8th holes is also rewarding. A long returning summer visitor to Estate One is the Eurasian Nightjar which has been roosting on a low branch of one of the trees in the clubhouse parking lot.

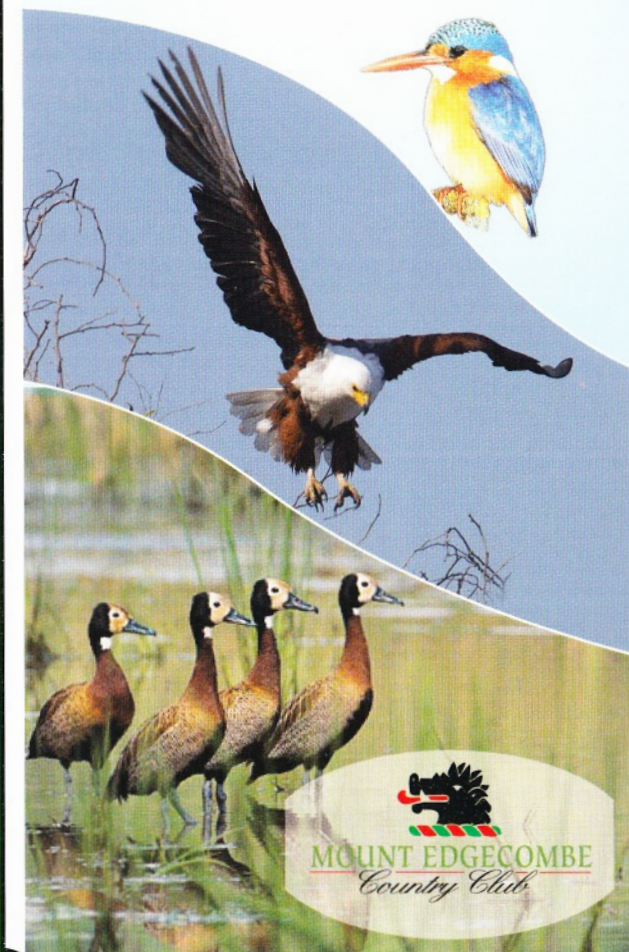
In addition to the endless birding pleasure for both those with a casual interest in our feathered friends as well as the serious birder, comes a variety of small game. Impala are regularly seen on the courses and in the nature areas, and there is always the chance of seeing one of the more secretive species such as Bushbuck, Blue Duiker or Slender Mongoose.

Residents and other Mt Edgecombe Country Club Members are all eligible to join our Bird & Environment Club, and are welcome at any of our many interesting talks, walks or outings. We are always keen to hear of interesting sightings and we welcome any feedback.

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# Bird Checklist



  
**MOUNT EDGECOMBE**  
Country Club

Little Grebe    
 Great White Pelican    
 Pink-backed Pelican    
 White-breasted Cormorant    
 Reed Cormorant    
 African Darter    
 Grey Heron    
 Black-headed Heron    
 Goliath Heron    
 Purple Heron    
 Great Egret    
 Little Egret    
 Yellow-billed Egret    
 Cattle Egret    
 Squacco Heron    
 Green-backed Heron    
 Black-crowned Night-Heron    
 White-backed Night-Heron    
 Little Bittern    
 Hamerkop    
 White Stork    
 Woolly-necked Stork    
 African Openbill    
 African Sacred Ibis    
 Southern Bald Ibis    
 Glossy Ibis    
 Hadedda Ibis    
 African Spoonbill    
 White-faced Duck    
 Fulvous Duck    
 White-backed Duck    
 Egyptian Goose    
 Yellow-billed Duck    
 African Black Duck    
 Red-billed Teal    
 Southern Pochard    
 African Pygmy-Goose    
 Comb Duck    
 Spur-winged Goose    
 Yellow-billed Kite    
 Black-shouldered Kite



Long-crested Eagle    
 African Crowned Eagle    
 African Fish-Eagle    
 Steppe Buzzard    
 Jackal Buzzard    
 Little Sparrowhawk    
 Black Sparrowhawk    
 African Goshawk    
 African Marsh-Harrier    
 African Harrier-Hawk    
 Osprey    
 Peregrine Falcon    
 Lanner Falcon    
 Shelley's Francolin    
 Natal Spurfowl    
 Common Quail    
 Helmeted Guineafowl    
 Small Buttonquail    
 Grey Crowned Crane    
 African Rail    
 African Crake    
 Black Crake    
 Red-chested Flufftail    
 Buff-spotted Flufftail    
 African Purple Swamphen    
 Common Moorhen    
 Red-knobbed Coot    
 African Jacana    
 Kittlitz's Plover    
 Three-Banded Plover    
 Crowned Lapwing    
 Blacksmith Lapwing    
 African Wattled Lapwing    
 Ruddy Turnstone    
 Common Sandpiper    
 Wood Sandpiper    
 Marsh Sandpiper    
 Common Greenshank    
 Curlew Sandpiper    
 Little Stint    
 Ruff    
 African Snipe    
 Black-winged Stilt    
 Spotted Thick-Knee    
 Water Thick-knee    
 Grey-headed Gull    
 Whiskered Tern    
 White-winged Tern    
 Rock Dove    
 African Olive-Pigeon    
 Red-eyed Dove    
 Cape Turtle Dove    
 Laughing Dove    
 Namaqua Dove    
 Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove



Tambourine Dove    
 African Green Pigeon    
 Rose-ringed Parakeet    
 Purple-crested Turaco    
 Common Cuckoo    
 Red-chested Cuckoo    
 Jacobin Cuckoo    
 Klaas's Cuckoo    
 Diderick Cuckoo    
 Black Coucal    
 Burchell's Coucal    
 Barn Owl    
 African Grass-Owl    
 African Wood-Owl    
 Spotted Eagle-Owl    
 European Nightjar    
 Fiery-necked Nightjar    
 Common Swift    
 African Black Swift    
 White-rumped Swift    
 Horus Swift    
 Little Swift    
 Alpine Swift    
 African Palm-Swift    
 Speckled Mousebird    
 Red-faced Mousebird    
 Narina Trogon    
 Pied Kingfisher    
 Giant Kingfisher    
 Malachite Kingfisher    
 African Pygmy-Kingfisher    
 Brown-hooded Kingfisher    
 Grey-headed Kingfisher    
 Blue-cheeked Bee-eater    
 Little Bee-eater    
 European Roller    
 Lilac-breasted Roller    
 African Hoopoe    
 Green Wood Hoopoe    
 Trumpeter Hornbill    
 Crowned Hornbill    
 Black-collared Barbet    
 White-eared Barbet



Red-fronted Tinkerbird    
 Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird    
 Crested Barbet    
 Greater Honeyguide    
 Scaly-throated Honeyguide    
 Lesser Honeyguide    
 Brown-backed Honeyguide    
 Golden-tailed Woodpecker    
 Cardinal Woodpecker    
 Olive Woodpecker    
 Red-throated Wryneck    
 Rufous-naped Lark    
 Barn Swallow    
 White-throated Swallow    
 Wire-tailed Swallow    
 Greater Striped Swallow    
 Lesser Striped Swallow    
 Rock Martin    
 Common House-Martin    
 Grey-rumped Swallow    
 Sand Martin    
 Brown-throated Martin    
 Banded Martin    
 Black Saw-wing    
 Black Cuckooshrike    
 Fork-tailed Drongo    
 Square-tailed Drongo    
 Eurasian Golden Oriole    
 Black-headed Oriole    
 Pied Crow    
 White-necked Raven    
 Southern Black Tit    
 Bush Blackcap    
 Dark-capped Bulbul    
 Terrestrial Brownbul    
 Sombre Greenbul    
 Yellow-bellied Greenbul    
 Kurrichane Thrush    
 Olive Thrush    
 Spotted Ground-Thrush    
 Familiar Chat    
 African Stonechat    
 Chorister Robin-Chat    
 Red-capped Robin-Chat    
 Cape Robin-Chat    
 Whitebrowed Robin Chat    
 Garden Warbler

Great Reed Warbler    
 African Reed Warbler    
 Marsh Warbler    
 Lesser Swamp Warbler    
 Dark Capped Yellow Warbler    
 Little Rush Warbler    
 Willow Warbler    
 Barthroated Apalis    
 Yellowbreasted Apalis    
 Longbilled Crombec    
 Greenbacked Cameroptera    
 Cape Grassbird    
 Fantailed Cisticola    
 Rattling Cisticola    
 Redfaced Cisticola    
 Rufous-winged Cisticola    
 Croaking Cisticola    
 Neddicky    
 Tawnyflanked Prinia    
 Spotted Flycatcher    
 African Dusky Flycatcher    
 Ashy Flycatcher    
 Southern Black Flycatcher    
 Fiscal Flycatcher    
 Cape Batis    
 Chinspot Batis    
 Black-Throated Wattle Eye    
 African Paradise Flycatcher    
 African Pied Wagtail    
 Longtailed Wagtail    
 Cape Wagtail    
 Yellow Wagtail    
 African Pipit    
 Plain-backed Pipit    
 Cape Longclaw    
 Yellow-throated Longclaw    
 Common Fiscal    
 Red-backed Shrike    
 Southern Boubou    
 Black-backed Puffback    
 Brubru    
 Southern Tchagra    
 Black-crowned Tchagra    
 Bokmakirie    
 Orangeous Bush-Shrike    
 Orange-breasted Bush-Shrike    
 Olive Bush-Shrike    
 Common Starling    
 Common Myna    
 Wattled Starling    
 Violet-backed Starling    
 Cape Glossy Starling    
 Black-bellied Starling    
 Red-winged Starling    
 Malachite Sunbird    
 Purple-banded Sunbird



White-bellied Sunbird    
 Grey Sunbird    
 Olive Sunbird    
 Scarlet-chested Sunbird    
 Amethyst Sunbird    
 Collared Sunbird    
 Cape White-eye    
 House Sparrow    
 Southern Grey-headed Sparrow    
 Thick-billed Weaver    
 Dark Backed Weaver    
 Spectacled Weaver    
 Village Weaver    
 Cape Weaver    
 Yellow Weaver    
 Southern Brown-Throated Weaver    
 Red-billed Quelea    
 Red-headed Quelea    
 Southern Red Bishop    
 Fan-tailed Widowbird    
 Red-collared Widowbird    
 Long-tailed Widow    
 Green Twinspot    
 African Firefinch    
 Blue Waxbill    
 Common Waxbill    
 Sweet Waxbill    
 Orangebreasted Waxbill    
 Red-headed Finch    
 Bronze Mannikin    
 Red-backed Mannikin    
 Pin-tailed Whydah    
 Dusky Indigobird    
 Yellow-fronted Canary    
 Brimstone Canary    
 Streaky-headed Seedeater    
 Golden-breasted Bunting