



## WILDLIFE

There is a perception that the southern Kalahari is a sparse and desolate desert. In reality it is a semi-arid grassland with wide open savannahs and a diversity of habitats. Tswalu is unique because it has typical Kalahari savannahs and sand dunes as well as the Korannaberg Mountains which increase the biodiversity of the area enormously. The mountains also provide spectacular backdrops for the landscape.

The variety of habitat and climate have resulted in an extremely diverse animal population. There are about 80 species of mammals and 240 species of birds. The open habitat makes for excellent game viewing.

Our vehicles have exclusive access to the entire reserve. There is no reason to queue for a sighting and no limit to the time guests can spend at sightings, because they are not competing with other vehicles.

Many of the animals that guests can expect to encounter on a game drive (or horse ride or walk) are species that are seen in more traditional safari areas (such as zebra, buffalo, giraffe, and white rhino) but many are also unique to the area, in particular the antelope. The Kalahari species include gemsbok, springbok, eland, red hartebeest and more. In addition, there are great opportunities to see rare species which are seldom seen in the traditional safari areas. These include roan and sable antelope, tsessebe, Hartmann mountain zebra and, of course, the desert black rhino.

The larger predators also offer excellent viewing opportunities. The Kalahari lions, although the same species as other lions across Africa, are famed for their size and beautiful manes. The Kalahari grasslands lend itself to excellent cheetah viewing and wild dog are also regularly seen on game drives.

Tswalu's small carnivores offer perhaps the most special and unique sightings. Meerkat viewing is unparalleled because the reserve has two colonies of habituated meerkats that have grown to trust people and allow close approach and observation. Apart from the more common small predators such as jackal and wild cat, unusual carnivores include bat eared fox, aardwolf, brown hyena, and small spotted genet.

*"I can say with confidence that Tswalu is probably the best place on earth to view aardvark and pangolin. Both these unusual animals are rarely seen elsewhere but the open grasslands on Tswalu make the animals easier to find, particularly during winter when they emerge in daylight to search for ants and termites."*

– Gus van Dyk