

Trip to Caprivi/Namibia with Aaron Bauer and Bill Branch

24 November 2009 – Tuesday

11:45 146252 km. Leaving home in Pretoria, heading for Bulawayo in Zimbabwe via Botswana. Went to Centurion to draw some money and purchased additional formalin.



Tropical House Gecko

17:00 146647 km. West of Baltimore. Got a d.o.r. Shield Cobra (*Aspidelaps scutatus*) – very flat.

17:47 146684 km. Through both border posts at Martins Drift. Pula 160 for road insurance.

19:48 146808 km. In Palapaya looking for accommodation but most of the places we found using our GPS look rather suspect. Bill found two Sand frogs (*Tomopterna* sp) in a near-empty swimming pool at one of the lodges. We headed for Nandos for dinner and I ended up calling Butch Rennie in Francistown who kindly offered us a bed for the night. Again!

23:00 146990 km. At Butch Rennie's house. Was nice to catch up with Butch – still farming chickens and looking good. He had a good break and managed some quality fishing.

25 November 2009 – Wednesday

07:35 146990 km. Leaving Butch's house and heading for Wimpy for breakfast. Also got some provisions from Spar. Heading for Bulawayo. There was a lot of police activity in Francistown, including police helicopters and we were told that the Botswana police were rounding up illegal Zimbabweans and shipping them back to Zimbabwe.

09:04 147000 km. Refuelled in Francistown – Pula 612 112 l. Have driven 744 km from home.

13:13 146303 km. Refuelling just north of Pretoria. R1073.45 140 l.

16:44 146621 Stopped off at Baltimore east of the border post where I had to arrange for Riaana's laptop to be taken to Pretoria – I had loaded the wrong laptop! Left the laptop with Johan Sparks at the local cafe/fuel station. Bill got a Tropical House Gecko (*Hemidactylus mabouia*).



Sand Frog

09:41 147031 km. On the way to Bulawayo and found a d.o.r. Striped Skaapsteker (*Psammophylax tritaeniatus*). 1088 masl. 37 km west of Ramokgwabane.



Striped Skaapsteker or Grass Snake

11:15 147086 km. Passed through both borders. In addition to copies of registration papers, the Zimbabwean customs officials also wanted a SAPS Clearance that the vehicle was not stolen. We had the same problem on a previous occasion while passing through Zimbabwe and that time I had to pay a R200 bribe to get through. This time I had the required paperwork, although I am quite sure it is not legally required. We had to pay R370 carbon tax, R150 for Third Party insurance and Aaron paid \$30 for a USA Visa. Bill, of course, being British, had to pay \$50!



Boomslang

12:01 14712 km. Do.r. Boomslang (*Dispholidus typus*) – very dark grey in colour, quite similar to a Black Mamba (*Dendroaspis polylepis*) colouration. 69.3 km SW of Bulawayo and about 10 km west of Figtree.

12:30 147204 km. At the Broadley's house. The GPS couldn't locate the street and actually had the street name wrong, but Don gave us fairly good directions.



Don Broadley and Bill Branch

We spent the afternoon at the Natural History Museum with Don and Sheila, photographing some distribution maps while Aaron looked at specimens. Sheila made us mince and rice for dinner and we chatted until about 22:00, then to bed. It was a long day.

26 November 2009 – Thursday

07:15 147218 km. Have driven 966 km from Pretoria. Had oats for breakfast and headed for Caprivi.

08:11 147293 km. We spotted a Flap-neck Chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*) crossing the road and as I stopped, a Yellow-billed Kite swooped low to grab it. I hooted and the kite flew off. 29.8 km east of Plumtree.

08:35 147325 km. Found a Speke's Hinged Tortoise (*Kinixys spekii*) on the road. We stopped to photograph it.



Speke's Hinged Tortoise

09:23 147337 km At the Zimbabwe/Botswana border. We got through quite quickly and, for no good reason, I am always relieved to get through these African borders.

10:45 147407 km. D.o.r. Snouted Cobra (*Naja annulifera*) with broad bands. 1005 masl.

12:57 147602 km. D.o.r. Rock Monitor (*Varanus albigularis*) just outside Nata Lodge. 900 masl.

13:45 147611 km. Lunch at Nata. We sat outside and it was extremely hot.

Just passed Nata we stopped at some water to photograph Knob-billed ducks and Foam Nest frogs (*Chiromantes xerampelina*).

17:05 147912 km. At Kazungula – added Pula200 (36.17 l) fuel and headed for the border. We saw a number of elephant. An articulate truck was driving well above the speed limit and I guessed that the border post was closing at 18:00. We got there about 2 minutes before closing and were a bit late on the Namibian side, but got through. They were all obviously very keen on going home and our passports were stamped quickly and nobody had any interest in checking the vehicle. We didn't even write down the vehicle's registration number. The weather was good, nice and hot. Road riding should be good.



18:52 148047 km. We were at somewhat of a dump of a lodge that we found using the GPS. A rather grumpy lady tried to talk us into taking a very small chalet – barely big enough for two beds and

riddled with mosquitoes. She told us that it was the only lodge in the area and that all of the local accommodation would be full by the next day as the schools were breaking up.

We drove on and found the Caprivi River Lodge where Bill and I shared a chalet right on the river bank with hippos close by. We had a good view of Zambia across the river and could hear the radios going at full blast, playing primitive, distorted music as you so often hear all over Africa.

We picked up some very suspect chicken burgers from a roadside cafe and went road riding.

20:12 148075 km. Found a Tremolo Sand frog (*Tomopterna cryptotis*) about 13.5 km SE of Katima Mulilo.

20:24 148075 km. Grass frog (*Ptychadena cf anchietae*) 14.2 km SE of Katima Mulilo.

20:28 148077 km. A small Tremolo Sand Frog (*Tomopterna cryptotis*) on the road, 950 masl and 15.5 km SE of Katima Mulilo.

21:12 148107 km. Tremolo Sand Frog (*Tomopterna cryptotis*) on the road. 44.5 km SE of Katima Mulilo.

27 November 2009 – Friday

07:40 We had a good night's sleep and a nice warm breakfast. The lodge charges R550 for a single person or R850 for a double. We saw a lot of elephant on our way to the lodge the previous day as well as a leopard crossing the road quite casually. Also missed a snake on the road the previous night – it was gone by the time we had stopped. Probably a spitter. We drove to town where I purchased some malaria medication. The pharmacy initially offered me some herbal pills for R15.00 which I declined.

08:12 148166 km. Refuelled in town. P971.00 138.9 l.

09:00 148202 km. Flap Neck Chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*) on the road. Bill also got an Ornate Rough-scaled Lizard (*Ichnotropis capensis*) with bright yellow sides after picking up the chameleon. 30.7 km SW of Katima Mulilo.



Ornate Rough-scaled Lizard



Long-tailed Worm Lizard

10:02 148209 km. 36.3 km SW of Katima Mulilo. 2 x Kalahari Burrowing Skinks (*Typhlacontias rohani*); 3 x Kalahari Dwarf Worm Lizards (*Zygaspis quadrifrons*); 2 x Wahlberg's Skink (*Trachylepis wahlbergii*); 1 x Long-tailed Worm Lizard (*Dalophia longicauda*); 5 x Sundevall's Writhing Skinks (*Mochlus sundevallii*); 1 x

Tropical House Gecko (*Hemidactylus mabouia*) and 1 x Ornate Rough-scaled Lizard (*Ichnotropis capensis*).

10:21 148228 km. 54.3 km SW of Katima Mulilo. D.o.r. Black Mamba (*Dendroaspis polylepis*) just under 2 m with a rat popping out of its guts. This was very close to some dwellings.

11:10 148264 km. 88.8 km SW of Katima Mulilo. 1 x Angola House Snake (*Lamprophis "angolensis"*); 1 x Kalahari Burrowing Skink (*Typhlacontias rohani*).



Brown House Snake



Chobe Dwarf Gecko

12:36 148288 km. At the police post on the Kwando River. Aaron got a Common Ground Agama (*Agama aculeata*) and two Chobe Dwarf Geckos (*Lygodactylus chobiensis*) and Bill a Variegated Skink (*Trachylepis variegata*).

Most of the afternoon was spent photographing and fixing specimens at the Caprivi River Lodge. I had a close shave with

the Agama – had it on an elevated piece of log and it sat still for quite a while during a photo session when it leapt off and disappeared under a big bush. With some help from Bill we managed to get it again.



Herald Snake

18:47 148412 km. Leaving the Caprivi River Lodge for some disgusting chicken burgers and some road riding.

19:21 148430 km. Herald Snake (*Crotaphopeltis hotamboeia*) on the road 9.4 km SW of Katima Mulilo. Nothing special – just the usual colours without the red or orange lips.

19:35 148439 km. D.o.r. Puff Adder (*Bitis arietans*) 18 km SW of Katima Mulilo.

19:56 148449 km. A live Mozambique Spitting Cobra (*Naja mossambica*) on the road 26.4 km SW of Katima Mulilo.

20:18 148462 km. D.o.r. Mozambique Spitting Cobra (*Naja mossambica*) 37.8 km SW of Katima Mulilo.

28 November 2009 – Saturday

07:48 148564 km. Heading out of camp after an enjoyable breakfast.

08:17 148585 km. D.o.r. Mozambique Spitting Cobra (*Naja mossambica*) 12.7 km SW of Katima Mulilo.

09:10 148606 km. 30.3 km SW of Katima Mulilo. 2 x Sundevall's Writhing Skinks (*Mochlus sundevallii*); 1 x Variable Skink (*Trachylepis varia*) and 2 x Kalahari Burrowing Skinks (*Typhlacontias rohani*).



Sundevall's Writhing Skink

09:19 148611 km. D.o.r. Common Ground Agama (*Agama aculeata*). 36.1 km SW of Katima Mulilo.

10:30 148613 km. 36.6 km SW of Katima Mulilo. 6 x Kalahari Burrowing Skinks (*Typhlacontias rohani*); 2 x Kalahari Dwarf Worm Lizards (*Zygaspis quadrifrons*); 1 x *Mochlus sundevallii* and 1 x *Ichnotropis capensis*. As we drove off we found a d.o.r. Snouted Cobra (*Naja annulifera*), about 1.6 m in length.

11:17 148620 km. 1 X Wahlberg's Skink (*Trachylepis wahlbergii*).



Wahlberg's Skink

13:00 148682 km. We had turned down onto the Linyati road and found one hatchling Wahlberg's Skink (*Trachylepis wahlbergii*) and two reptile eggs. Bill managed to get lost and walked to the nearest road where he heard vehicles but it was the east/west road about 2 km away. Needs a GPS! 7.3 km SW of Katima Mulilo.

The afternoon was spent in camp again fixing specimens and doing some photography.

20:40 148697 km. Another session of night riding but Bill decided to stay in camp, partially because night riding had been so unproductive. I couldn't handle another suspect chicken burger and went for the hot dog, it was equally as suspect.

20:12 148768. Rhombic Egg-eater (*Dasypeltis scabra*) on the road. 48.3 km SW of Katima Mulilo.



Rhombic Egg-eater

21:00 148803 km. Another Rhombic Egg-eater (*Dasypeltis scabra*) on the road. 17.6 km SW of Katima Mulilo.

21:12 148808 km. Herald Snake (*Crotaphopeltis hotamboeia*) 12.7 km SW of Katima Mulilo.

29 November 2009 – Sunday

08:10 148828 km. Leaving the Caprivi River Lodge and heading west for the Shamvura River Lodge which is run by Mark and Charlie Paxton.

08:36 148834 km. Refuelling in Katima Mulilo. Have travelled 25818 km to date. P620 88.7 l.

09:14 148874 km. D.O.R. Flap Neck Chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*) (it got flattened as we turned around). 36.6 km SW of Katima Mulilo.

12:40 149191 km. Flap Neck Chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*) on the road. 153 km east of Rundu.

15:00 149235 km. At Shamvura Lodge where we met Mark and Charlie. Mark is a keen birder and takes people on birding and photographic tours.



Tented accommodation at Shamvura Lodge

He also rates himself of somewhat of a herper but not sure that having been bitten 18 times qualifies you. A bit like Billy the Kid! He will do well amongst some of the Gauteng herpers.



Typhlosaurus jappi

Searched around under logs and the odd rock and got 3 x Wahlberg's Skinks (*Trachylepis wahlbergii*); 3 x Variable Skinks (*T. varia*); 2 x Sundevall's Writhing Skink (*Mochlus sundevallii*); 4 x Turner's Gecko (*Chondrodactylus turneri*); 1 x Ornate Rough-scaled Lizard (*Ichnotropis capensis*) and one Barotse Land Blind Legless Skink (*Typhlosaurus jappi*), the first for Namibia. Bill got a Wahlberg's Skink (*Trachylepis wahlbergii*). 1052 masl.

Tented accommodation cost us R350 per person per night excluding meals while camping costs R150 per person per night. Rather expensive but a captive audience. Charlie prepared us dinner which was very average and adequate but very expensive at R150 per person per meal. Breakfast is also very expensive at R80 a head.

19:11 149236 km. On the road for some night riding. There were signs of rain in the area but it just didn't happen.

19:24 149244 km. On the main road and got a Guttural Toad (*Amietophrynus gutturalis*). It somehow disappeared in the vehicle and is probably a bit of biltong somewhere in the dash.

21:04 149319 D.o.r. Foam Nest frog (*Chiromantis xerampelina*). 87 km east of main road turnoff.

21:45 149322 km. At Duvundu. Searched a pond next to the highway and got 2 x Banded Rubber Frogs (*Phrynomantis bifasciatus*);



Banded Rubber Frog

7 x Mascarene Grass Frogs (*Ptycadena mascareniensis*); 3 x Foam Nest frogs (*Chiromantis xerampelina*); 1 x Flat-backed Toad (*Amietophrynus maculatus*); 1 x Bubbling Kassina (*Kassina senegalensis*).



Bubbling Kassina

22:22 149352 km. Kalahari Ground Gecko (*Colopus wahlbergii wahlbergii*) on the road. 43.8 km east of Mbwata.



Mascarene Grass Frog

30 November 2009 – Monday

08:10 149400 km. Leaving camp for some collecting.

08:43 149430 km. Flap Neck Chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*). 16.8 km east of the lodge.

08:55 149433 km. Ornate Rough-scaled Lizard (*Ichnotropis capensis*). 19.6 km east of camp.

10:20 149463 km. This is the same spot where we got the *Colopus* the previous evening. 5 x Ornate Rough-scaled Lizards (*Ichnotropis capensis*); 3 x Kalahari Burrowing Skinks (*Typhlacontias rohani*) and missed a Wahlberg's Skink (*Trachylepis wahlbergii*).

10:36 149466 km. Wahlberg's Skink (*Trachylepis wahlbergii*) in a log which I bounced on the tar road to get it out. 44.56 km east of the lodge.

On the way back to camp we stopped off at the river and had a few casts for small tiger fish. We both managed a few very small tiger fish with some light tackle and a bream spinner – lots of fun.

While Bill and Aaron were preparing specimens in the afternoon I did some photography and walked off into the field but it was very hot and I got a solitary Sundevall's Writhing Skink (*Mochlus sundevallii*).

Bill and Aaron went on a night drive and got two Mozambique Spitting Cobras (*Naja mossambica*), one Eastern Olive Toad (*Amietophrynus garmani*), one Foam Nest frog (*Chiromantes xerampelina*) and two Turner's Geckos (*Chondrodactylus turneri*) at the camp site.



Mozambique Spitting Cobra

Mark also brought us a Guinea Shovel-nosed Frog (*Hemisus guineensis*) that he got in the swimming pool. I managed to get a Common Dwarf Gecko (*Lygodactylus capensis*) right outside Mark's office.



Guinea Shovel-nosed Frog

01 December 2009 – Tuesday

09:22 149643 km. About to leave camp. Upon our arrival we decided to stay for three nights but as the area was quite monotonous and the night driving not very productive, we decided to move on. Charlie had also informed us that she was leaving for Windhoek and would not be in a position to provide us with food, so moving on seemed the right move. Surprisingly, upon settling the bill, Charlie mentioned a cancellation fee because we were leaving one day earlier. Quite ridiculous as we had not booked in advance and the entire river camp was empty! The cancellation fee was somehow waived because of a discount, but it all seemed unnecessary and rather greedy.

11:25 149827 km. Refuel in Rundu. P1 000 143 l.

12:40 149867 km. 36.36 km west of Rundu. 2 x Turner's Geckos (*Chondrodactylus turneri*) and 2 Wahlberg's Skinks (*Trachylepis wahlbergii*) which were hiding in a log. Used an axe to split the log open.

13:08 149891 km. 61.3 km west of Rundu. Found a dead Tremolo Sand Frog (*Tomopterna cryptotis*) in a pond next to the road and successfully demolished a road sign when reversing!

16:13 150128 km. 53 km east of Otavi. Got 2 Sand Lizards (*Pedioplanis* ?) 53 km east of Otavi.

17:20 150211 km. 40.3 km NE of Grootfontein and got a Variable Skink (*Trachylepis varia*).



Variable Skink

20:10 150358 km. At Zum Potjie, 8 km north of Otavi on the Tjumeb Road. Canned food for dinner. Went road riding but nothing on the busy road.

2 December 2009 – Wednesday

08:00 150468 km. Leaving Zum Potjie after a nice breakfast. The single rate is R300 and the double rate R350.

08:30 150480 km. Refuel at Otavi. R736.35 105 l.

09:00 150489 km. 2 x juvenile Speckled Gecko (*Pachydactylus punctatus*) on the dirt road from Otavi to Outjo. 6.1 km west of Otavi.

09:15 150503 km. Leopard tortoise (*Stigmochelys pardalis*) sub adult. Still on the dirt road to Outjo. 20.1 km west of Otavi. Took some tissue samples for DNA.



Leopard Tortoise

10:00 150535 km. Speckled gecko (*Pachydactylus punctatus*) under a log. 46.8 km west of Otavi.

10:36 150592 km. Flap Neck Chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*) on the road. 87.4 km west of Otavi.

11:38 150620 km. About 24.1 km from Outjo. The brackets on the back axle have come loose and the axle has shifted, causing the vehicle to crab. And one of the new tyres picked up a nail in the side wall – not yet flat but replaced. Flap Neck Chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*) on the road.

14:50 150647 km. In Outjo and had the vehicle repaired for R430.00. This took a few hours and we relaxed, had a light lunch and paged through some magazines.

16:07 150759 km. Stopped for a *Gerrhosaurus* but could not find it. Got a Speckled Gecko (*Pachydactylus punctatus*). 22.8 km north of Khorixas.

20:48 150953 km. Travelled from Khorixas to Gaias Fountain using SA 4x4 tracks on the GPS – about 166 km. It worked perfectly but we did manage to lose a crate on the roof that contained two sleeping bags as well as Aaron's mattress. Saw a Black Rhino and got some pictures. Collected 5 x Turner's Geckos (*Chondrodactylus turneri*) at the Gaias fountain as well as a *Trachylepis* sp.



Gaias

20:30 150960 km. At Gaias and got three Brandberg Geckos (*Pachydactylus gaiasensis*), using the torch/binocular method.



Brandberg Gecko

Also saw a few Barking Geckos (*Ptenopus garrulus*) but didn't really try to get any as we collected several on a previous trip. At the old Gaias camping sit. It was a cold evening, especially without a sleeping bag. Aaron slept in the vehicle and also didn't get much sleep – very cold in the roof top tent!



Barking Gecko

09:46 150966 km. At Klein Gaias. 13 Brandberg Namib Day Geckos (*Rhoptropus diporus*) and one Hoesch's Skink (*Trachylepis hoeschi*).



Namib Day Gecko



Hoesch's Skink



Klein Gaias

10:37 10978 km. On the way to Brandberg West Mine from Gaias. Bill banded a large Hoesch's Skink (*Trachylepis hoeschi*) from the vehicle with a rubber band, knocking it out briefly but no damage. Nice specimen for photographs. 17.9 km from Brandberg West Mine.

12:30 150993 km. Close to Brandberg West Mine. 4 x Kaoko Sand Lizards (*Pedioplanis gaerdesi*).



Driving down the salt steps

13:20 151003 km. West of Brandberg West Mine. 7 x Brandberg Namib Day Geckos (*Rhoptropus diporus*), 3 x Speckled Geckos (*Pachydactylus punctatus*), 1 x Turner's Gecko (*Chondrodactylus turneri*) and 3 x FitzSimons' Gecko (*C. fitzsimonsi*).



Speckled Gecko

16:50 151221 km. At Swakopmund Rest Camp and heading for the Ocean Basket for dinner. Aaron visited the book shop and spent a small fortune on two books on the geology of Namibia. Must weigh 5 kg! Thought of popping in to visit John Visser but this wasn't feasible.

4 December 2009 Friday

07:40 151221 km. Heading for town for breakfast and another visit to the book store.

07:46 151223 km. Refuelled in Swakopmund. R941.50 138 l. Off for breakfast.

12:20 151431 km. 53.9 km west of Solitaire.



Solitaire

Bill and Aaron missed a Dwarf Plated Lizard (*Cordylus subreticulatus*). Got 12 x Plain sand Lizards (*Pedioplanis inornata*), 2 x Wedge-snouted Skinks (*Trachylepis acutilabris*), 1 x Western three-striped Skink (*Trachylepis occidentalis*), 1 x Variegated Skink (*T. variegata*) and 2 Common Ground Agamas (*Agama aculeata*).



Wedge-snouted Skink



Plain Sand Lizard

14:00 151490 km. Lunch at Solitaire. And it's hot!

16:40 151674 km. Way south of Soussosvlei – got a second flat!

16:55 151686 km. At Tolou's Lodge which is run by Jan and Marie. Jan told us about 6 m Berg Mambas that are too fat to fit through the fences (75 mm holes) – they just go right over the fences. Nice little chalets at R300 a head including dinner and breakfast. And the food was good – a lot better than Caprivi. Tel +264 61 234 342 – eden@mweb.com.na . Got one Giant Ground Gecko (*Chondrodactylus angulifer*), 1 x *Melores* sp and 4 Turner's Geckos (*Chondrodactylus turneri*). I went out onto the dunes and heard a few Barking Geckos (*Ptenopus garrulus*) – managed to see one with the binoculars/torch but it disappeared down its hole. Otherwise nothing.

5 December 2009 Saturday

10:06 151782 km. 7 km north of the farm Barby on C27 – 38.5 km north of Helmeringhausen. 1 x Festive Gecko (*Narudasia festivia*), 1 x Western Rock Skink (*Trachylepis sulcata*) and 1 x skeleton of a *Cordylus*. No sign of Campbell's Girdled Lizard (*Cordylus campbelli*) – really need a specimen as Ed needs tissue for his studies.



Festive Gecko

11:30 On the farm Barby. I went up the hill on the western side of the farmhouse while Bill and Aaron drove off with the farmer and his two children. After a long search I managed to get two Campbell's Girdled Lizards (*Cordylus campbelli*), both in narrow crevices in smallish rock outcrops.



Campbell's Girdled Lizard

It was extremely hot and upon my return to the vehicle I found that it was locked and there was no sign of Bill and Aaron. I found a shady spot next to the vehicle and relaxed for about half an hour. They had gone elsewhere on the farm and collected 1 x Serval Gecko (*Pachydactylus serval*), 1 x Jordan's girdled Lizard (*Cordylus jordani*), 1 x Festive Gecko (*Narudasia festivia*) and 2 x *Agama* sp.



Cordylus campbelli habitat

13:54 151821 km. Lunch in Helmeringhausen. Refuelled R300.00 42.79 l. Heading for Mariental.

16:30 152077 km. Mariental. Refuelled R800 114 l.

18:00 152203 km. At Auob Lodge only to find that it is fully booked. They called the local hotel but they were also fully booked, so it was another night of camping with no sleeping bag! And it turned out to be quite cold! We went to the lodge for dinner and ended up watching a bit of soccer. Back in the camp site, across the road from the lodge, we got Bibron's Gecko (*Chondrodactylus bibronii*) and the Karasburg Tree Skink (*Trachylepis sparsa*). Auob@ncl.com.na. +264 61374750 Fax +264 61256598

6 December 2009 Sunday



07:00 Made some oats for breakfast and we got stuck into some photography while Aaron fixed specimens. Then we headed west of Gotchas.

10:13 152215 km. A few kilometres west of Gotchas – got 3 x Speckled Geckos (*Pachydactylus punctatus*), 1 x Western Sandveld Lizard (*Nucras tessellata*) and missed a Western Three-striped Skink (*Trachylepis occidentalis*) as well as an *Agama*. Also got some Spotted Sand Lizards (*Pedioplanis lineocellata*). 3.09 km west of Gotchas.

11:00 152220 km. 9.3 km southwest of Gotchas. One Western Three-striped (*Trachylepis occidentalis*).

11:13 152223 km. 1 x Common Ground Agama (*Agama aculeata*) although

we could not agree on the identification. It looked more like an *Agama atra*-type animal and ran up a tree when cornered, but its colouration changed to *A. aculeata* colours at times. This group certainly needs some attention and already looking forward to what Stu Nielsen comes up with. 12.5 km sw of Gotchas.

11:55 152234 km. 27.9 km sw of Gotchas. Got Spotted sand Lizards (*Pedioplanis lineocellata*) and Western Three-striped Skinks (*Trachylepis occidentalis*).

13:00 Sandwiches for lunch and a lazy afternoon. We had great steaks for dinner, followed by desert!

20:30 1522287 km. In the reserve at a calcrete ridge. We had visited some red dunes earlier but nothing. It was quite windy. I was using the torch binocular combination and could quickly see that very little was out. Got one Bibron's Gecko (*Chondrodactylus bibronii*) on the ground, thanks to the torch binocular combination, otherwise we would have missed it. We were collecting on the farm Zonderput. Back to the lodge where we were booked into air-conditioned rooms.

7 December 2009 Monday

08:50 152290 km. Leaving the lodge after a pleasant breakfast.

10:05 152382 km. 9.9 km west of Stampriet. Found a Common Ground Agama (*Agama aculeata*) on the road that was hit by a car but still alive.

10:18 152396 km. 24 km west of Stampriet. D.o.r. Kalahari Sand Snake (*Psammophis trinasalis*). Has a divided anal shield.



Kalahari Sand Snake

10:35 152421 km. 49 km west of Stampriet. Western Three-striped Skink (*Trachylepis occidentalis*).

11:07 152476 km. D.o.r. Common Ground Agama (*Agama aculeata*). 16.5 km SE of Kalkrand.

13:47 152688 km. Windhoek. Booked into the Tamboti Lodge, still owned and run by Sigi. Aaron went off to the permit offices of Nature Conservation (what a battle to find them – Mike Griffin's old offices have been abandoned) while I spent most of the day trying to get the air-conditioning of the vehicle fixed. While walking in the centre of town Aaron nearly had his valuables stolen from his backpack but noticed that someone was tampering and prevented the theft. We ended up at Spur for dinner.

8 December 2009 Tuesday

07:00 Another day in Windhoek. I had another bash at having the air conditioning fixed but no joy. It was going to cost over R6, 000 but they could not locate the required spares in Namibia. Aaron went off to the permit offices again and we just chilled, visiting book stores, coffee shops, etc. We ended up having pizza for dinner.

09 December 2009

06:30 Another good breakfast at Tamboti and a quick visit to the permit office. We then headed south to look for the Kobos Gecko (*Pachydactylus kobosensis*).



Aaron and Bill next to the Padloper

07:40 152735 km. Leaving Tamboti Lodge.

08:44 152740 km. Refuelled in Windhoek R872 126 l.

12:00 At the Kobos Gecko (*Pachydactylus kobosensis*) site near Kobos. It was an extremely hot day and collecting difficult. We could not find any *P. kobosensis* (Aaron got 4 when last he stopped at this spot) and ended up with 4 x Turner's Geckos (*Chondrodactylus turneri*), 1 x Anchieta's Agama (*Agama anchietae*), which I banded off the top of a rock and it ended up about 2 meters from the rocks, and 4 x Western Rock Skinks (*Trachylepis sulcata*).



Western Rock Skink

We headed back to Windhoek to see if the export permits had been processed. We waited for Aaron at the Mugg and Bean and could see in his walk that he had obtained the required paper work. Always a relief as one never knows what can go wrong with export permits, especially as CITES permits were involved. Bill and I went to a sleazy sports pub where we ate pizza and watched some British soccer on TV.

10 December 2009

08:00 153071 km. We said our goodbyes to Sigi at Tamboti Lodge (www.tamboti-namibia.com) and headed for the Botswana border.

09:00 153154 km. D.o.r Brown House Snake (*Lamprophis capensis*) – took some tissue. 83 km east of Windhoek.

11:00 153263 km. 19 km east of Gobabis. Flap Neck Chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*) on the road.

10:22 153282 km. Refuelled in Gobabis. About 120 km west of the Buitepos border post. R640.35 91 l.

10:59 153327 km. D.o.r. Eastern Tiger Snake (*Telescopus semiannulatus*). Haven't caught one of these in a while and a pity that it was dead. 67 km west of the border.



Eastern Tiger Snake

12:30 153396 km. At Buitepos border post. The border officials had our names on a piece of paper and asked us to call a number in Windhoek – all rather strange. It turned out to be a message from Sigi at Tamboti. Aaron's credit card had not gone through for the accommodation and she required more information from him.

20:14 153791 km. At the Echo Lodge in Kang. The lodges were all full and we managed to get a small air conditioned room for two people. I ended up sleeping in the roof tent of the vehicle. After a pleasant meal we went road riding but found nothing.

11 December 2009

07:30 153839 km. Leaving Kang for Pretoria. Refuelled Pula 542 99 l.

08:30 153923 km. Common ground Agama (*Agama aculeata*) on the road. 83 km east of Kang.

09:16 153945 km. We found two Serrated Tent Tortoises (*Psammobates oculifer*) in the process of mating in the middle of the road. 105 km east of Kang. We had a 20 minutes photo session.

10:00 154024 km. D.o.r. Mole Snake (*Pseudaspis cana*).

10:22 154055 km. Flap Neck Chameleon (*Chamaeleo dilepis*). 32 km west of Juaneng.



Flap Neck Chameleon - Pic Bill Branch

11:44 154182 km. Rock Agamas (*Agama atra*). 1201 masl. We were 34.2 km south west of Kanye, fairly close to the SA border.

16:30 Back home in Pretoria.

Another great trip!