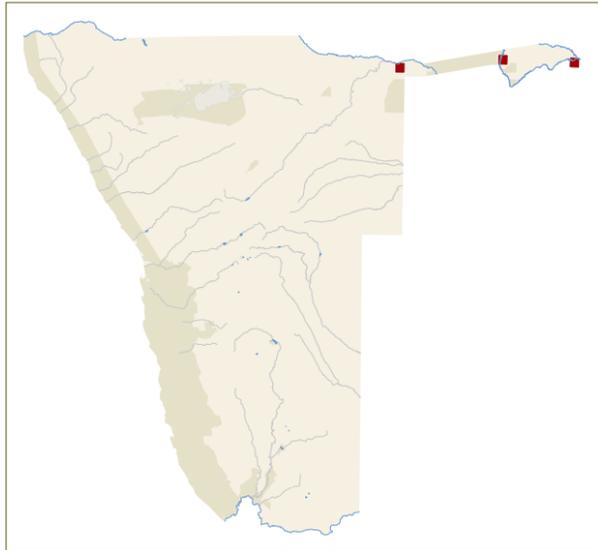


in December 2002 (Simmons 2003). Threats include predation by local inhabitants who plunder colonies by hanging nets over occupied tunnels to capture the trapped birds or spear the young birds in the nest (Barnes & Herremans 1997, Simmons 2003, M Paxton *in litt.*). Thus, although it can be a relatively common sight in Namibia (reporting rates above 20% are common along rivers), this species requires some monitoring and protection if it is not to enter the *Near Threatened* category in future years.

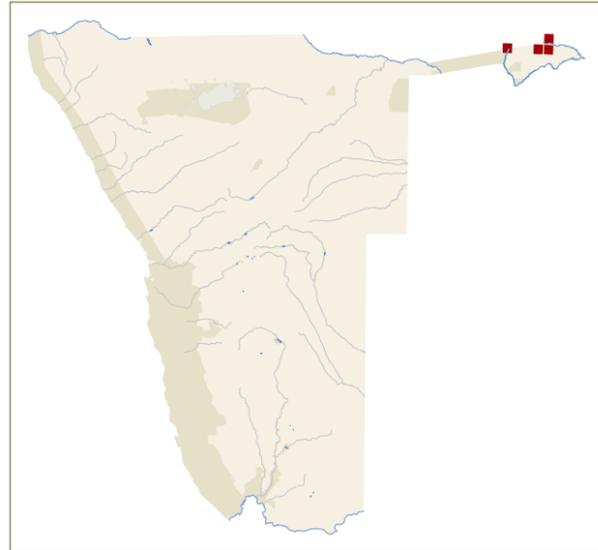
**Thick-billed Cuckoo I  
*Pachycoccyx audeberti***



This is an uncommon to rare species of well-developed woodland, including Zambezi teak, miombo and Mopane, and lowland forest from West Africa through to eastern southern Africa, particularly Zimbabwe and Mozambique (Vernon & Dean 2005e). There are four known records in Namibia from Impalila Island, riparian woodland on the Kwando River near Susuwe and the Kavango east region near Shamvura. It is a brood parasite of Retz's Helmet-Shrike (Red-billed Helmet-Shrike) *Prionops retzii*, which occurs across the Caprivi Strip and through the northern parts of the two Kavango regions. The Thick-billed Cuckoo is generally solitary, unobtrusive and probably more common than the number of records suggest. Surveys in the vicinity of its host would reward the effort. There is no reason to suspect that it is under any threat in Namibia. Both the cuckoo and its host are protected by the Bwabwata, Mudumu, Nkasa-Rupala (Mamili) and Khaudum national parks.

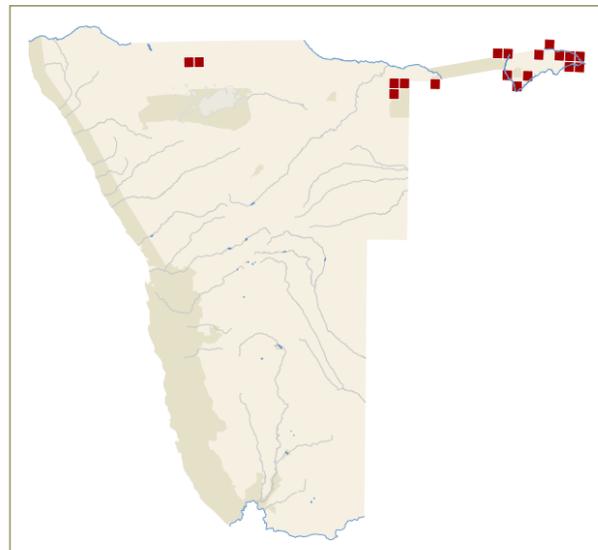
**African Emerald Cuckoo (Emerald Cuckoo) I  
*Chrysococcyx cupreus***

This is a widespread species in Afrotropical forests from West Africa to Ethiopia and southwards into eastern parts of South Africa and Zimbabwe (Vernon & Underhill 1997a).



It is generally scarce, with a reporting rate averaging 6% for the region. In Namibia, it has only been recorded from the immediate area around Katima Mulilo and once from the Kwando River (Jarvis *et al.* 2001) in riparian forest or dense evergreen forest. It has a reporting rate of 4% in these areas and its population is clearly very small. It is presumed to be a migratory species that arrives in southern Africa in September and October and leaves (or becomes quiet and elusive) by February or March. It is not threatened anywhere.

**Black Coucal I  
*Centropus grillii*  
(*Centropus bengalensis*)**



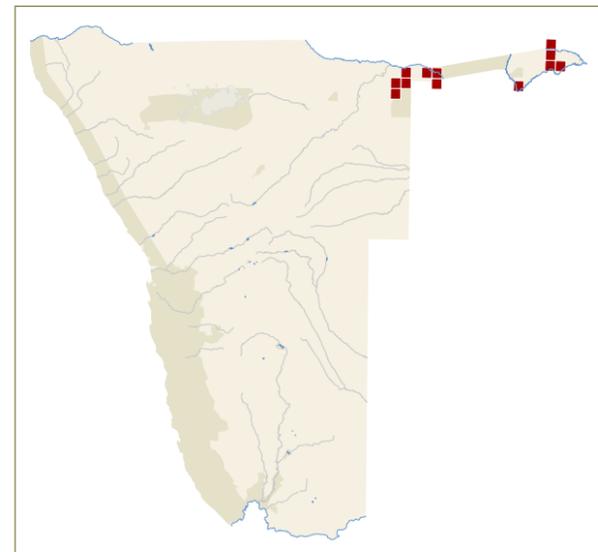
This polyandrous species occurs in the floodplains and associated grassland vegetation of the Zambezi, Chobe, and Kwando rivers. Small populations are also recorded in the Cuvelai drainage system in the north-central regions and the Khaudum National Park (Brown 1990, Vernon



© Ken Oake Game Studios (Botswana) Pty Ltd

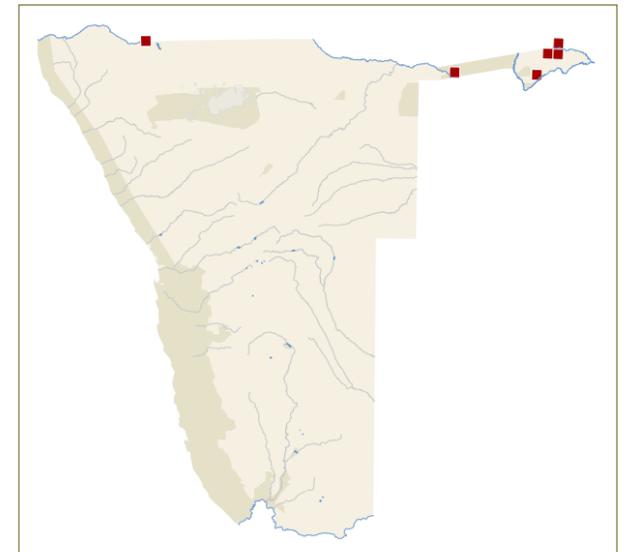
& Herremans 1997a). Its southern African stronghold is the Mashonaland Plateau of northern Zimbabwe and the Okavango Swamps, but it is not common anywhere (Vernon & Herremans 1997a). The overall reporting rate for this easily overlooked species is 6% (Jarvis *et al.* 2001), but population size is unknown. It is a migratory species that occurs in Namibia from October to April (Vernon & Herremans 1997a). It was found in healthy numbers, with a minimum of ten birds, in one locality on the Salambala floodplain of the Chobe River in February and September 1998, where it almost certainly breeds (Robertson *et al.* 1998a). The high frequency of grassland burning and trampling by the large herds of cattle in Caprivi (Mendelsohn & Roberts 1997) may negatively influence this species if fires and livestock spread into the wetlands. It is not threatened in other ways, but was designated *Near Threatened* in South Africa because of historical range contractions (Allan 2000a).

**Grey-headed Parrot I  
*Poicephalus fuscicollis***



This, the largest parrot in southern Africa, just touches the Zambezi and Kavango regions in a range that extends north to Tanzania and Uganda (Fry *et al.* 1988) and south from Zimbabwe to northern South Africa (Wirminghaus 1997). The population south of this distribution in South Africa has recently been given full species status (Symes 2005) as the Cape Parrot *P. robustus*. The Grey-headed Parrot is found mainly in mature miombo and Mopane woodland below 1,000 m (Rowan 1983). It occupies an area of 7,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the Zambezi and Kavango regions. Its movements are not understood because atlas data indicate records from October to June, but no records from the winter and spring months (Wirminghaus 1997). They breed in Namibia and lay from February to May (n=6) (Brown *et al.* 2015). Reporting rates suggest low numbers, representing much less than 5% of the range of the African population. There are some indications that it suffers from local inhabitants taking nestlings for the parrot trade and for food, while in Namibia damage to its forest habitat is evident from elephant and human pressures (CJ Brown pers. obs.). Populations are currently being monitored by members of KOAR (Kavango Open Africa Route), and this initiative should be extended to other tourism facilities and partners across the north-east of Namibia (M Paxton pers. comm.). Cutting of large mature fruiting trees should be discouraged. It has recently been assessed as *Near Threatened* in South Africa (Taylor *et al.* in press).

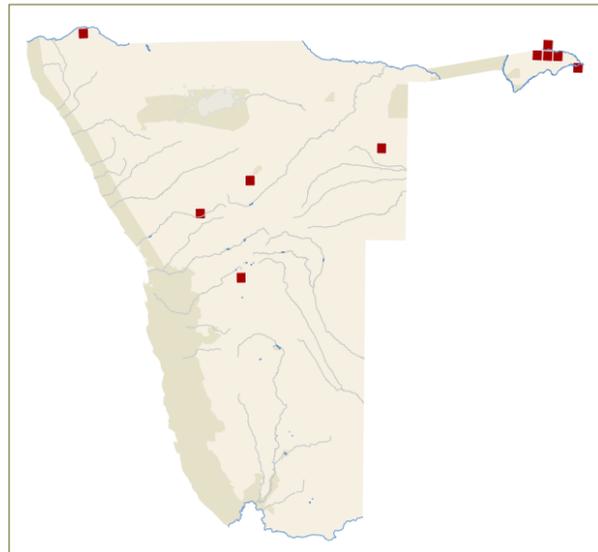
**Böhm's Spinetail I  
*Neafrapus boehmi***



This rare species occurs in a highly fragmented distribution from coastal Angola (isolated) east to Tanzania and is probably most common in Mozambique (del Hoyo *et al.* 1999). It occurs patchily in north-west and south-east Zimbabwe and north-eastern South Africa. In Namibia, it just touches the north-east of the country at the Zambezi River, the Linyanti Swamps and the Okavango River (Brooke 1997b),

and has been recorded on the Kunene River. It prefers riverine forest with Baobab trees in lowland tropical areas. It is not threatened in southern Africa but little is known of its specialized ecology other than that it nests in holes in Baobab trees, where it builds a nest of leaf stalks attached to the inside wall of the hollow tree, or on the ground in manmade holes (Tarboton 2001). Eight breeding records for Namibia have them laying on December and January (Brown *et al.* 2015). Its reporting rate in Namibia is 3.7% from an area of occupancy of 1,800 km<sup>2</sup> (Jarvis *et al.* 2001).

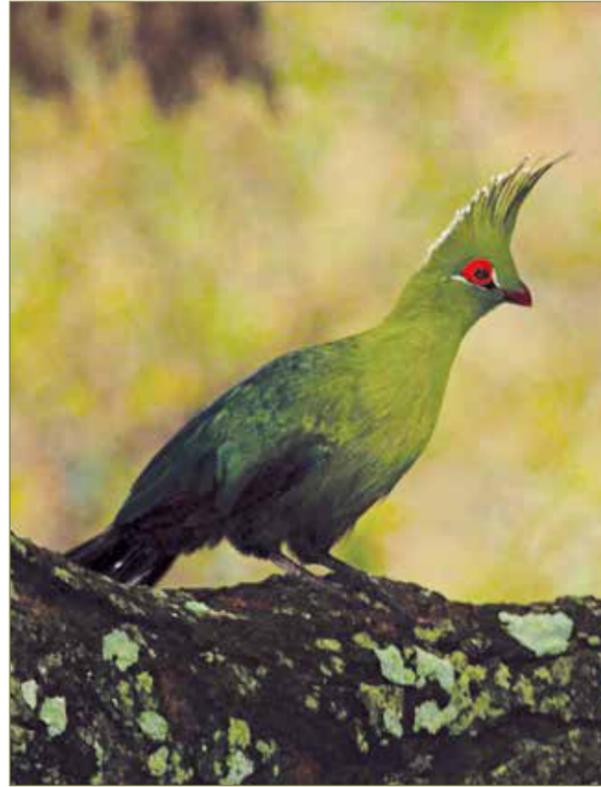
### Horus Swift | *Apus horus*



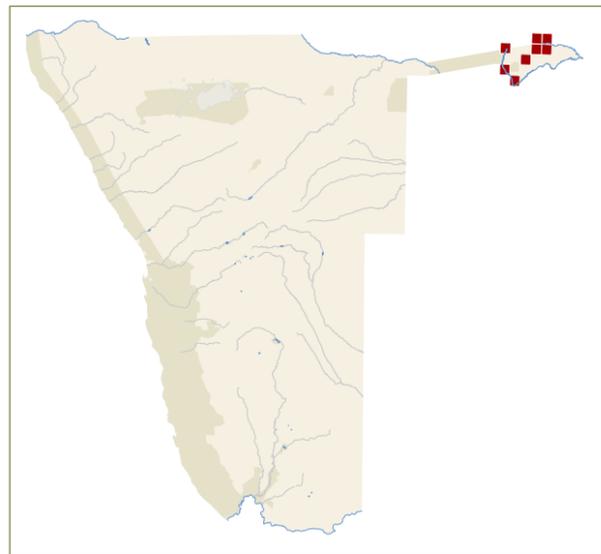
This species occurs patchily from Sudan to Zimbabwe and the eastern and southern regions of South Africa (Brooke 1997a). It has a curious distribution in Namibia, occurring on the Zambezi and Chobe rivers, a few records from the Kunene River and then a large gap before it reappears at low density and isolated locations in central Namibia (Brooke 1997a). It is easily mistaken for the Little Swift *A. affinis*, which may explain the fragmented occurrence, but it can be recognised at close quarters by a slightly forked tail. Some populations in Zimbabwe and on the Kunene River lack the white rump (CJ Brown, J Paterson pers. obs.). Nests are typically found in river banks, and are holes excavated initially by bee-eaters or kingfishers (Brooke 1997a). Colonies have been found in banks adjacent to road culverts used by White-rumped Swifts *A. caffer* in Namibia (Brown 1989). Eggs were laid in March (n=4: Brown *et al.* 2015). It is not threatened in Namibia, but rather occurs there on the edge of its African distribution.

### Schalow's Turaco | *Tauraco schalowi*

Following the split of the three southern African 'green' turacos into full species, supported by morphological, vocal and molecular evidence (du Plessis & Dean 2005), this

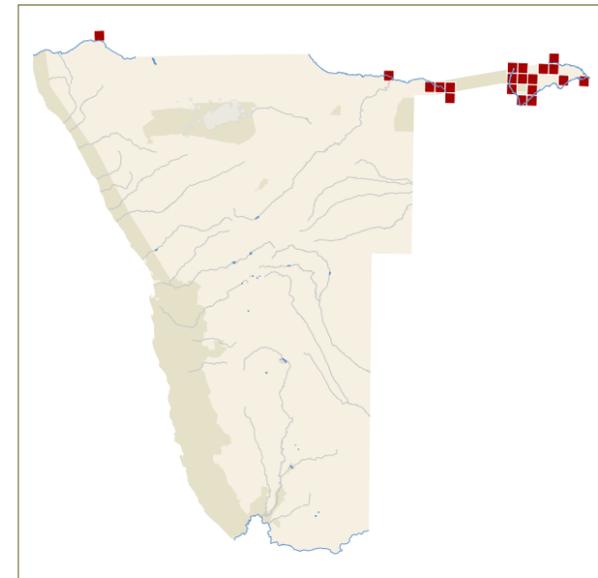


© Alick Rennie



poorly known species of woodlands, primarily associated with rivers and evergreen forest, is represented in southern Africa only by birds in the eastern Zambezi region and northern Botswana, where reporting rates average 20% (Oatley 1997a, Jarvis *et al.* 2001). Namibian birds are mainly recorded from Katima Mulilo, where they are best detected by their calls. Populations extend into Angola, Tanzania and south-west Kenya and south to Malawi. Population size is small, but unknown in Namibia. Some riparian habitat has been lost in the Zambezi region, which is likely to have resulted in a decline in numbers.

### African Wood-Owl (Wood Owl) | *Strix woodfordii*



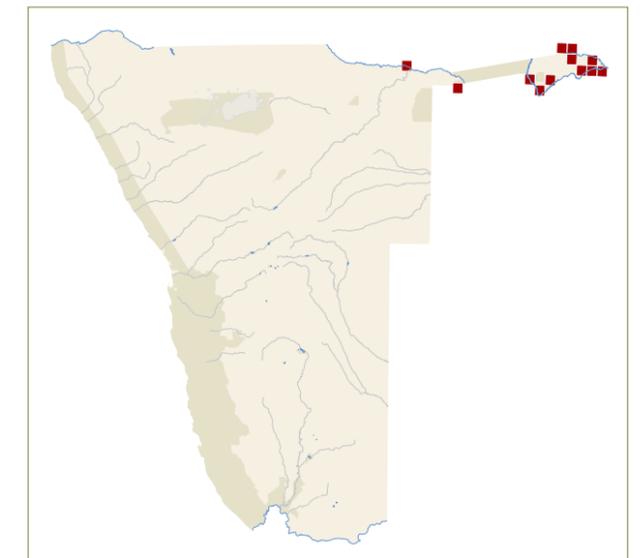
This tropical woodland species occurs widely from West and central Africa down the eastern side of southern Africa into South Africa as far as Cape Town (Mendelsohn 1997d). Four subspecies are recognized of which the nominate *woodfordii* occurs throughout Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa (del Hoyo *et al.* 1999). In southern Africa,



© Alick Rennie

it is often associated with coastal or riverine woodland and has been recorded in the riparian woodland of the Okavango, Kwando, and Zambezi rivers. It is curiously absent from the Chobe River. Another population is found on the Kunene River near Epupa Falls. This population is not isolated, but rather represents the southern limit of the Angolan population (Mendelsohn 1997d, del Hoyo *et al.* 1999). This species occupies an area of 7,900 km<sup>2</sup> in Namibia, of which 17% occurs in the protected Mahango region of the Bwabwata National Park and Mudumu and Nkasa Rupara (Mamili) national parks (Jarvis *et al.* 2001). Given a density of 23 pairs in 15 km of river in high reporting rate areas of South Africa (Kemp & Kemp 1989), Namibia's rivers may hold (at an estimated density of 10 pairs per 10 km) about 330 pairs (approximately 750 birds) of African Wood-Owls along 330 km of river (from Mendelsohn 1997d). It may be at risk from woodland degradation in all areas of Namibia, but it is not considered threatened anywhere.

### Swamp Nightjar (Natal Nightjar) | *Caprimulgus natalensis*



This rare nocturnal denizen of grassy floodplains and wetlands is separated into two subspecies in southern Africa: *C. n. natalensis*, which is endemic to southern Mozambique and the eastern coast of South Africa in KwaZulu-Natal, and the more widespread *C. n. carpi*, which is found south of the Sahara in localised pockets (Clancey 1980). In Namibia, the latter subspecies has been recorded patchily from the Okavango, Kwando, and particularly the Chobe and Zambezi rivers (Maclean 1997h). It is also found patchily in the Okavango Delta. Population sizes are unknown and reporting rates are low at 4.7% in Namibia because of its secretive nocturnal behaviour (Maclean 1997h, Jarvis *et al.* 2001). Namibian