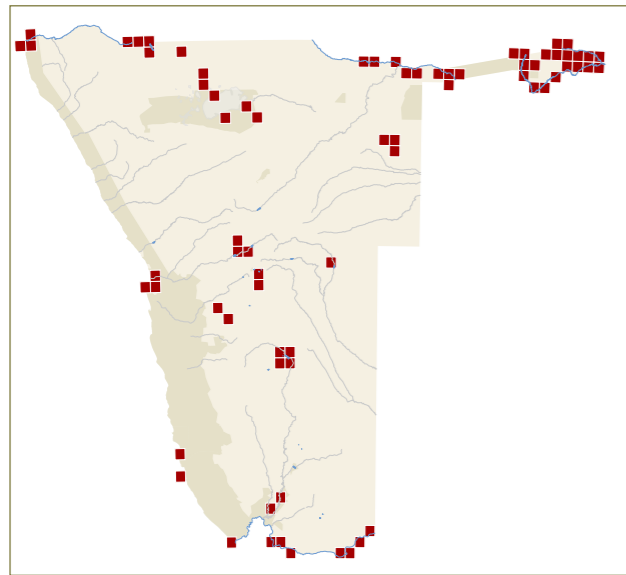


of southern Africa's estimated population and less than 4% of the African population. It is not threatened either globally or in South Africa, and is probably a naturally rare species.

Purple Heron | *Ardea purpurea*



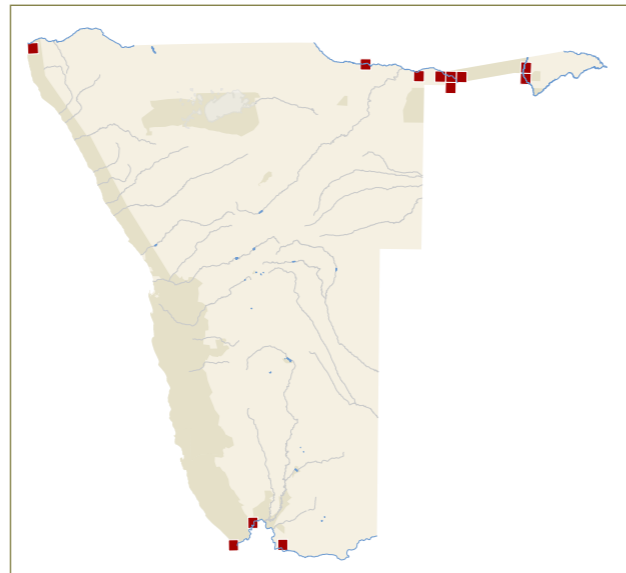
This species is found throughout southern Eurasia and sub-Saharan Africa's wetlands and rivers, but is scarce and probably under-recorded in southern Africa (Martin 1997b). Its core area, as with many large wetland species, is the Okavango Swamps (Tyler 2001). Its global population is more than 75,000 birds (Dodman 2002). No estimate is available for southern African populations, but it is probably more common than the Goliath Heron *A. goliath*, which has an estimated population of 3,000 birds in southern Africa. In Namibia, fewer than 1,000 Purple Herons are estimated (1.3% of global numbers) as follows: 340 birds on the Zambezi and Chobe rivers (10 birds per 10 km of river), 110 birds on the Kwando and Linyanti rivers (3.2 birds per 10 km), 115 birds on the Okavango River (five birds per 10 km), 50 birds on the Orange River, 50 birds on the Kunene River and fewer than 50 birds on large dams or wetlands (data from Jarvis *et al.* 2001).

White-backed Night-Heron | *Gorsachius leuconotus*

This is an elusive tropical forest wetland species, which is common outside southern Africa in sub-Saharan Africa (del Hoyo *et al.* 1992). Its global population is estimated at 100,000 birds (Dodman 2002). It is rare and sparsely distributed on rivers in southern Africa, particularly in the Okavango River (Martin 1997c), but is easily overlooked. No population estimates are available because of the bird's nocturnal and secretive nature and there are only two nest records, with birds laying in March and April (Brown



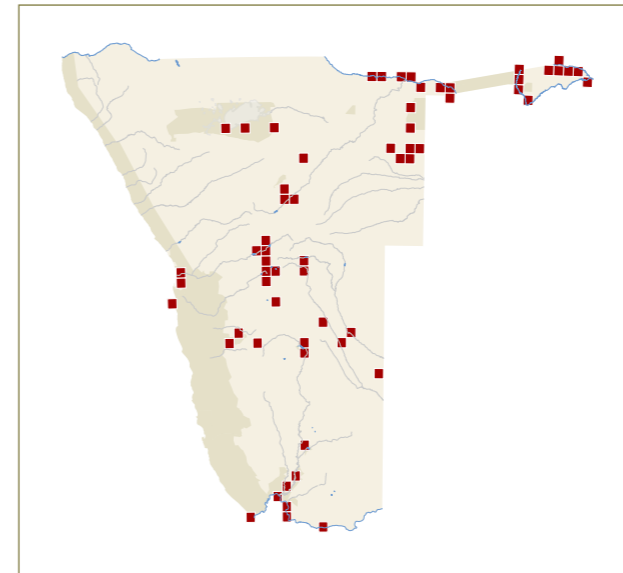
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et al. 2015). In Namibia, it is found mainly in the Mahango area of the Bwabwata National Park (M Paxton in Jarvis *et al.* 2001) and the banks of the Zambezi and Chobe rivers (CJ Brown pers. obs.). It has also been recorded from the Kunene River (Braine 1988, S Braine pers. obs.), and from the Orange River (Shaugnessy & Shaugnessy 1980, RE Simmons in Jarvis *et al.* 2001), well outside its range. There are probably fewer than 500 birds in Namibia (less than 1% of the African population). It is classified as *Vulnerable* in South Africa (Parker & Barnes 2000) but not globally. Research to better understand its population status and its vulnerability to current pressures is needed in Namibia.

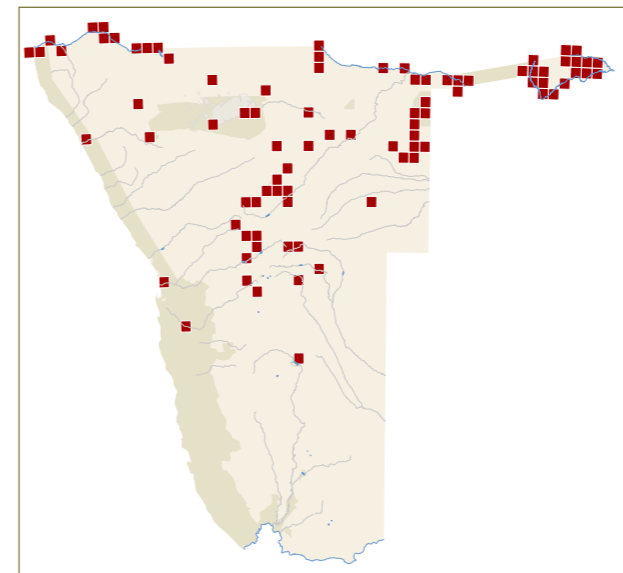
Little Bittern | *Ixobrychus minutus*

Two subspecies occur in southern Africa. The commoner *I. m. minutus* occurs across Eurasia (del Hoyo *et al.* 1992) and migrates into eastern areas of southern Africa (Tree 1997a), but is absent from Namibia. The African subspecies, *I. m. payesii*, is resident throughout wetlands of sub-Saharan Africa. In Namibia, it is sparsely distributed in the rivers and



wetlands of the north-east (e.g. the Mahango area of the Bwabwata National Park on the Okavango River, and the Kwando and Zambezi rivers), but also occurs in sewage works and dams in central Namibia (e.g. Walvis Bay, Daan Viljoen Game Park and Windhoek sewage works), and in the Fish and Orange rivers (Tree 1997a). Numbers of the African subspecies are estimated at 25,000 to 100,000 birds (Dodman 2002), and Namibia's population is estimated at fewer than 1,000 birds (1% to 4% of the world population).

Dwarf Bittern | *Ixobrychus sturmii*



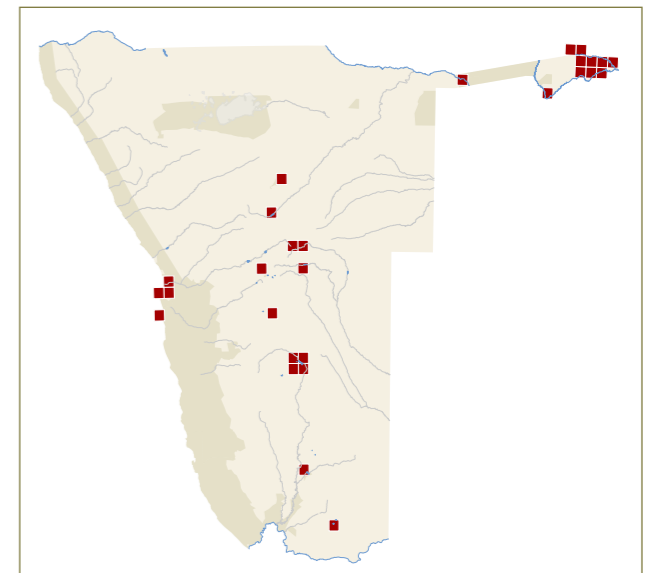
This small, highly nomadic tropical species is found throughout sub-Saharan wetlands. It favours seasonally flooded pans such as the Tsumkwe Pans, where up to 28 birds occur, and the Okavango River floodplains where up to 30 birds can occur in the Mahango area of Bwabwata



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National Park (M Paxton in Jarvis *et al.* 2001). It is found as far west as the Kunene River mouth (Anderson *et al.* 2001) and at dams and sewage works as far south as Rehoboth (Navarro 1997a). The global population is estimated at 25,000 to 100,000 birds (Dodman 2002). Given the numbers probably present in the wetlands linked to the Linyanti and Kwando rivers, Namibia's population is estimated to number fewer than 1,000 birds, or about 1% to 4% of the global population.

Pink-backed Pelican | *Pelecanus rufescens*

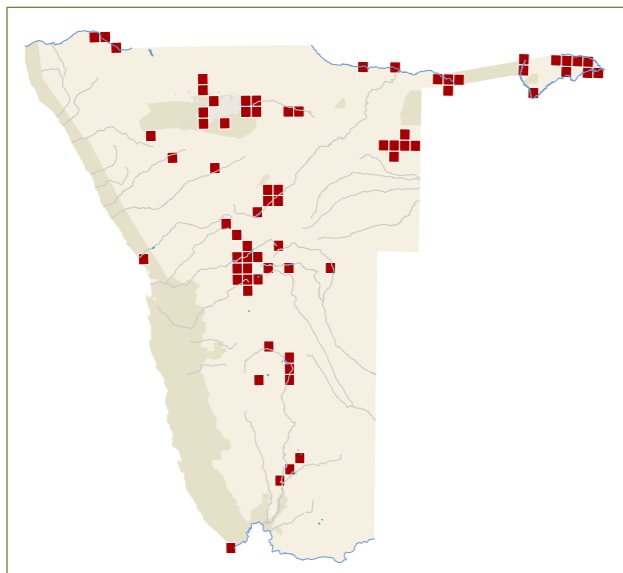


This species is restricted to northern tropical regions of Namibia, with probably fewer than 50 individuals recorded regularly in Namibia, though several hundred birds have been recorded episodically under favourable conditions in the Kwando and Linyanti Swamps, the Chobe River



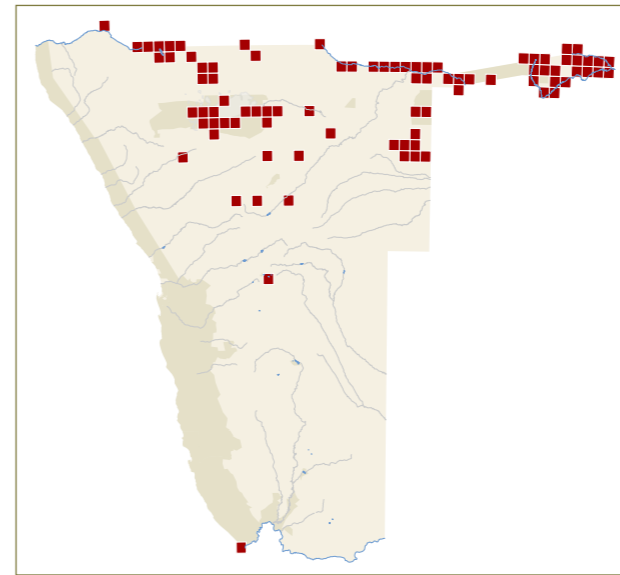
and Lake Liambezi. On rare occasions it is recorded as a vagrant to dams and coastal wetlands among the more common Great White Pelican *P. onocrotalus*. Only four breeding colonies are known: one in the Salambala Conservancy on the Chobe River floodplain, where about 25 birds were recorded in August 1998 (RE Simmons, M Paxton pers. obs.) and 125 birds in September 2001 (Ward 2001), and two from the Linyanti Swamps. The average number of nests per colony was 26 (22 to 34) and eggs were laid in July and August (Brown *et al.* 2015). The global population, spread across sub-Saharan Africa and the southern Red Sea, is estimated at 50,000 to 100,000 birds (Dodman 2002). The Namibian population is less than 1% of the African population. This species is classified as *Vulnerable* in South Africa (Taylor *et al.* in press) because of its small population, which has declined. It is common and stable elsewhere (Dodman 2002) and is not globally threatened. The population should be monitored, especially breeding colonies to ensure that there is no disturbance.

Yellow-billed Stork | *Mycteria ibis*



Widespread in Africa south of the Sahara, this species occurs mainly in the Okavango Delta in Botswana and on rivers and large protected areas in Zimbabwe and north-eastern South Africa (Anderson 1997b). In Namibia it is rare and occurs on the northern rivers, including (in decreasing order of abundance) the Chobe, Okavango, Kunene and Kwando rivers. Congregations of up to 91 birds occur in summer at Lake Oponono (W Versfeld in Jarvis *et al.* 2001). A total of 64 adult birds were recorded at the Impalila-Kasane rapids on the Chobe River in September 2011 (Brown 2012a) and small numbers are recorded from shallow inland dams such as the Omatako and those around Windhoek (Namibia Bird Club in Jarvis *et al.* 2001). Some birds occur as far south as the Fish River and Orange River mouth, reflecting the somewhat nomadic movements of this otherwise resident species (Hancock *et al.* 1992). Reporting rate averaged 2% to 15% (Anderson 1997b). Forty eight active nests were recorded at the Impalila-Kasane rapids in September 2011, with 118 young birds ranging from downy nestlings to recently fledged young (Brown 2012a). Based on only three breeding records for Namibia, the average colony size is 43 nests (38 to 48), and eggs were laid in August and September (Brown *et al.* 2015). World populations are estimated at 75,000 to 100,000 birds (Nagy *et al.* 2012). It is not globally threatened, but was classified as *Near Threatened* in South Africa and Swaziland (Barnes 2000a, Monadjem *et al.* 2003), based on an inferred decline of 10%. A recent assessment in South Africa has elevated its threat status to *Endangered* (Taylor *et al.* in press). There is no evidence of a decline in Namibia or globally (Wetlands International 2002, Nagy *et al.* 2012).

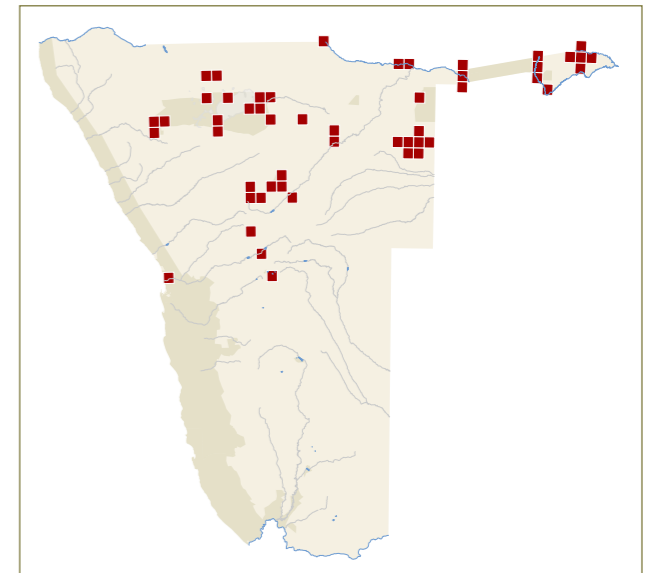
African Openbill (Openbilled Stork) | *Anastomus lamelligerus*



Endemic to sub-Saharan wetlands, avoiding forests (del Hoyo *et al.* 1992), this species is found in northern Namibia, mainly along perennial rivers and floodplains, as well as in the Cuvelai drainage system, sometimes in large flocks when pans such as Etosha are flooded. During the good rains of 2000 and 2001, flocks of 460 birds were recorded on flooded Nyae Nyae Pan and 385 birds in the Mahango area of Bwabwata National Park (RE Simmons, M Paxton in Jarvis *et al.* 2001). There is one recorded sighting from the Orange River mouth. In 2001, the sum of all known flocks was 1,460 birds (Jarvis *et al.* 2001). However, 1,600 birds were counted along short sections of the Okavango River in 2005 (CJ Brown, M Paxton pers. obs.) and over 4,500 birds were counted over three days in March 2008 on the Zambezi and Chobe floodplains when high flooding inundated the Zambezi-Chobe floodplains (CJ Brown pers. obs.). In September 2011, a minimum of 485 nests were recorded near the Impalila-Kasane Rapids on the Chobe River and 3,435 birds were counted in this one locality. This represents the minimum number, as birds were coming and going and presumably a large part of this flock was out on the floodplains foraging (Brown 2012a). This refutes the assertion of the estimated southern African population numbering "fewer than 100 pairs" (Barnes 2000a). The maximum Namibian population is probably in the region of 8,000 birds, although populations are highly variable, depending on environmental conditions. Core areas in the Okavango Delta where it is resident (Navarro 1997b) sometimes support flocks of up to 3,000 birds (Tyler 2001). The African population is estimated at 300,000 to 500,000 birds (Dodman 2002). The Namibian population is thus about 2% of the African population. It is not globally threatened, and has been down-listed from

Near Threatened to *Least Concern* in South Africa (Taylor *et al.* in press), where it breeds only sporadically.

Woolly-necked Stork | *Ciconia episcopus*



This is a widespread species throughout sub-Saharan Africa and India, through to the Philippines (del Hoyo *et al.* 1992). It is very rare in southern Africa; the breeding population in South Africa is estimated to comprise fewer than 30 pairs (Berruti 1997a). It is largely vagrant to Namibia, with a maximum of 31 birds seen at Lake Oponono in March 1999 and 58 birds at Middelbult Dam, near the Waterberg Plateau National Park, in April 1993. Other similar concentrations are known from Namibia's

