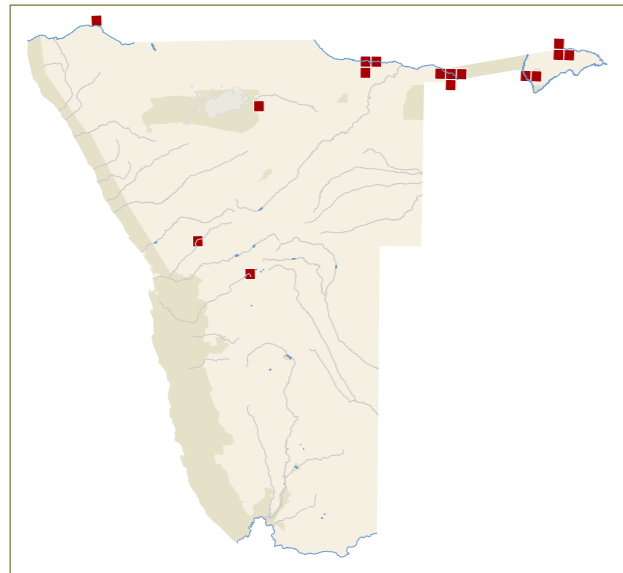


populations probably represent much less than 1% of the African population and thus it is treated as rare. It may suffer from the frequent burning that Caprivi grasslands experience (Mendelsohn & Roberts 1997) during the breeding season from August to November (Maclean 1997h). The South African subspecies is designated as *Vulnerable* because of its small and fragmented population (Parker 2000, Taylor *et al.* in press)

**Pennant-winged Nightjar |**  
*Macrodipteryx vexillarius*  
(*Macrodipteryx vexillaria*)



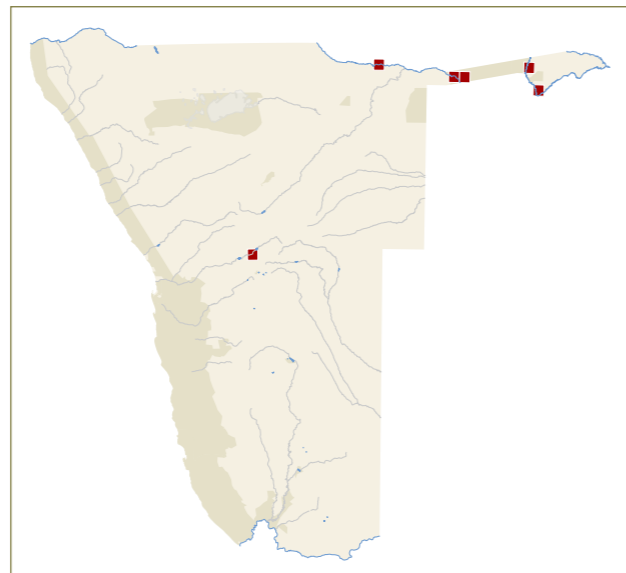
This extraordinary migratory tropical species breeds in central southern Africa (mainly from October to December) and flies in flocks to equatorial Africa from March (Maclean 1997g, del Hoyo *et al.* 1999). In southern Africa, it is found mainly in Zimbabwe, but birds occur peripherally in Namibia in the north-east and near Epupa Falls on the Kunene River. It is always associated with riverine habitat and broad-leaved woodlands, where it typically prefers stony hillsides and sandy areas (Maclean 1997g). Birds are occasionally sighted in Etosha National Park and in Windhoek, but these are vagrant. It occupies an area of 7,100 km<sup>2</sup> in Namibia, of which 20% occurs in the Mahango protected area in the Bwabwata National Park and in Mudumu National Park (Jarvis *et al.* 2001). No breeding records are known from Namibia. It is not a conservation priority here or elsewhere.

**Red-chested Flufftail |**  
*Sarothrura rufa*

This is among the commonest of Africa's flufftails, its distribution spreading westwards in finger-like projections from a predominantly easterly distribution in sub-Saharan Africa, south to Cape Town (Taylor 1997c, Delany & Scott 2002). It just touches the north-east of Namibia, where it

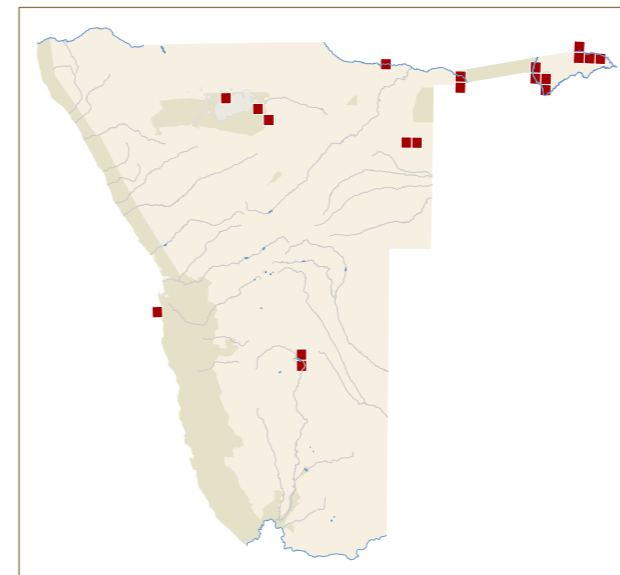


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is almost certainly under-recorded because it is heard more often than seen in wetlands comprising grasses and reeds. Its area of occupancy is therefore probably greater than the 1,600 km<sup>2</sup> recorded from the Okavango River and Linyanti Swamps (Taylor 1997c, Jarvis *et al.* 2001). Birds were also recorded in the Bwabwata National Park from the Okavango and Kwando river floodplains (Brown 1990), from the Zambezi eastern floodplain (Koen 1988), the Nkasa-Lupala Island complex nearby (RE Simmons pers. obs.), from north of Kamanjab (E Demasius pers. obs.) and near Windhoek (Taylor 1997c). Like other flufftails, it may respond to local rains, and appear unexpectedly in more arid parts of Namibia. Population size is currently impossible to predict, but it probably occurs throughout the perennial river systems of the two Kavango and the Zambezi regions. It is not threatened, given that most of this habitat is inaccessible wetland penetrated only by occasional fires.

**African Rail |**  
*Rallus caerulescens*



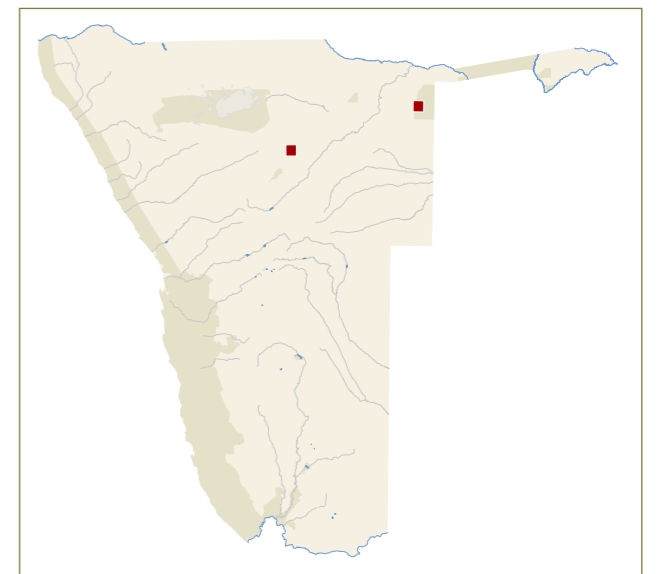
This small, unobtrusive species is found scattered throughout the wetter areas of East and central Africa (Dean 2005a). In Namibia, it occurs along the margins of the northern rivers (Zambezi, Kwando and Okavango), where it forages on the edge of reed beds and shallow water (Dean 2005a). Its area of occupancy from SABAP1 records was 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> (Jarvis *et al.* 2001). The bird is also recorded from the Tsumkwe Pans and northern Etosha. A recent record from SABAP2 is from further north in the north-central regions on the border with Angola. About 20% of the range is within protected areas, so it is unlikely to become a conservation priority. There are no nest records for the species in Namibia.

**Corn Crane |** *Crex crex*

This small, secretive and elusive grassland species is threatened by the massive loss of grasslands in its Eurasian breeding grounds (Stattersfield & Capper 2000). Recent conservation efforts focusing on changing the timing and methods of harvesting in the United Kingdom are proving successful; the populations are increasing again (A Balmford pers. comm.) and the species has been reclassified to *Least Concern* status in 2012 (IUCN 2012). The range in southern Africa where this species migrates to is poorly known, but includes the more mesic grasslands of Zimbabwe and eastern South Africa (Taylor 1997a). It is very rare in Namibia, with only one sighting recorded during the SABAP1 atlas period in the Nyae Nyae region (Taylor 1997a). More recent sightings include birds 30 km east of Otavi in black turf grasslands, where three single birds were observed in February 2004, following above average rains (B Nebe pers. obs.). Remains of a bird 70 km north west of Okahandja were found on treed thornveld



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savannah, also following above average rains there (C Nebe pers. obs.). Understanding its status in Namibia would require a concerted research effort because it is unlikely to be recorded by the casual observer, particularly because male birds do not call. It is doubtful for two reasons whether conservation efforts in Namibia will add to this bird's overall conservation. Firstly, its peripheral status and lack of evidence that it was ever common in Namibia suggest that conservation efforts would be futile. Secondly, the conservation problems responsible for its rarity occur in Eurasia, where harvesting practices may hold the key to recovery. It therefore seems inappropriate to assign it a threat category in Namibia.

**Striped Crane |**  
*Aenigmatolimnas marginalis*

This uncommon Afrotropical species is a wet-season visitor to southern Africa, and is so secretive and poorly known that only two birds were recorded in Namibia during the 24-year