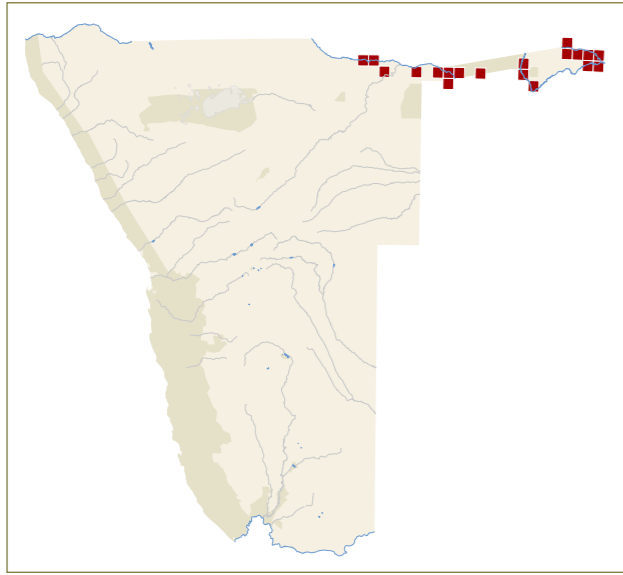


**Southern Brown-throated Weaver
(Brown-throated Weaver) |
*Ploceus xanthopterus***



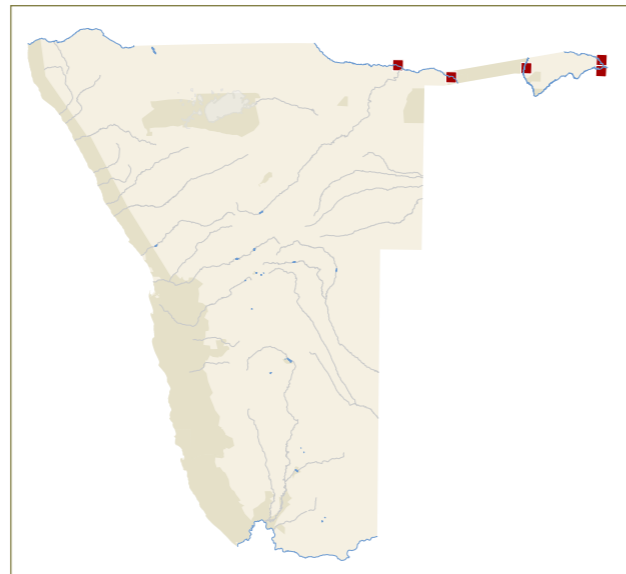
Confined to the major tropical wetland systems of south central Africa, this restricted-range species is present in Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique, spreading south into KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and touching north-east Zimbabwe (Craig & Herremans 1997). Most records for southern Africa, however, occur from the Okavango Delta and associated rivers of the Okavango, Linyanti, Chobe and Zambezi. The isolated Okavango-Zambezi population is considered to be a separate subspecies *P. x. castaneigula* (Craig & Herremans 1997). It occupies an area of 9,200 km² in Namibia, of which more than 25% is within the protected areas of the Bwabwata and Nkasa Rupara national parks (Jarvis *et al.* 2001) and the Impalila and Kasika conservancies (Biggs 2006). It is most frequently seen in permanent swamps with papyrus and reeds, but may also forage in surrounding thickets and woodlands (Irwin 1978). It breeds from November to January (Craig & Herremans 1997), with three records from December, February and July for Namibia (Brown *et al.* 2015). Its deep wetland habitat suggests that it is not threatened in any way, although it appears to be a naturally scarce species. It may be overlooked because of confusion with similar weavers (Craig & Herremans 1997).

**Red-headed Quelea |
*Quelea erythrops***

This rarely reported species is associated only with the Okavango and Kwando rivers in north-eastern Namibia (Randall 1996, Johnson 1997b). They have also been recorded from the Impalila and Kasika conservancies (Biggs 2006). Large breeding colonies comprising many

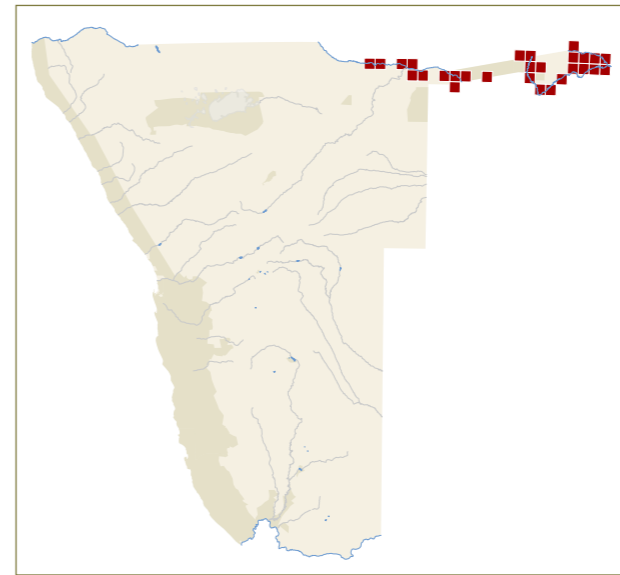


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thousands of birds were found in submerged reed beds on the Kwando River in 1989 and in the same year near Impalila Island (S Braine pers. comm.). Other records in southern Africa, including breeding sites, are centred on Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, where an isolated breeding colony exists (Johnson 1997b). Its favoured habitat is wetland vegetation such as reed beds, but it is not known from the Okavango Delta, where seemingly suitable habitat exists. Recent sightings include a flock of 12 to 15 birds on the Okavango River near Shamvura in March 2003 (Paxton 2003). Records only stem from February, March and May, indicating that it is a summer migrant. It is not a conservation priority in Namibia.

**Fan-tailed Widowbird
(Red-shouldered Widow) |
*Euplectes axillaris***



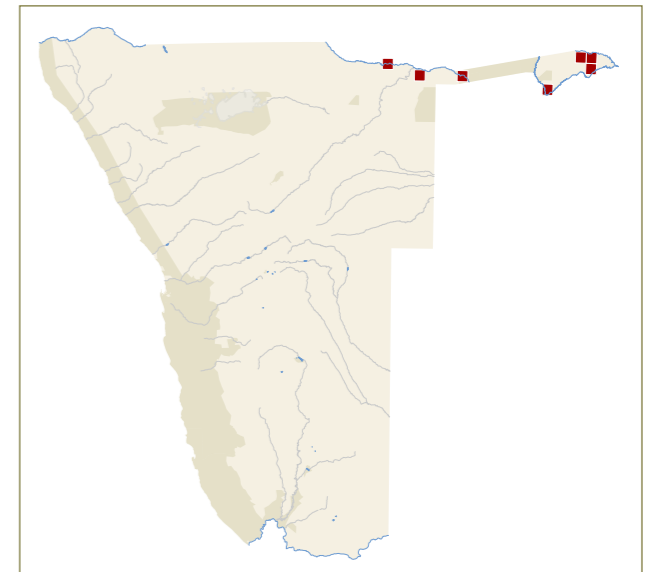
This species is common in Africa, occurring from Ethiopia to Botswana, with an isolated subspecies *E. a. axillaris* present in Mozambique and south-eastern South Africa (Craig 1997a). The subspecies *E. a. bocagei* occurs in southern Africa only in the Okavango Delta, Botswana, and the associated rivers of the Okavango, Kwando, Zambezi and Chobe in Namibia. It occupies an area of 12,400 km² in Namibia, of which 21% is contained within the Bwabwata and Nkasa Rupara (Mamili) national parks. It prefers moist open grassland, but is also



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found in reeds and papyrus. Elsewhere, it breeds between November and March (Craig 1997a), but there are no nesting records for Namibia; however, males in breeding plumage are common from October onwards in the Cuito-Okavango confluence (M Paxton pers. obs.). It is not a conservation priority in Namibia because of its use of a wide variety of wetland habitats and because it is locally common in some areas (M Paxton pers. obs.). Locally, it may be at risk in grasslands of the Zambezi region, where burning is frequent and reduces the amount of wetland grasslands at critical times of year (Mendelsohn & Roberts 1997).

**White-winged Widowbird
(White-winged Widow) |
*Euplectes albonotatus***



Much less common in Namibia than the Fan-tailed Widowbird (Red-shouldered Widow) *Euplectes axillaris*, this species was reported at below 10% during the SABAP1 atlas period and has an area of occupancy of 4,400 km². It can be found in moist grassland, but is more likely to occur in rank growth on the fringes of open grassland near water, and the seasonally inundated floodplains such as those of the Chobe River (Craig 1997b). It is relatively common in the floodplain of the Okavango River within the Mahango area of the Bwabwata National Park (P Lane, M Paxton pers. obs.) and an uncommon resident near Katimo Mulilo in the Zambezi region (Branfield 1990). Only 18% of its range lies within protected areas, but it is a widespread and common species north of southern Africa, extending to Ethiopia and West Africa (Craig 1997b). There are no breeding records for Namibia, but it breeds from October to May elsewhere (Tarboton 2011). It is not a conservation priority, given the very small percentage of its global population that occurs in Namibia, but the presence of ever-increasing cattle numbers on the fringes of its wetland habitat (Mendelsohn & Roberts 1997) may degrade habitat quality in Namibia.