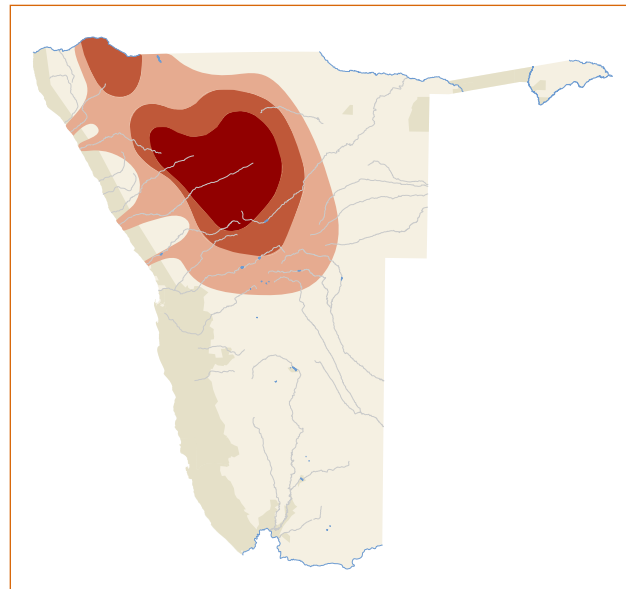


**Damara Hornbill | *Tockus damarensis***



© Peter Ryan

This is a newly described species, formerly a subspecies of the widespread Red-billed Hornbill *T. erythrorhynchus*. It differs from the typical Red-billed Hornbill in being larger, having a white, rather than a streaked, cheek patch and dark rather than yellow eyes. This, together with differences in calls and courtship behaviour resulted in the former subspecies being given full species status (Delpont 2001, Hockey *et al.* 2005). Plumage differences make for striking and easily observed differentiation in the field. Like many other Namibian near-endemics, the Damara Hornbill occurs in the central to north-western regions of Namibia, in dry *Acacia* savannah to stony Mopane woodland habitat, north into escarpment areas of Angola and eastwards through Etosha National Park as far as Tsumeb, where some hybrids occur (Delpont 2001). The centre of this contact zone is south of Halali, with birds in Omaruru, Kamanjab and Windhoek being pure Damara Hornbills (Delpont 2001). Here they prefer the large trees associated with ephemeral rivers in dry *Acacia* woodland, and occur at densities of two pairs per km<sup>2</sup> along these rivers (Boix-Hinzen 2005). The breeding ecology is reasonably well known, with birds induced to breed in nest boxes for many years in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, and more recently in the Otavi Mountains. Egg-laying is from September to March, with a peak in January to March (n=29) (Brown *et al.* 2015). The more arid southerly site exhibited a lower average clutch size of 4.0, compared to that of 4.7 recorded at the Otavi site (Delpont 2001, Boix-Hinzen 2005). An average brood size of 4.7 (at Otavi) and a 75% success from 15 nesting attempts in Daan Viljoen Game



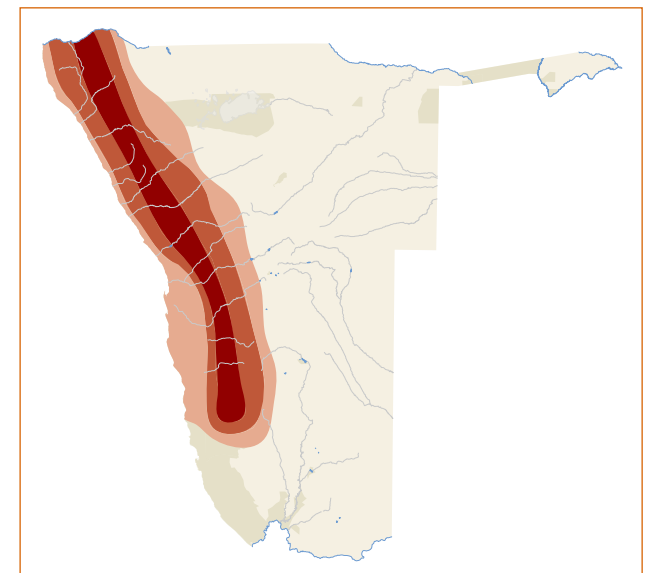
Reserve indicates breeding rates typical of hornbills (Kemp 1995a). Like other hornbills, they may produce larger broods in wetter years. They are largely unthreatened in their range, which covers 268,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and are formally protected in Etosha National Park, Daan Viljoen Game Reserve and parts of the Namib-Naukluft National Park. Collection of firewood by local villagers may reduce foraging opportunities or nest sites, but the intensity of this is considered low and of no threat at present (Boix-Hinzen 2005).

**Rüppell's Korhaan | *Eupodotis rueppellii***



© Cillie Burger

This pale and cryptic species occurs only in western Namibia and the extension of the Namib Desert in south-west Angola. It is found from the escarpment west to the coast, but avoids the unvegetated dunes of the Namib sand sea south of Walvis Bay (Allan 1997n). Further south is the traditional transition zone of Namibian near-endemics from their nearest relatives, near Koigab Pan (26°S). Here this species intergrades with the Karoo Korhaan *E. vigorsii*, but few hybrids have been reported (Clancey *et al.* 1991). Population size in Namibia is estimated at 99,900 birds and it occupies an area of 240,000 km<sup>2</sup> (Jarvis & Robertson 1999). It occurs most commonly in open grassy gravel plains below the escarpment, where densities reach one bird per 13.2 km<sup>2</sup>. On sandy plains, densities are half this, at one bird per 26.7 km<sup>2</sup>, while birds in valleys and plateaus in montane habitat occur at low densities of one bird per 59.3 km<sup>2</sup> (Viljoen 1983). They are frequently seen in groups of two to four, presumably family units, but up to eight birds have also been observed (Allan 2005a). They are sexually dimorphic and presumed monogamous (Osborne 2004). Birds lay eggs in all months of the year, but with a peak in April and May (48% of 79 records). The average clutch is 1.3 eggs; 70% of clutches are one-egg, 26% are two-egg and 4% are three-egg (Brown *et al.* 2015). They



are not threatened in their desert habitat and 30% of their range lies within protected areas that include the Skeleton Coast, Dorob, Namib-Naukluft and Tsau//Khaeb (Sperrgebiet) national parks (Jarvis *et al.* 2001). If rainfall decreases with global warming (Midgley *et al.* 2001), then this species may come under pressure and its range could shift to more eastern mesic areas.