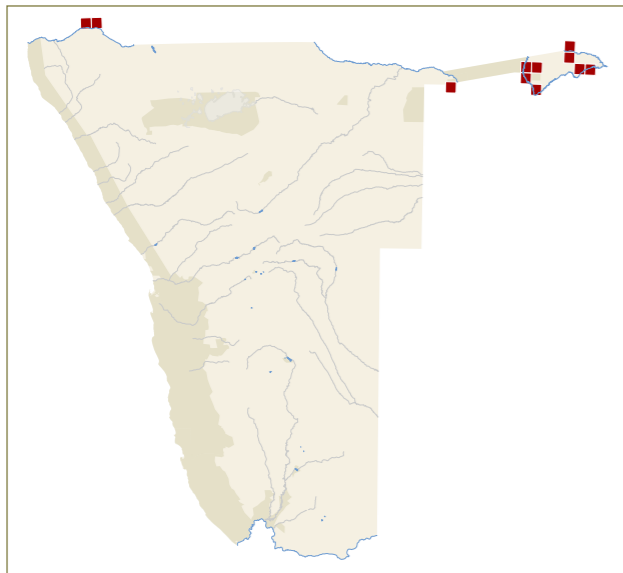


is required on this species, but at present it is unlikely that Namibia's population exceed the 5% threshold of African populations required for inclusion in a threat category. It is classified as *Near Threatened* in South Africa (Allan 2000b, Taylor *et al.* in press) because of an apparent decline in numbers in KwaZulu-Natal and lower than expected densities (20 birds per 10 km to one bird per 10 km of river) in various parts of its South African range (Allan 1997o).

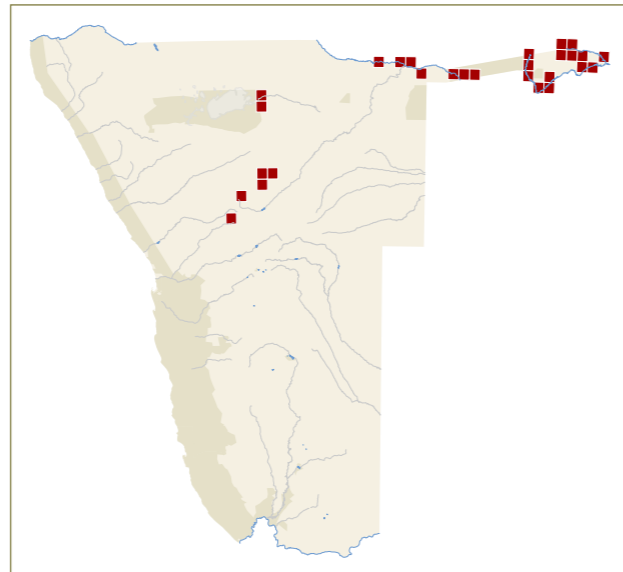
**African Pygmy-Kingfisher
(Pygmy Kingfisher) |
*Ispidina picta***



Like its half-collared sister species, this diminutive insectivore is surprisingly rare in the riparian and forested areas of northern Namibia (reporting rate of 5.1% from the Kwando, Chobe and Zambezi river riparian belts: Jarvis *et al.* 2001), missing from most of the Okavango Delta,

but widespread in eastern South Africa and throughout Zimbabwe (Clancey 1997a). Elsewhere, it occurs in forested habitat often near riverine forest south of the Sahara (del Hoyo *et al.* 2001). Its area of occupancy in Namibia is a mere 4,200 km². It has recently been recorded from the riparian belt along the Kunene River near Epupa Falls at a low density of 0.46 birds per 10 km of river (Simmons 1997o, Heinrich 2003). This is not an isolated population, but a southern extension of a distribution from Angola, where they are described as common (Dean 2000). The area is one of Namibia's 21 Important Bird Areas (Simmons *et al.* 2001b), but has no formal protection. No direct threats have been identified and the species is not considered threatened. The population in Namibia probably does not exceed 500 birds and therefore falls below the threshold of 5% of the world population occurring in Namibia, which is the requirement for inclusion in any threatened category.

**Brown-hooded Kingfisher |
*Halcyon albiventris***



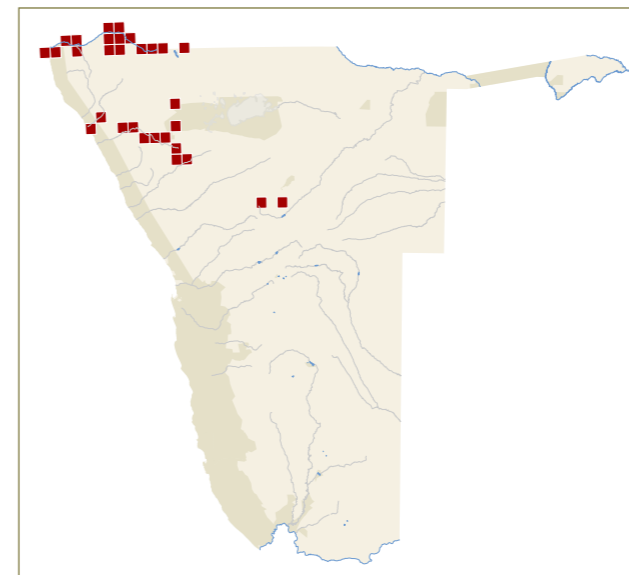
This terrestrial kingfisher is common in Zimbabwe and South Africa, but rare in Namibia, where it is confined to moist woodland associated with the Okavango, Kwando, Chobe and Zambezi rivers at a low reporting rate of 5%. Only one region around Katima Mulilo exhibits reporting rates above 25% (Jarvis *et al.* 2001). It occupies an area of 12,600 km² in Namibia, of which 20% occurs in the protected areas of Mudumu and Nkasa Rupara (Mamili) national parks and the Mahango area of Bwabwata National Park (Jarvis *et al.* 2001). Sightings also occur further south and west from Etosha National Park, the Waterberg Plateau Park and central Namibia (Clancey 1997b). There are no density estimates or nest records for this species from Namibia and it is not a conservation priority, given its abundance elsewhere.



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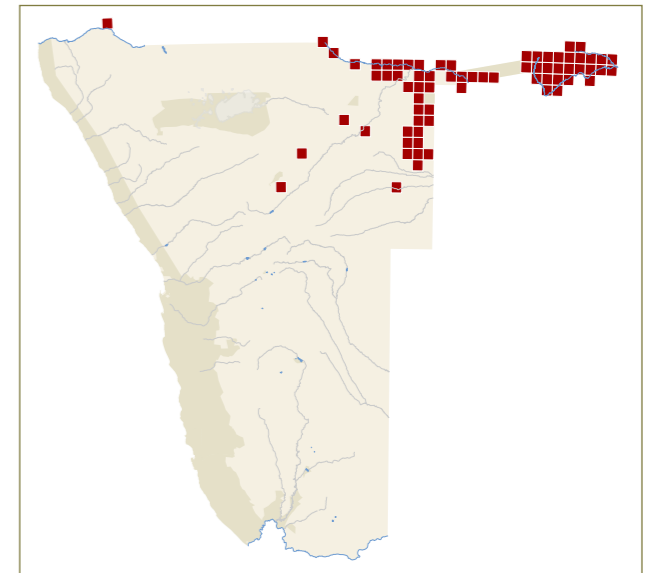
**Olive Bee-eater |
*Merops superciliosus***

This intra-African migrant only touches southern Africa in north-western Namibia, where it is locally common along the Kunene River and along a few ephemeral north-western rivers where it breeds. There are also scattered records in Zimbabwe and Mozambique (Underhill & Herremans 1997, Barnes 2005). It is divided into two subspecies, of which *M. s. alternans* breeds in Angola (Dean 2000) and Namibia and migrates to unknown quarters elsewhere in Africa (Fry *et al.* 1992, Barnes 2005). Population figures for Namibia are poorly known, but have been estimated at 3,000 to 5,000 birds (P Hockey in Barnes 2005). Densities of 9.2 bee-eaters per 10 km of the lower Kunene River (Simmons 1997p), with records from about 75% of the 344 km-long river (Underhill & Herremans 1997), give an estimate for the Kunene River of only about 250 birds. There are 16 breeding records for Namibia, including from the Huab River (S van der Reep pers. obs.), with egg-laying from September to January, but mainly November to January (Brown *et al.* 2015). The



species may move south as temperatures increase with climate change. These densities suggest that the population estimate of 3,000 to 5,000 birds may be too high and may be closer to 1,000 to 2,000 birds. They inhabit remote, unpopulated parts of Namibia and are therefore unlikely to be threatened in any way.

**Southern Carmine
Bee-eater (Carmine Bee-eater) |
*Merops nubicoides***



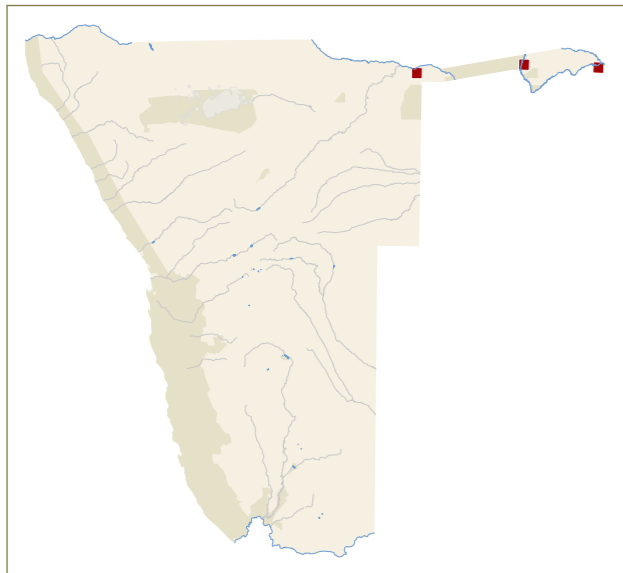
This bee-eater is more common in southern Africa than the Olive Bee-eater *M. superciliosus* and is also migratory within Africa. However, breeding colonies, which are found in northern and eastern Botswana, throughout Zimbabwe and the Caprivi Strip of Namibia, are often under threat (Barnes & Herremans 1997). Three colonies of unknown size were found during a survey of 60 km of the Zambezi River in October 2002 (L Scheepers unpubl. data), and a colony containing between 3,000 and 8,000 nest holes was found on the Zambezi River near Kalizo Lodge



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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.

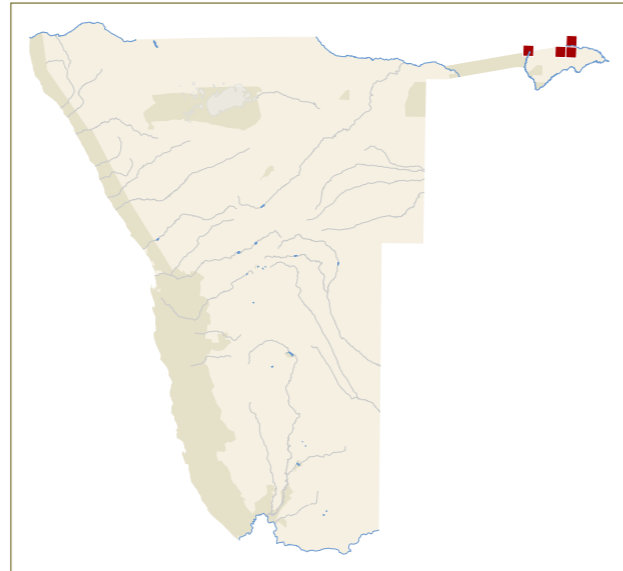
**Thick-billed Cuckoo I
*Pachycoccyx audeberti***



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.

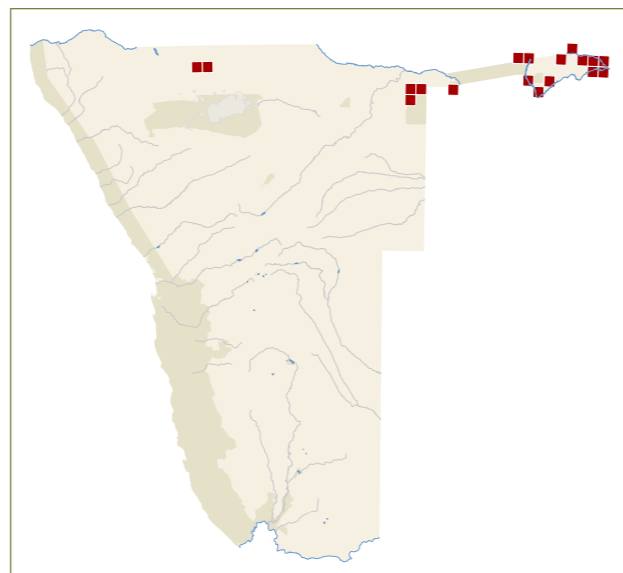
**African Emerald Cuckoo (Emerald Cuckoo) I
*Chrysococcyx cupreus***

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*)**



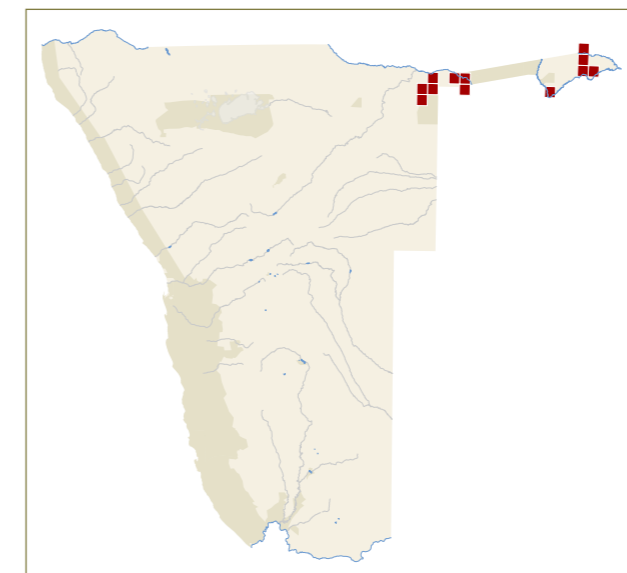
This polyandrous species occurs in the floodplains and associated grassland vegetation of the Zambezi, Chobe, and Kwando rivers. Small populations are also recorded in the Cuvelai drainage system in the north-central regions and the Khaudum National Park (Brown 1990, Vernon



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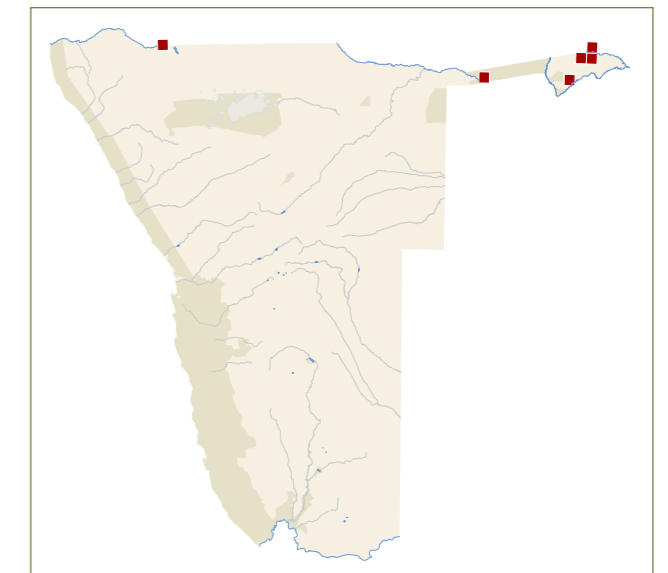
& Herremans 1997a). Its southern African stronghold is the Mashonaland Plateau of northern Zimbabwe and the Okavango Swamps, but it is not common anywhere (Vernon & Herremans 1997a). The overall reporting rate for this easily overlooked species is 6% (Jarvis *et al.* 2001), but population size is unknown. 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 km² 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),