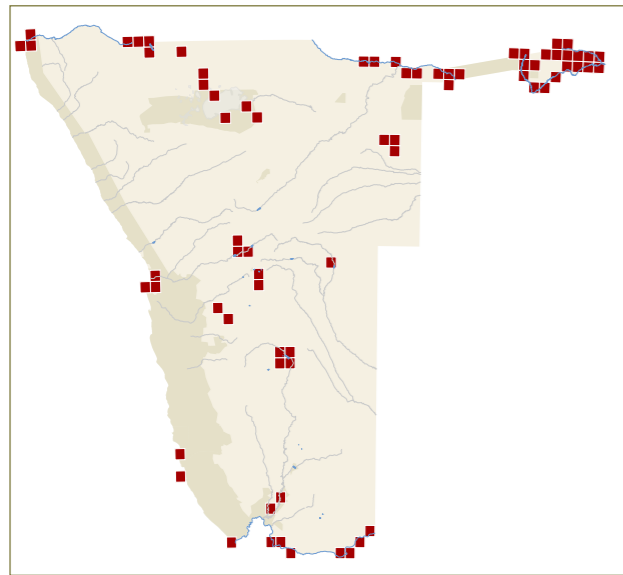


of southern Africa's estimated population and less than 4% of the African population. It is not threatened either globally or in South Africa, and is probably a naturally rare species.

### Purple Heron | *Ardea purpurea*



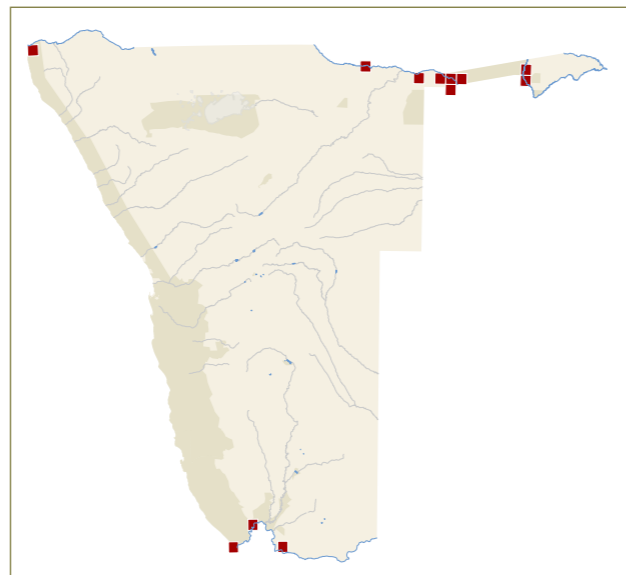
This species is found throughout southern Eurasia and sub-Saharan Africa's wetlands and rivers, but is scarce and probably under-recorded in southern Africa (Martin 1997b). Its core area, as with many large wetland species, is the Okavango Swamps (Tyler 2001). Its global population is more than 75,000 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



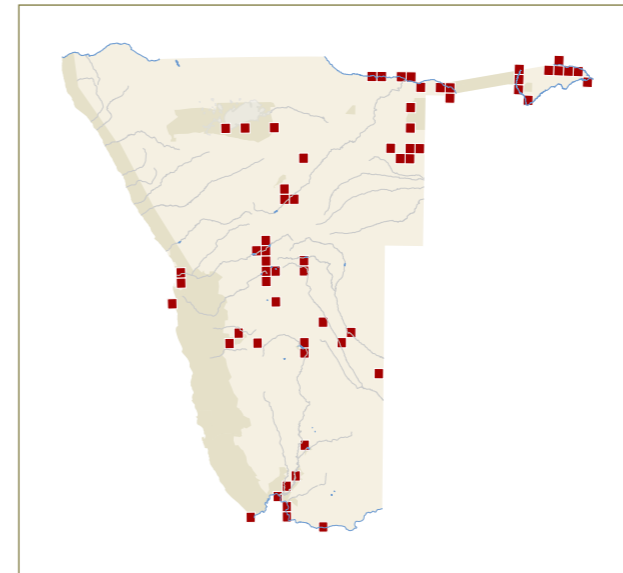
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*et al.* 2015). In Namibia, it is found mainly in the Mahango area of the Bwabwata National Park (M Paxton in Jarvis *et al.* 2001) and the banks of the Zambezi and Chobe rivers (CJ Brown pers. obs.). It has also been recorded from the Kunene River (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.

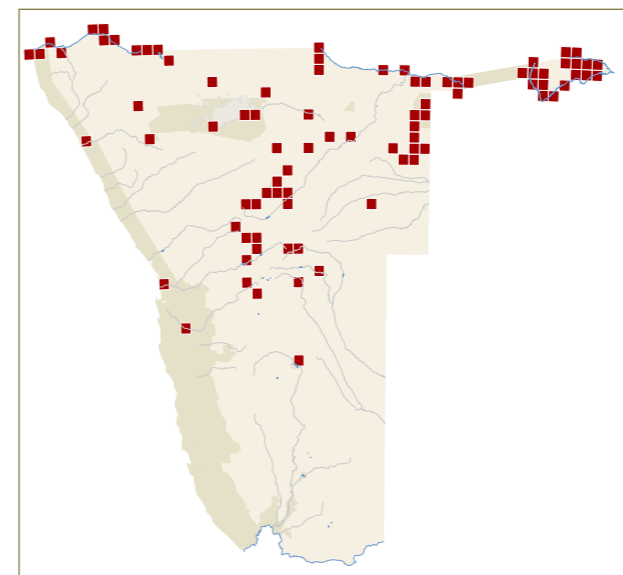
### Little Bittern | *Ixobrychus minutus*

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*



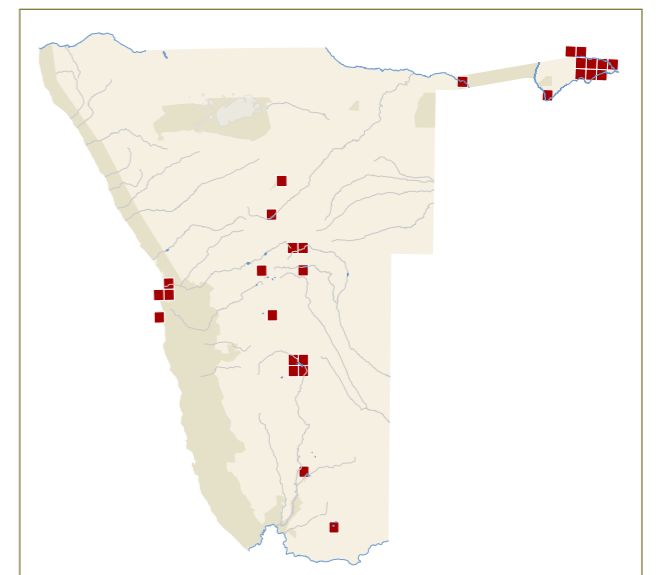
This small, highly nomadic tropical species is found throughout sub-Saharan wetlands. It favours seasonally flooded pans such as the Tsumkwe Pans, where up to 28 birds occur, and the Okavango River floodplains where up to 30 birds can occur in the Mahango area of Bwabwata



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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