

Barred Cuckoo

Langstertkoekoek

Cercococcyx montanus

The Barred Cuckoo is a poorly known and elusive species. It occurs in the lowland regions of Mozambique, Tanzania and Kenya, where it may be resident. It was observed in nine grid cells in Zimbabwe during the atlas period; these confirm the known distribution.

Sight records should be treated with caution because Barred Cuckoos can easily be confused with the juveniles of *Cuculus* cuckoos.

In East Africa it is found in a wide range of wooded habitats, including miombo woodland. In southern Africa it occurs in lowland forest, although it may be seen in other habitats when on migration (Fry *et al.* 1988).

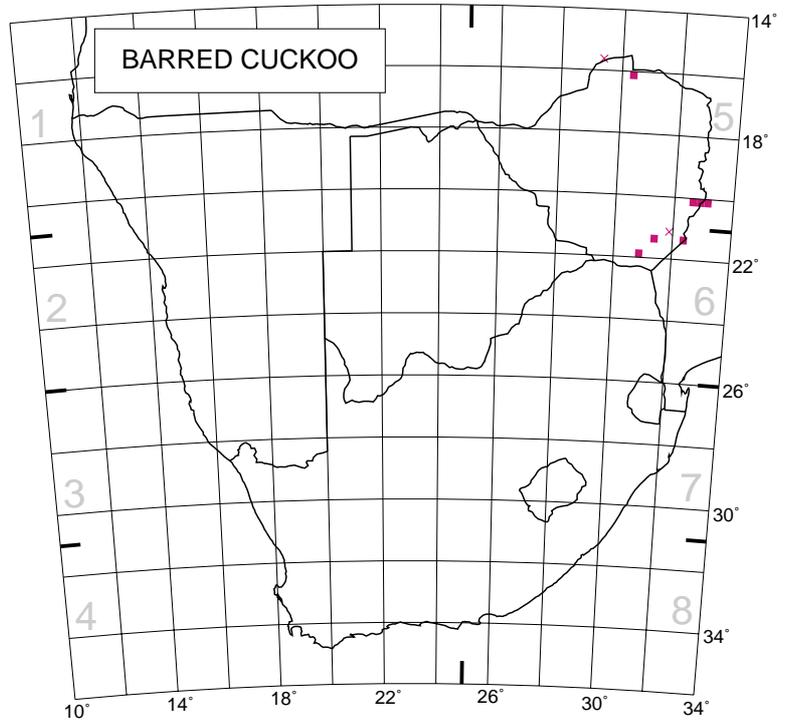
It is an altitudinal summer migrant into Zimbabwe, Malawi and eastern Zaire (Fry *et al.* 1988). It is presumably a summer migrant to the atlas region (Irwin 1981; Vernon *et al.* 1990). Its status as a summer migrant is confirmed by the fact that most records were November–March.

Its hosts are unknown but may be robins of the genus *Sheppardia* and the Broadbill *Smithornis capensis* (Rowan 1983; Fry *et al.* 1988).

Historical knowledge about this cuckoo in southern Africa is based on one specimen from Mozambique, sight records in summer from eastern Zimbabwe, a sight record from the Zambezi Valley, and a sight record from the eastern Transvaal (Irwin 1981; Rowan 1983; Jones 1987; Tarboton *et al.* 1987b). At the Haroni–Rusitu confluence (2033AA) in eastern Zimbabwe, it was heard in summer, but was seldom seen, being difficult to locate even when calling in the canopy above the observer (Vernon *et al.* 1990). The first record for Botswana was made in the Limpopo Valley (2229A) in November 1989 (Bishop 1995).

The conservation of the Barred Cuckoo as a breeding species in southern Africa appears to be strongly linked to the conservation of the Tropical Lowland Rainforest at the Haroni–Rusitu confluence in eastern Zimbabwe; the unique avifauna of this region and its biogeographical significance were described by Vernon *et al.* (1990).

C.J. Vernon



Recorded in 9 grid cells, 0.2%
 Total number of records: 25
 Mean reporting rate for range: 7.2%

