

Mottled Swift

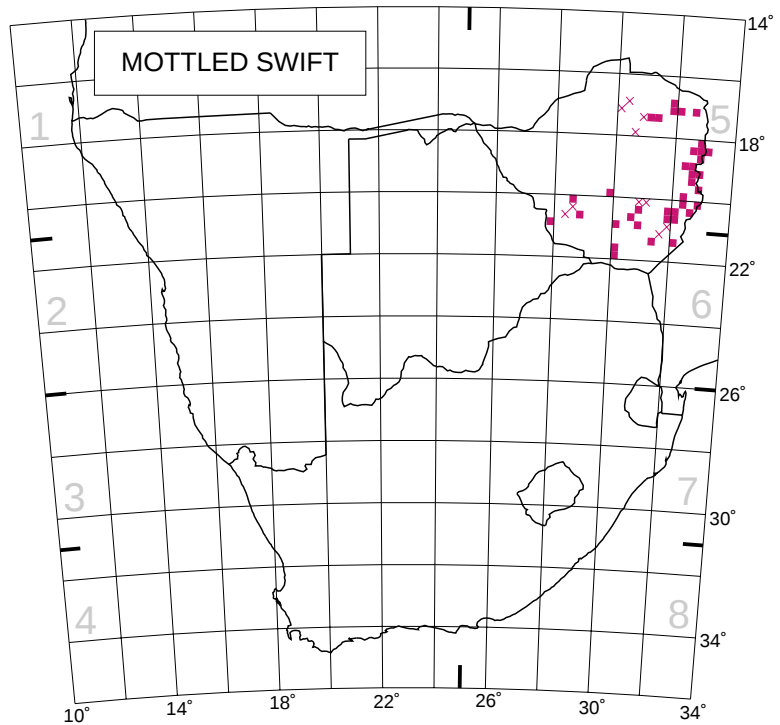
Bontwindswael

Apus aequatorialis

The Mottled Swift occurs from Zimbabwe north to Ethiopia with isolated populations in West Africa. Most populations, including those in southern Africa, are normally resident, and there has been no known repetition of the >1000 km vagrancy record from the Hex River Pass (3319BC) in August 1976 (Osborne & Osborne 1978). The race *A. a. gelidus* is based on the granite hill areas of Zimbabwe where it is not rare, and the nominate race occurs in the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe and adjacent Mozambique (Brooke 1967, 1973). No records were collected at Victoria Falls (1725DD) though it used to be seen there occasionally (Dowsett 1976; Osborne & Osborne 1978).

Foraging flights, particularly in winter, may take it almost anywhere in Zimbabwe. The race *gelidus* breeds, usually colonially, in dry vertical cracks in granite hills (Brooke 1973). In southern Africa the breeding range does not overlap that of the Alpine Swift *A. melba*, but from northern Tanzania northward to Ethiopia the two species breed sympatrically, the Mottled Swift at lower elevations than the Alpine Swift (Snow 1978).

There has been no known change in its southern African distribution; apparently it has not yet adapted to breeding on man-made structures. The Mottled Swift's remote and inaccessible breeding sites ensure that human persecution is limited, and local changes to the environment are likely to have minimal effect.



Extent of range: 47 grid cells, 1.0%
Total number of records: 203
Mean reporting rate for range: 8.3%

Reporting rates for vegetation types

R.K. Brooke

