



## Blackcollared Barbet

### Rooikophoutkapper

*Lybius torquatus*

The Blackcollared Barbet is a distinctive Afrotropical barbet. It is widely distributed, found in moist open woodland and edges of riverine forest, yet it avoids thick forest, dry woodland and desert (Fry *et al.* 1988). It is common in the mesic, eastern regions of southern Africa and it occurs from sea-level to above 2000 m in the interior of South Africa (Ginn *et al.* 1989). The three subspecies currently recognized in the region (Clancey 1980b; Clancey *et al.* 1991) have continuous distributions.

Often in groups and highly vocal, it is also conspicuous, and is not easily confused with any other species. Atlas data therefore clearly indicate the distribution and abundance of this species.

**Habitat:** The distribution is centred in the Miombo, on the moist wooded areas of the Okavango and Caprivi, along the east-facing slopes of the Transvaal escarpment, and on the eastern coastal areas. In drier savannas and certain grasslands, it is restricted to riverine vegetation. In other grassland areas, association is undoubtedly linked to urban areas, where it is common in gardens and parks.

**Movements:** It is considered resident throughout the year. The models indicate a weak pattern of higher reporting rates at the onset of the breeding season and lower reporting rates in the second part of the breeding season, when birds start moulting. Recovery data for 17 birds give a mean distance from site of ringing to recapture as 5.4 km, with the furthest being 20 km (SAFRING).

**Breeding:** Egglaying in southern Africa spans September–February (Dean 1971; Irwin 1981; Tarboton *et al.* 1987b; Skinner 1996a; Brown & Clinning *in press*). The atlas models indicate a shift in the peak of breeding to later dates with increasing latitude. Evidence of breeding was recorded in the atlas throughout the year, but the maintenance of territories throughout the year (Fry *et al.* 1988), often by groups of birds, and communal roosting (Maclean 1993b) may have given rise to erroneous records of dependent young (and therefore presumed breeding activity) during winter.

**Interspecific relationships:** Where sympatric, Crested *Trachyphonus vaillantii* and Pied *Tricholaema leucomelas* Barbets may compete with Blackcollared Barbets for nest sites. Although the ranges of Blackcollared and Pied Barbets overlap widely, reporting rates of the latter appear to be generally lower where the former occurs. On the east-facing slopes of the highlands of eastern Zimbabwe, the Blackcollared Barbet is uncommon; Irwin (1981) attributed this to competition for food and nesting sites from White-eared *Stactolaema leucotis* and Whyte's *S. whytii* Barbets (Irwin 1981). A.J. Tree (*in litt.*) considered that the high-rainfall east-facing slopes provide unsuitable habitat for the Blackcollared Barbet which prefers mixed or open woodland while Whyte's Barbet prefers *Brachystegia*-dominated woodland.

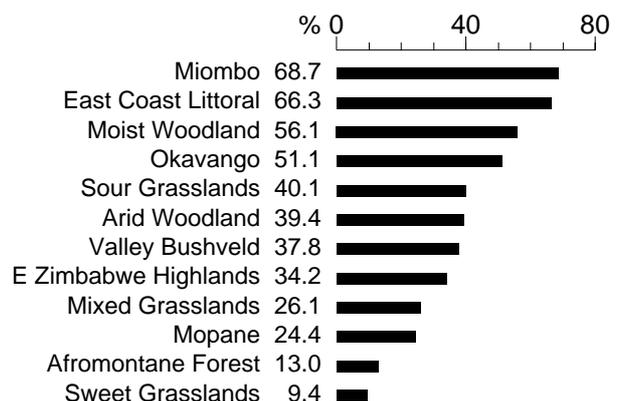
The Blackcollared Barbet is a host of the Lesser *Indicator minor* and Greater *I. indicator* Honeyguides (Maclean 1993b).

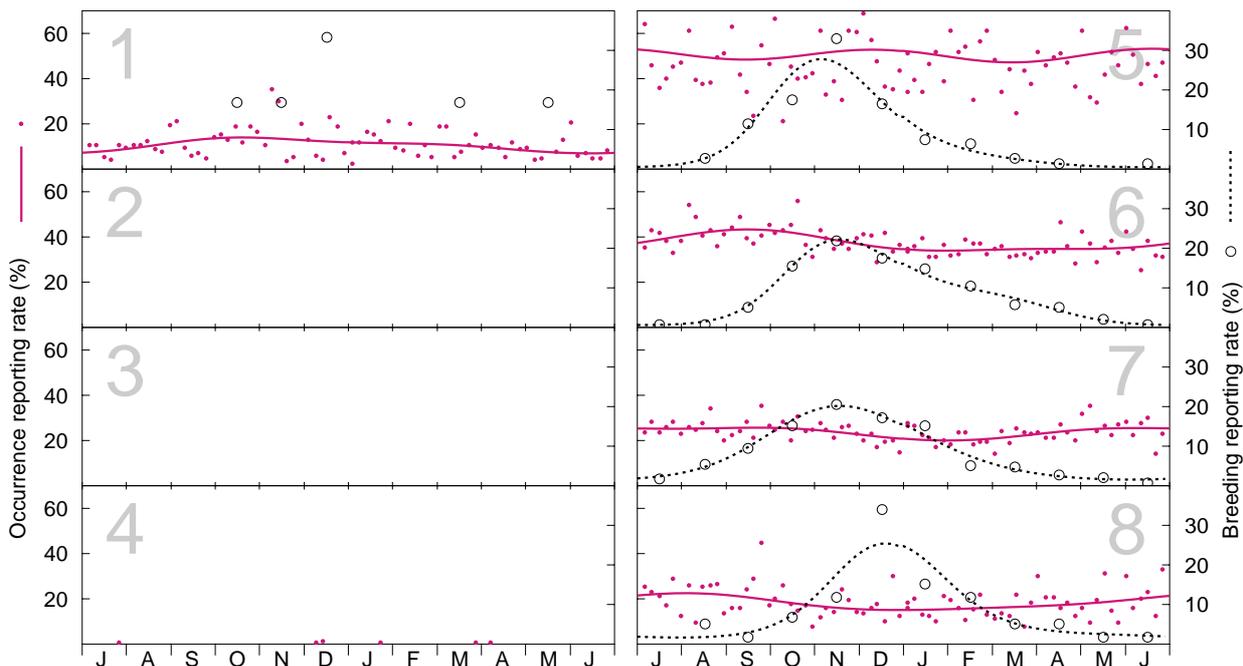
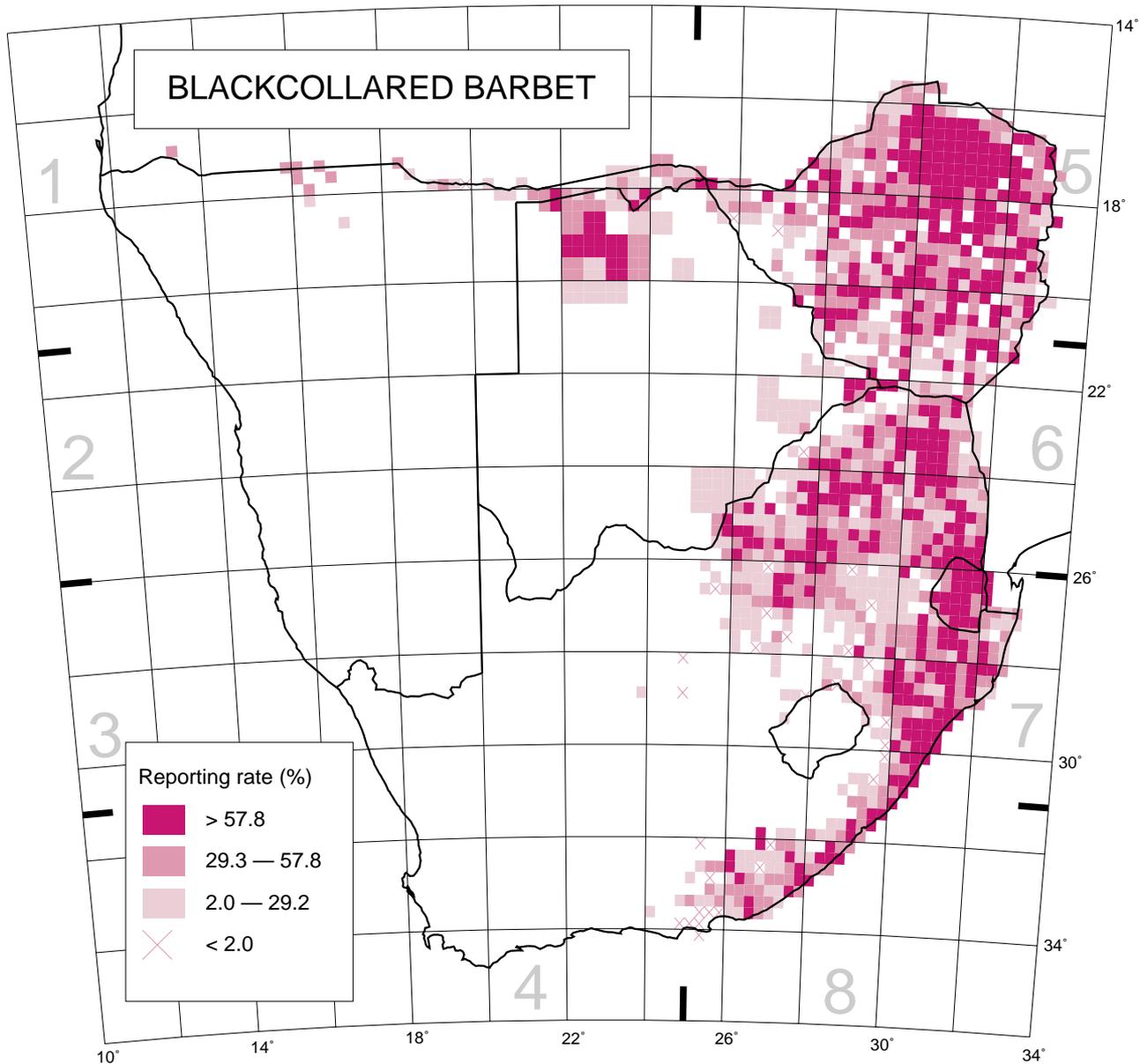
**Historical distribution and conservation:** Current distribution does not appear to differ from the historical; adaptation to urban environments, particularly in open grassland areas, may have resulted in slight extensions in range. Atlas records from grassland (such as the central and southern Free State) are probably from towns or along rivers, and represent range extensions. The Blackcollared Barbet is not threatened; it is widespread and common, and adapts well to urban environments. Removal of dead wood may decrease the number of available nest sites.

R.J. Nuttall

Recorded in 1325 grid cells, 29.2%  
Total number of records: 40 550  
Mean reporting rate for range: 48.2%

#### Reporting rates for vegetation types





Models of seasonality for Zones. Number of records (top to bottom, left to right):  
 Occurrence: 340, 0, 0, 6, 4396, 4255, 4620, 995; Breeding: 6, 0, 0, 0, 79, 142, 238, 59.