

Little Spotted Woodpecker

Gevlekte Speg

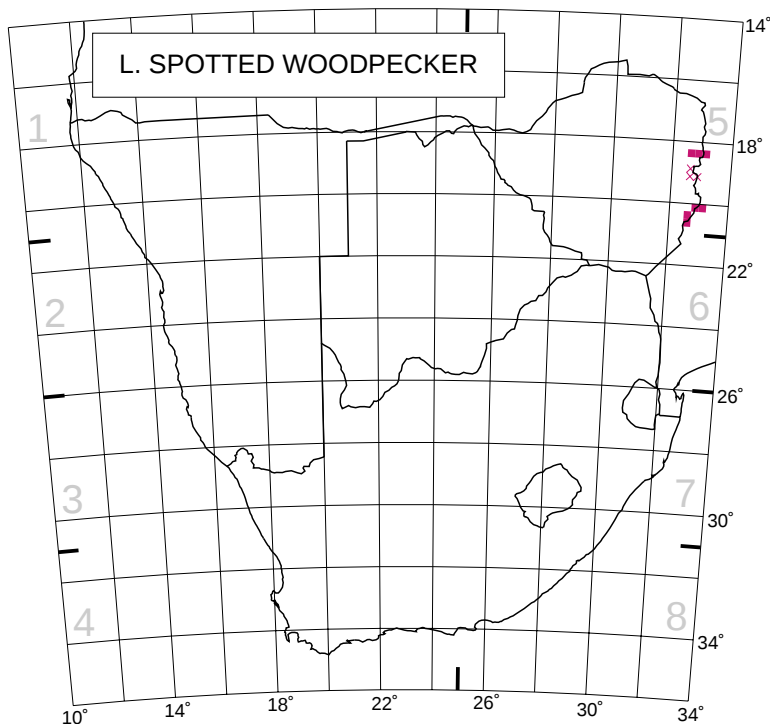
Campethera cailliautii

The Little Spotted Woodpecker is a small, ant-eating, tropical African woodpecker whose distribution extends into southern Africa along the Mozambique coastal plain as far south as latitude 25°S (Clancey 1971b). Much of its southern African range is not shown here; only those records showing its limited penetration from Mozambique into adjacent areas of eastern Zimbabwe are plotted. Here, it follows the drainage lines of low-lying, east-flowing rivers (such as the Rusitu and Honde rivers) for short distances.

It is restricted to areas where lowland evergreen forest and mature miombo woodland form galleries of tall trees. It is not recorded above 1200 m (Irwin 1981). Although localized on account of the limited availability of suitable habitat, it is common in places and often outnumbers other woodpecker species where it is found.

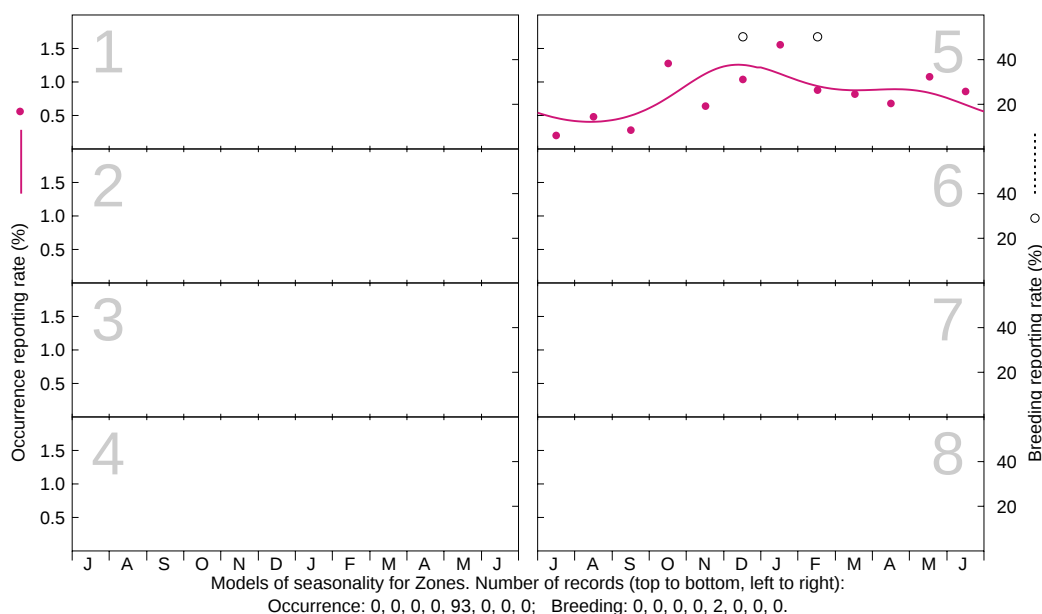
It is usually encountered singly or in pairs and is apparently sedentary. The increased reporting rates during summer may be due to increased conspicuousness during the breeding season, when it is probably more vocal, but eastward movement in the winter, down to the Mozambique coastal plain, is a possibility. Two atlas reports of breeding, one each from December and February, were obtained. Breeding has been reported for September in Mozambique (Clancey 1971c) and September–November further north in its range (Short 1982).

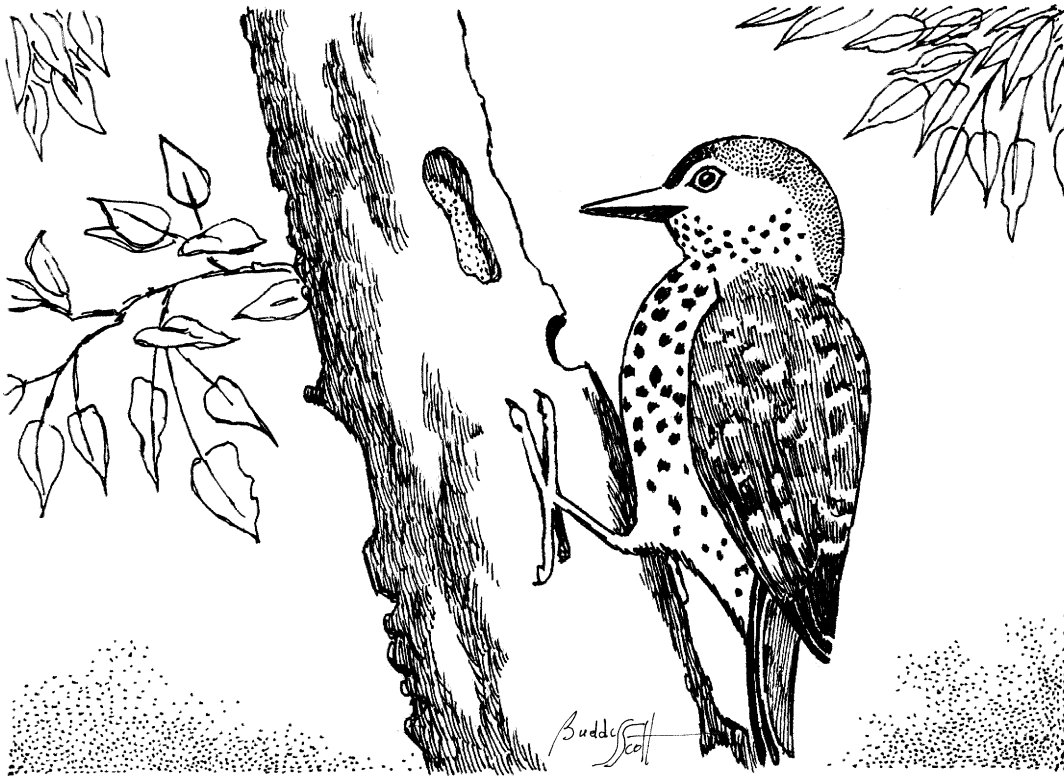
Slash-and-burn agriculture is steadily reducing the extent of the lowland riparian forests in eastern Zimbabwe, and the destruction of those at the junction of the Rusitu and Haroni rivers (2033AA) is of particular concern (Vernon *et al.* 1989; Masterson 1992). Much of the Little Spotted Woodpecker's former habitat here is being lost and this may even lead to its extinction in Zimbabwe. The much larger population in adjacent Mozambique is probably also threatened by the destruction of woodlands in that country (Ryan 1995).



Recorded in 10 grid cells, 0.2%
Total number of records: 93
Mean reporting rate for range: 12.1%

W.R. Tarboton





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