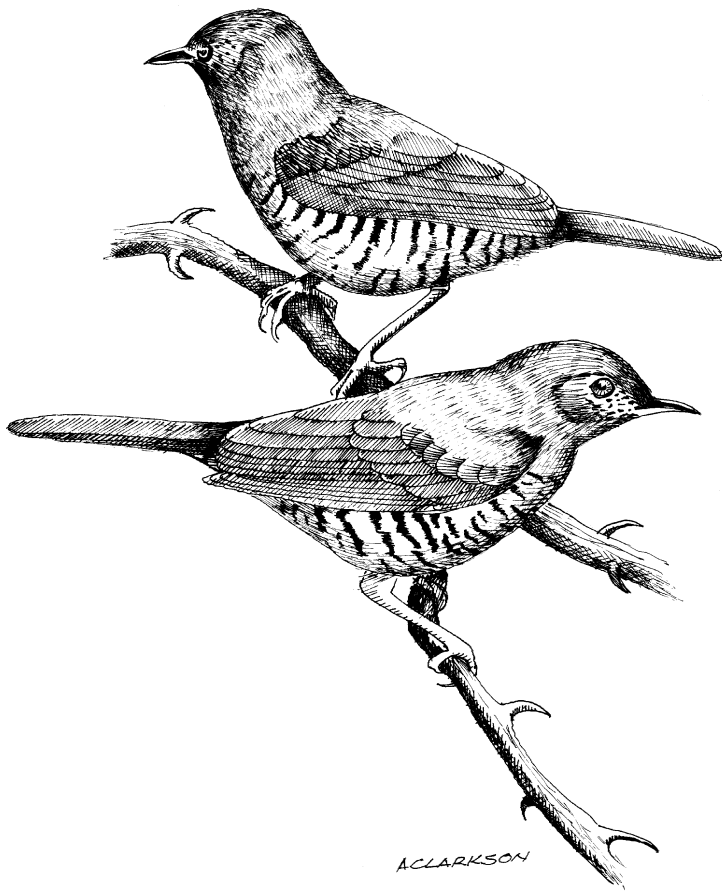




Barred Warbler

Gebande Sanger

Calamonastes fasciolatus

This common thornveld specialist is near endemic to the region, extending marginally into southern Angola (Maclean 1993b). The Barred Warbler's distribution is restricted to the Kalahari basin of Botswana, Namibia and South Africa – except the more open southern part – and adjacent thornveld areas on hardveld in eastern Botswana, the northwestern Transvaal, northern Namibia and southwestern Zimbabwe. Core areas do not seem to be in the centre of the distribution in the arid Kalahari sands, but rather at the peripheries on hardveld at both ends of the distribution. These relative strongholds coincide with the two subspecies, *C. f. europhilus* in the east and *fasciolatus* in the west (Clancey 1980b). The apparent gap in the distribution in eastern Namibia is most likely an artefact of low coverage.

In *Acacia* woodland in the Transvaal, densities of 1 pair/4 ha were recorded (Tarboton *et al.* 1987b). It is rather difficult to observe, but has a loud and distinctive territorial call which makes it conspicuous and easy to identify during the breeding season. It is unobtrusive in the non-breeding season, and the atlas data are therefore likely to represent a correct distribution picture, but with a degree of under-reporting.

Habitat: It is a typical representative of the Kalahari-basin thornbelt endemics and is restricted to *Acacia* bushveld. Association with predominantly broadleaved vegetation

types such as Mopane and Okavango, or Sweet Grasslands, results from the complex mosaic of *Acacia* bushveld within these vegetation types. Although it forages mostly in the canopies of bushes during summer, it avoids tall *Acacia* savanna and riverine woodland, particularly if the middle and lower strata are poorly developed or absent. Most *Acacia* spp. within the habitat of the Barred Warbler are semi-deciduous, and the bird shifts from living in canopies during summer to skulking closer to the ground in winter.

Movements: Local recaptures of ringed birds throughout the year in southeastern Botswana (pers. obs), confirm that at least some are sedentary in that area. The models indicate a clear seasonal fluctuation in reporting rates, but this is most likely due to seasonal changes in behaviour, and therefore conspicuousness. During the 1992 drought, however, the species could not be relocated at several known localities in the arid central Kalahari (pers. obs), but was recorded beyond the northwestern limit of the normal distribution in Zimbabwe (A.J. Tree pers. comm.). This suggests that it can become nomadic under unfavourable conditions.

Breeding: The few atlas breeding records span October–April, confirming that it breeds in the wet summer season (Tarboton *et al.* 1987b; Maclean 1993b; Skinner 1995a; Brown & Clinning in press).

Interspecific relationships: Its distribution marginally overlaps Stierling's Barred Warbler *C. stierlingi* (Irwin 1981; Tarboton *et al.* 1987b), but they occupy different habitats, i.e. thornbush and broadleaved woodland, respectively (Herremans & Herremans 1992b).

Historical distribution and conservation: No immediate threats are known and the Barred Warbler is common over a wide range. However, the difficult period for this small insectivorous bird could be in the dry winter, when the semi-deciduous nature of most thornbushes forces it to forage in the lower and herbaceous strata. Structural overgrazing by livestock – as is the case in many parts of the Kalahari basin – might then considerably degrade the quality of habitat, particularly during drought periods. In the longer term, however, overgrazing results in thornbush encroachment and habitat expansion for the species.

M. Herremans

Recorded in 770 grid cells, 17.0%

Total number of records: 2343

Mean reporting rate for range: 12.0%

Reporting rates for vegetation types

