

Bronze Sunbird

Bronssuikerbekkie

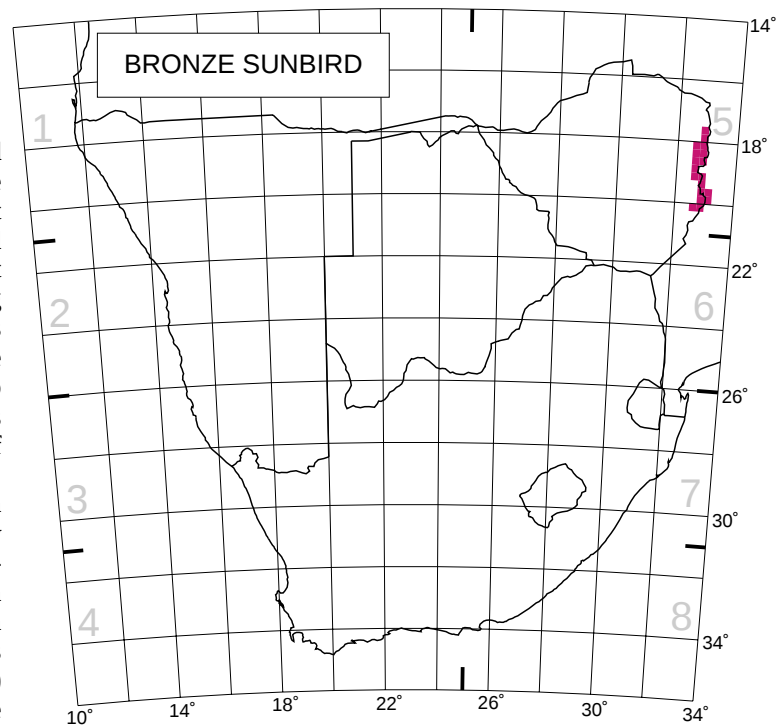
Nectarinia kilimensis

In southern Africa this large sunbird is restricted to the montane areas of the eastern Zimbabwe highlands and it is also found in similar habitat northwards to East Africa. The Bronze Sunbird inhabits the fringes of montane evergreen forest and any area with a profusion of flowering shrubs, such as proteas, *Leonotis* and aloes (Irwin 1981). It has adapted well to suitable nectar-producing alien plants introduced to parks and gardens, and particularly favours farms cultivating large stands of Proteaceae, of both South African and Australian origin.

The model shows little seasonal variation in reporting rates and this species does not show the movements known to occur in the similar-sized Malachite Sunbird *Nectarinia famosa* in South Africa. On occasions it has been known to range away from the highlands, westwards along the watershed as far as Rusape (1830CA) (Irwin 1981). It has a greater altitudinal range within the eastern highlands than the Malachite Sunbird, occurring from 2200 m to as low as 1000 m (Irwin 1981), but appears to avoid intervening valley floors at lower altitudes. It presumably overflies these to reach other suitable montane areas.

The breeding season is protracted and egg-laying in Zimbabwe spans August–March (Irwin 1981). The atlas breeding data are concentrated September–April with two peaks, one October–December and another in April. As in many tropical sunbirds, peak breeding occurs just before and just after the main rains.

There has been no significant change in range since that shown in Skead (1967c), and no information is available to indicate any changes in population size. Indeed the development of parks, gardens and *Protea* nurseries has probably enabled the population of Bronze Sunbirds to increase.



Recorded in 18 grid cells, 0.4%
Total number of records: 372
Mean reporting rate for range: 40.6%

A.J. Tree

