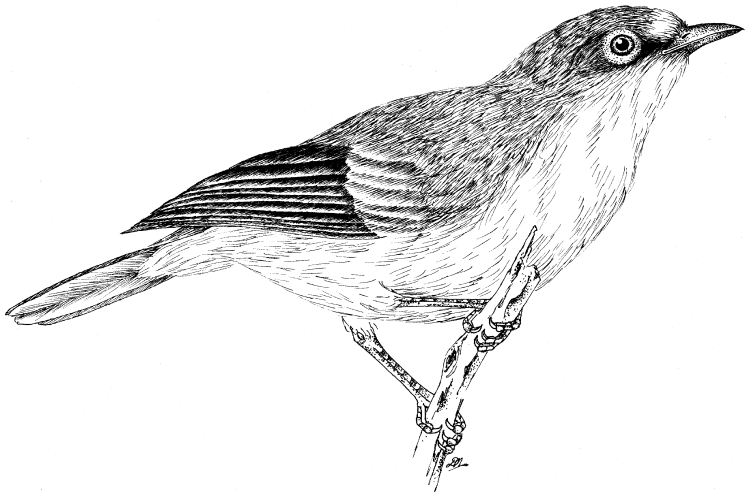


Yellow White-eye

Geelglasogie

Zosterops senegalensis

This widespread Afrotropical species (Clancey 1980b; Brooke 1984b) is restricted in southern Africa to the more tropical northern and eastern regions. It occurs over much of Zimbabwe, although it is largely absent from the dry savannas of the west and southwest (Irwin 1981). Elsewhere it occurs in northeastern Namibia, northern and eastern Botswana, and northeastern KwaZulu-Natal. Three subspecies have been recognized in the region (Clancey 1980b); their ranges appear continuous on the present map.

Confusion with the Cape White-eye *Z. pallidus* may have arisen in areas where the two overlap (Skead 1967c; Penry 1994). The Yellow White-eye is marginally smaller and more yellow and is usually found in pairs or small parties, while the Cape White-eye also occurs in large flocks (Clancey 1964b).

Habitat: A variety of habitats are favoured, including coastal and riparian forest, thickets and bush in the southern limits of its range, and in Zimbabwe it is typically found in moist miombo woodland. In semi-arid areas it is restricted to vegetated watercourses, and it occurs in evergreen forest up to 2000 m or higher in the eastern Zimbabwe highlands (Irwin 1981). It is common in gardens and is partial to flowering *Eucalyptus* plantations (Skead 1967c).

Movements: The evolution of local phenotypes, in neighbouring evergreen forest and savanna woodland populations in parts of Zimbabwe, implies that these populations are sedentary (Irwin 1981). Although movements in the Okavango 'in search of food' are considered doubtful (Skead 1967c), in mixed woodland local movements occur in response to changing food availability, especially when not breeding (Vernon 1985). The model for Zimbabwe (Zone 5) shows a slight winter increase in reporting rate, peaking in July. Zone 1 shows this slight increase September–October and in May; slight increases occur also at this time in Zones 6 and 7. Possible reasons for these are, firstly, increased singing activity of territorial males at the end of winter, rendering them more conspicuous. Secondly, flocking behaviour during winter may do the same, particularly in the more open, deciduous miombo of Zimbabwe. It is doubtful whether entire populations undertake seasonal movements.

Breeding: The models show peak activity in October in Zimbabwe; the season extends from early spring to late summer, August to mid-March, which agrees with published information (Irwin 1981). From scant data, Skead (1967c) suggested that central and northern Zimbabwean birds breed until December, while those in southwestern Zimbabwe continue until March.

Interspecific relationships: Although it overlaps geographically with the Cape White-eye, the two are separated ecologically, e.g. in northeastern KwaZulu-Natal where the Cape White-eye keeps to evergreen forest and coastal bush while the Yellow White-eye occurs more in open woodland (Clancey 1964b; Skead 1967c).

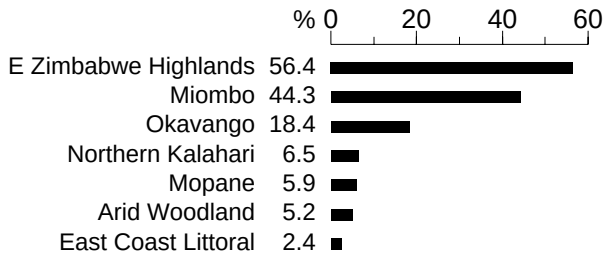
Historical distribution and conservation: The uncertain taxonomic status of Yellow and Cape White-eyes in the past (see Skead 1967c) makes it difficult to infer changes in distribution. Man-made environments may have influenced this species' range, allowing extension. Skead (1967c) indicated only a single, doubtful record in Botswana; he also showed no records from the Waterberg Plateau (2017A) in Namibia. Both the atlas data and those of Hunter (1986a) and Penry (1994), however, indicate the Yellow White-eye as common in northern Botswana and that it also occurs regularly in the far eastern parts. It is also found on the Waterberg Plateau (Maclean 1993b; atlas data). These differences may result simply from the species having been overlooked previously.

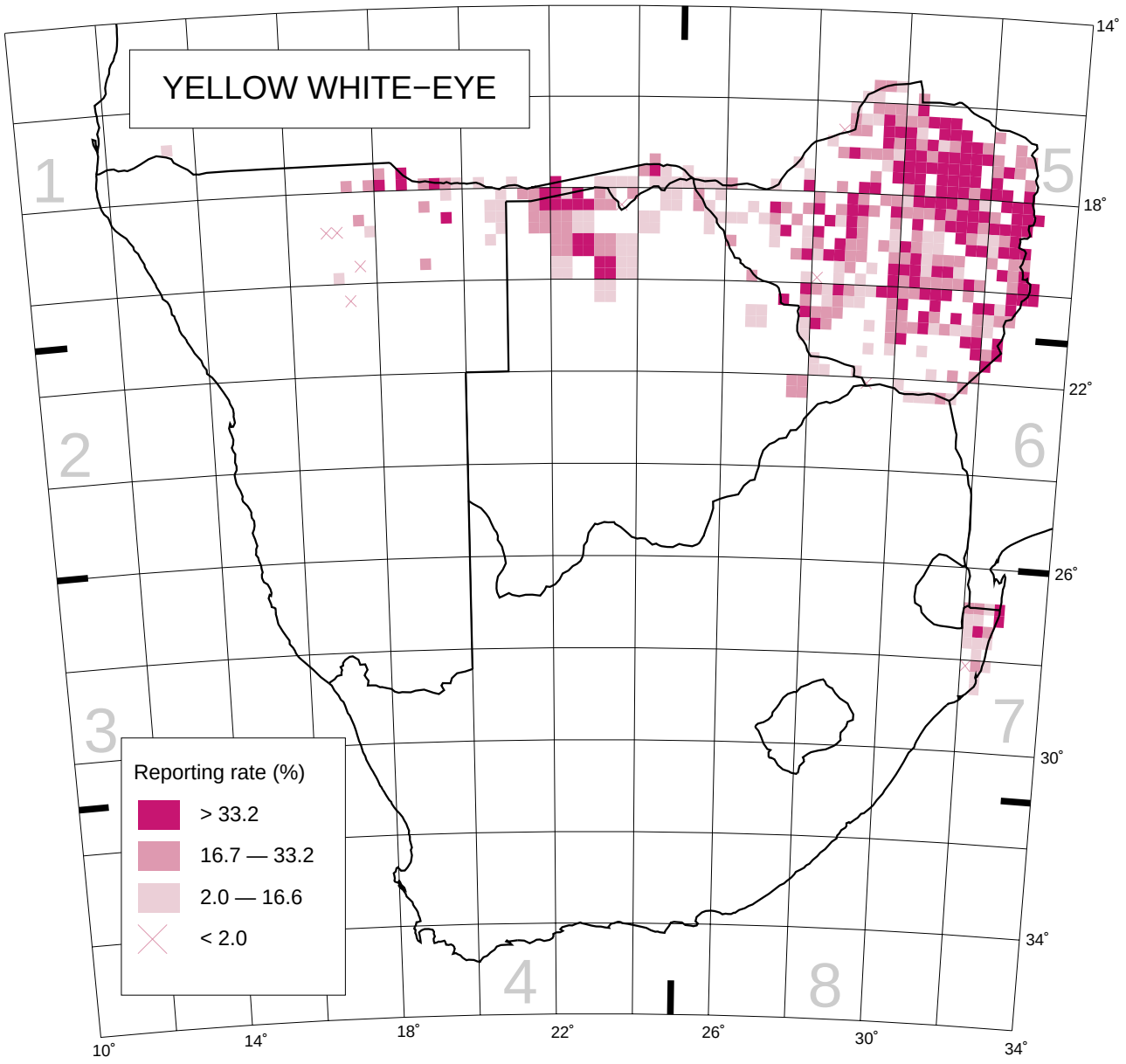
Considered 'indeterminate' in South Africa by Brooke (1984b), it probably merits 'rare' status there because of its restricted range. Beyond the boundaries of southern Africa the Yellow White-eye is widespread and common.

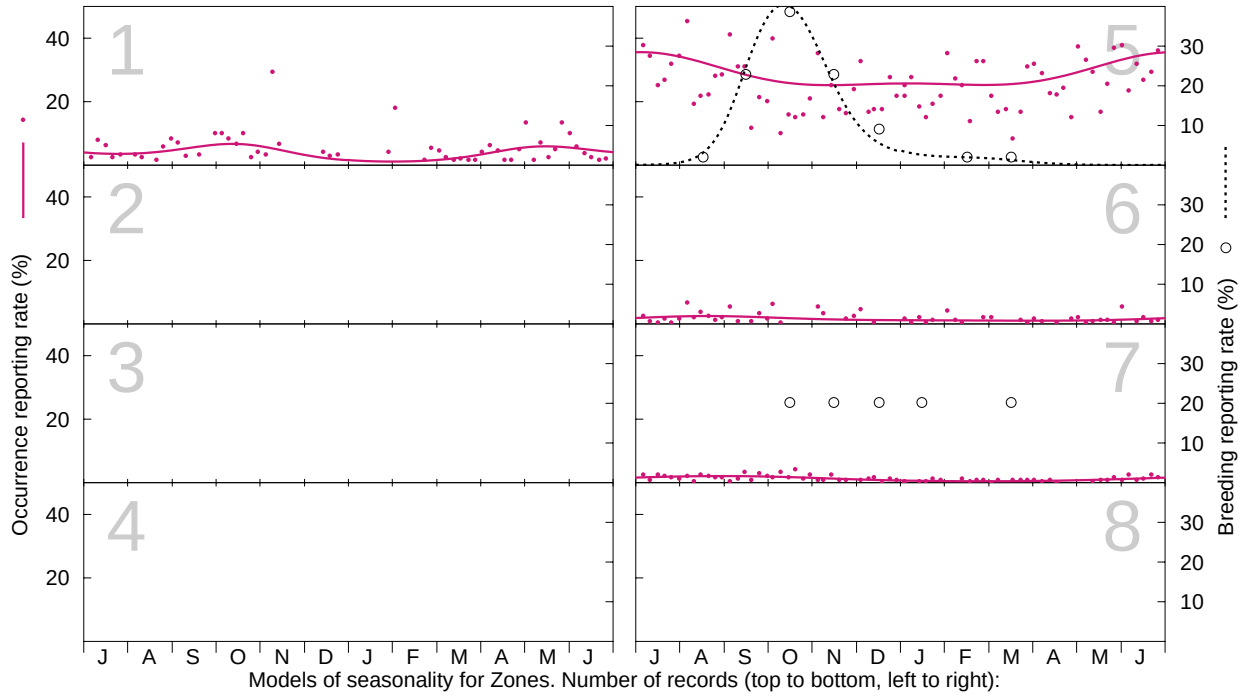
R.J. Nuttall

Recorded in 482 grid cells,10.6%
Total number of records: 4768
Mean reporting rate for range: 30.4%

Reporting rates for vegetation types







Models of seasonality for Zones. Number of records (top to bottom, left to right):
Occurrence: 137, 0, 0, 0, 2502, 173, 229, 0; Breeding: 0, 0, 0, 0, 44, 0, 5, 0.