

Redthroated Twinspot

Rooikeelkolpensie

Hypargos niveoguttatus

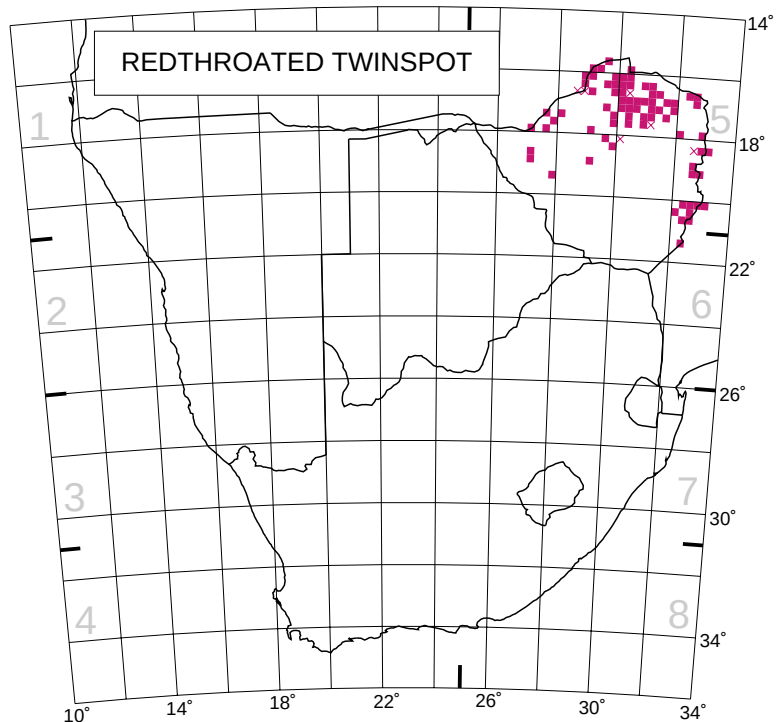
This quiet, unobtrusive bird occurs from Kenya southwards to Zimbabwe and Mozambique but is generally sparse and localized, although it may be quite common in places. At the Dichwe Forest (1730AA) in Zimbabwe, a density of about 50 pairs/10 ha was estimated (Ginn *et al.* 1989). Its favoured habitat is riparian fringing forest with nearby dense thickets, although in the eastern highlands region where it is most common, it inhabits the edges of lowland or mid-altitude evergreen forest and other moist cover. It has been recorded up to 1500 m (Irwin 1981). The patchy distribution shown in the map probably reflects both its inconspicuousness and the patchiness of suitable habitat.

Reporting rates were inconsistent and the degree of seasonality suggested in the model is probably immaterial; it is sedentary and the increase in records towards the end of the dry season coincides with a reduction in foliage cover which renders the birds more conspicuous.

The breeding data expand those given in Irwin (1981). Breeding was recorded in all months except July–August, with a peak March–June when suitable food is most abundant. It is the host species of the Green Widowfinch *Vidua codringtoni* (Payne *et al.* 1992, 1993; Hustler 1993; Klein *et al.* 1993).

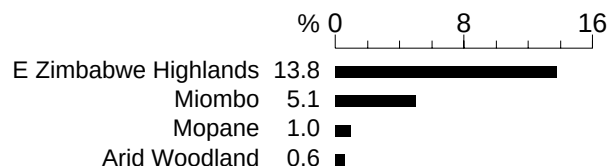
There is some indication of limited range expansion on the Mashonaland highveld in recent years, especially on farms where the riparian growth is left relatively undisturbed. Although it was not recorded in the Transvaal during the atlas period, there are two older records from that province, including breeding (Tarboton *et al.* 1987b), but in the light of recent information, these records may be of the Pinkthroated Twin-spot *H. margaritatus* (Hockey *et al.* 1995).

In the Mana Pools National Park in the Zambezi Valley (1529CB), it used to occur quite commonly in the extensive dense thickets of the floodplain, but now the effects of excessive concentrations of certain species of game have eliminated much of this habitat (pers. obs). Although there is no cause for concern at this stage, cognizance should be taken by wildlife managers of the negative effect of this habitat destruction on the Redthroated Twinspot.



Recorded in 80 grid cells, 1.8%
Total number of records: 544
Mean reporting rate for range: 13.8%

Reporting rates for vegetation types



A.J. Tree

