



Fierynecked Nightjar

Afrikaanse Naguil

Caprimulgus pectoralis

Distributed from southern Africa to Kenya and southeastern Zaire, it is mostly scarce or absent in dry regions of southern Africa. It is usually common, especially at lower elevations, from the western Cape Province along the southern and eastern lowlands to Zimbabwe, northern Botswana and northeastern Namibia. It is generally scarce on the highveld, but is regular at rocky places in the eastern and southern Free State (Earlé & Grobler 1987). In Zimbabwe it is widespread and common, except in the highlands of the east (Irwin 1981). As a resident species in southern Mozambique it is locally common (Clancey 1971c). In Botswana it is said to be a breeding intra-African migrant which may be very common in the north, less so in the east (Penry 1994). Clancey (1980b) recognized two races: the nominate from the Cape Province to KwaZulu-Natal, and *C. p. fervidus* further north; their ranges appear to be continuous on the present map.

Like all nightjars, it is difficult to identify by sight alone, but its frequently uttered 'good-lord-deliver-us' call is one of the most characteristic of night sounds, making it relatively well reported.

Habitat: It roosts on the ground, preferring areas where there is dense leaf litter. It occurs in dense broadleaved woodland (Jackson 1975, 1978; Penry 1994), savanna, coastal bush, fynbos and alien plantations, such as *Eucalyptus* (Irwin 1981), as well as invasive *Acacia* species in the southwestern Cape Province (Hockey *et al.* 1989). It avoids forest. It may occur in drier habitats, such as Kalahari sandveld, after good rains (Penry 1994). Reporting rates are especially high in Miombo, Okavango, and in other broadleaved or mixed woodland types. It is least abundant in the high-elevation grassland biomes and semi-arid habitats.

Movements: Most Zones show a double peak in reporting rates, suggesting spring (August–October) and late-summer (February–April) influxes. However, this is primarily an artefact of variation in calling frequency at different times of year. Calling occurs primarily in spring–early summer, and again in late summer–autumn. Much of the Zimbabwean population is absent during the rains, having a post-breeding exodus November–April (Irwin 1981). The lowland nominate race is regarded as resident (Skead 1967b; Cyrus & Robson 1980; Hockey *et al.* 1989; Parker 1994); inland *fervidus* is considered a partial migrant or breeding summer visitor (Irwin 1981; Tarboton *et al.* 1987b; Maclean 1993b; Penry 1994).

Breeding: Breeding records were August–January, peaking September–November throughout the region. This confirms egg-laying records (Dean 1971; Irwin 1981; Tarboton *et al.* 1987b). Egg-laying is largely geared to the period between full moon and last quarter (Jackson 1983).

Interspecific relationships: All six nightjar species breeding in the region are primarily separated by habitat; the Fierynecked Nightjar occupies relatively moist woodlands.

Historical distribution and conservation: The distribution has probably changed little, but Hockey *et al.* (1989) suggested that the spread of alien *Acacia* spp. northward from the Cape Peninsula may have resulted in an extension of range. Special conservation measures are unnecessary for the Fierynecked Nightjar, since it is common, widespread, and adaptable to modified woodland habitats. Eggs and chicks are vulnerable to fires (Colebrook-Robjent 1984).

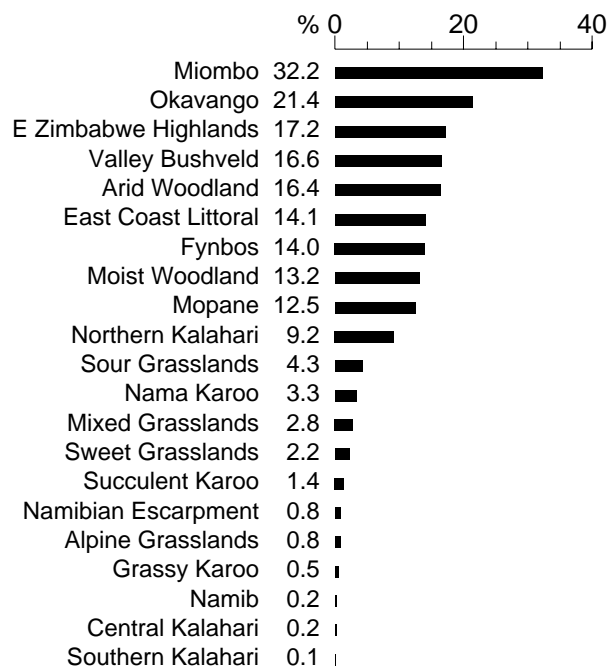
G.L. Maclean

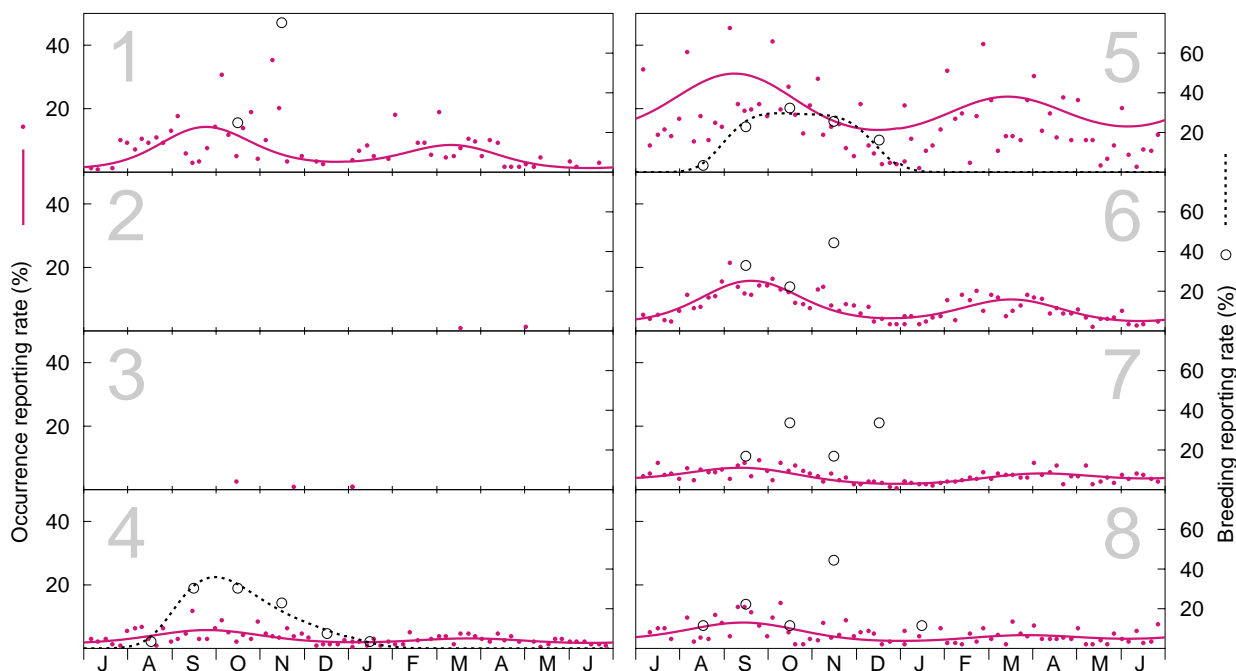
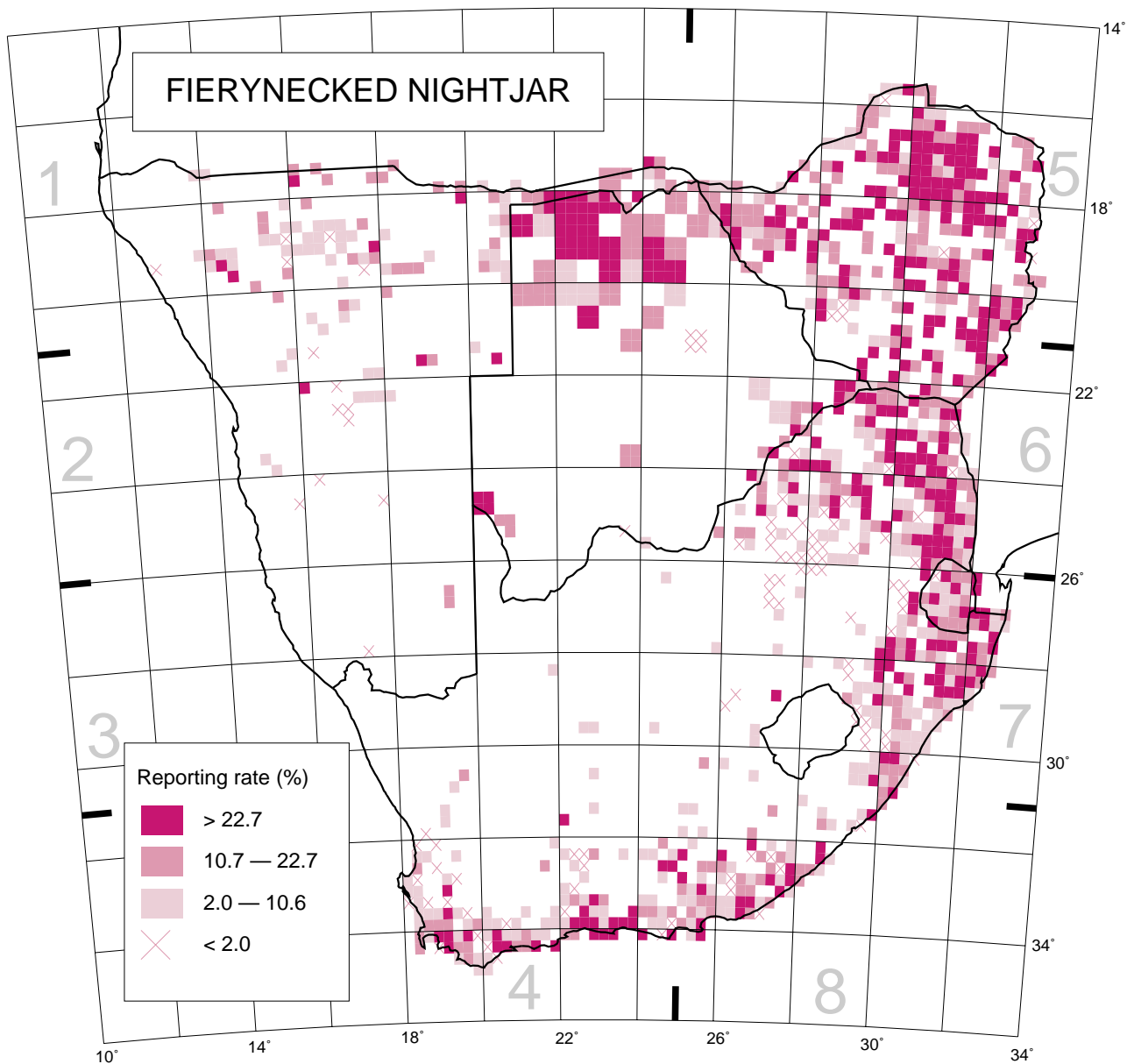
Recorded in 1205 grid cells, 26.6%

Total number of records: 14 528

Mean reporting rate for range: 15.5%

Reporting rates for vegetation types





Models of seasonality for Zones. Number of records (top to bottom, left to right):
 Occurrence: 200, 2, 7, 271, 1820, 861, 803, 238; Breeding: 4, 0, 0, 26, 31, 9, 6, 9.