

Monteiro's Hornbill

Monteiose Neushoringvoël

Tockus monteiri

This large and conspicuous hornbill is near-endemic to the region. It has a restricted range in the rocky central and northwestern arid regions of Namibia and southwest Angola (Pinto 1970) where it is locally common in areas of rocky savanna. Its Namibian range covers 170 000 km² (Robertson 1993). Monteiro's Hornbill is unlikely to be confused with other species even though it is sympatric with the Yellowbilled *T. leucomelas*, Redbilled *T. erythrorhynchus*, Grey *T. nasutus* and, locally, with Bradfield's *T. bradfieldi* Hornbills. Its orange bill, grey hood, large size and low, gravelly duetting call are distinguishing features.

It is one of Namibia's commonest near-endemics with an estimated population, derived from atlas reporting rates and ground-truthed density values, of 340 000 birds; the Etosha National Park supports *c.* 6 000 birds (Jarvis & Robertson 1997). Densities can vary enormously from 1–2 birds/km² in central Namibia to 13 birds/km² in more northern areas (A. Robertson *et al.* unpubl. data). Breeding densities of 7 birds/km² were achieved with the provision of artificial nest boxes in a reserve near Windhoek (2217CA) (J. Mendelsohn pers. comm.).

Habitat: It typically breeds in rock crevices, which explains its predilection for the Namibian Escarpment where reporting rates were about six times higher than in Arid Woodland. High densities resulting from the availability of nest boxes, mentioned above, suggest that it is usually nest-site limited elsewhere.

Movements: The models do not suggest regular seasonal movements. It is considered to be resident in the parts of its range with relatively high rainfall, but in drier areas it

tends to form wandering flocks in flat country adjacent to hills, in the dry season (Fry *et al.* 1988).

Breeding: It breeds predominantly in late summer, with most eggs occurring in March (46% of 31 records), but with variation depending on rains. Breeding is initiated in response to heavy rains and the resulting sudden improvement in veld conditions (Kemp & Kemp 1972).

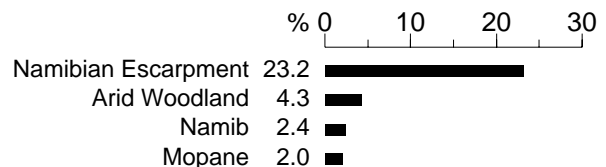
Interspecific relationships: It occupies the most arid habitat of all hornbills in the region and, at a micro-habitat scale, is ecologically separated from Grey Hornbill and Southern Yellowbilled Hornbill (Kemp & Kemp 1972).

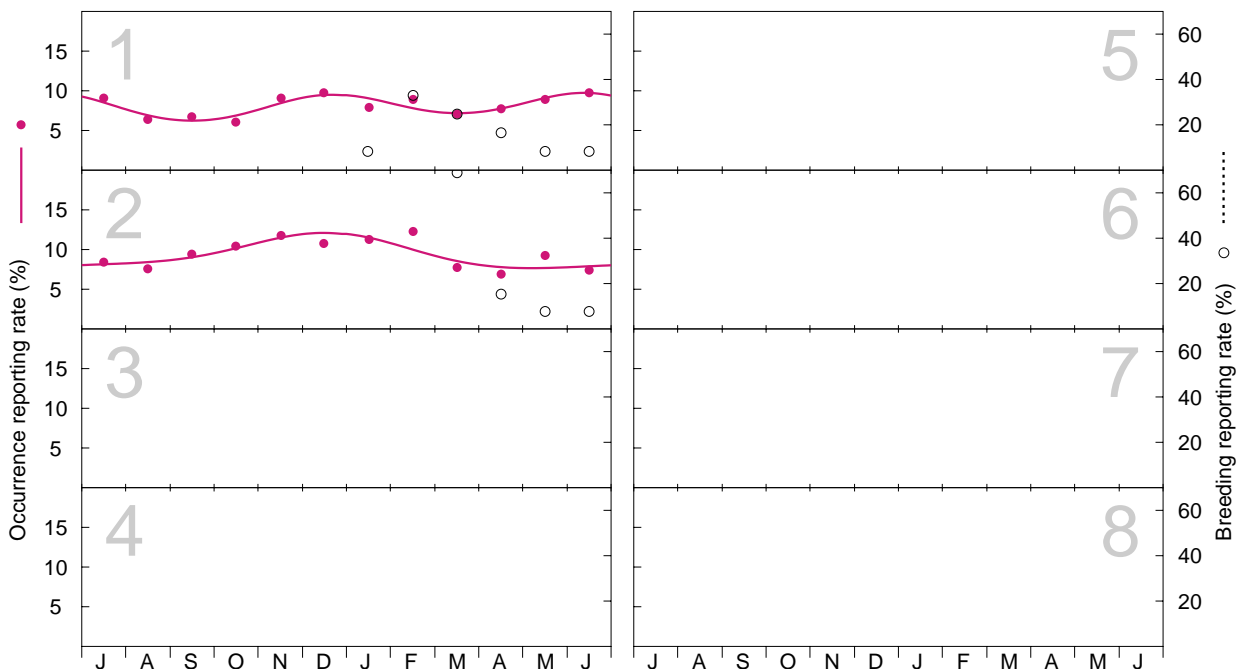
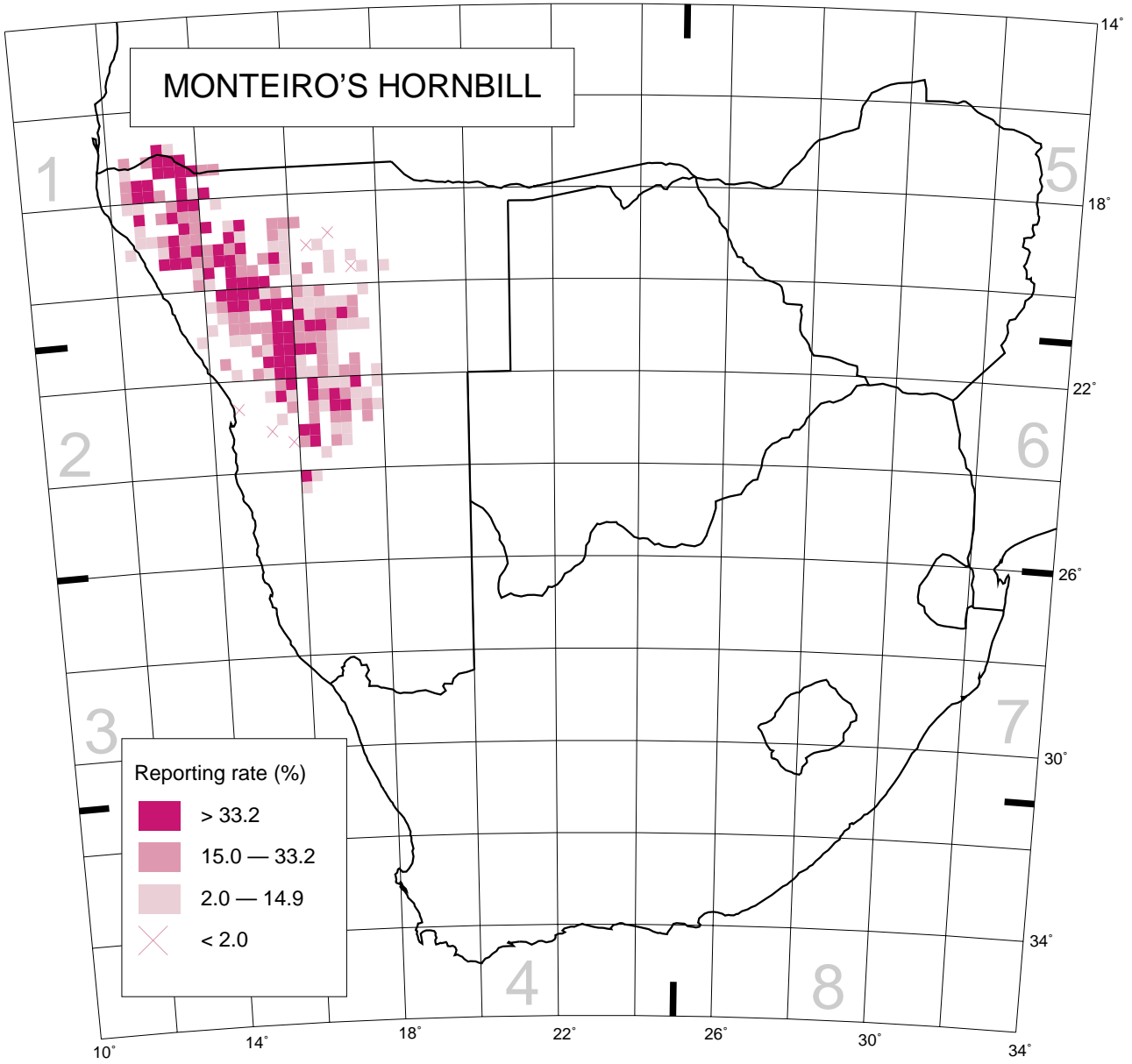
Historical distribution and conservation: The rugged nature of Monteiro's Hornbill's favoured habitat, and its presence in several protected areas in Namibia, means that it faces few threats and poses no conservation problems.

R.E. Simmons

Recorded in 232 grid cells, 5.1%
Total number of records: 1725
Mean reporting rate for range: 23.3%

Reporting rates for vegetation types





Models of seasonality for Zones. Number of records (top to bottom, left to right):
 Occurrence: 731, 983, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0; Breeding: 12, 13, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0.