

Dusky Lark
 Donkerlewerik
Pinarocorys nigricans

The Dusky Lark is an uncommon nonbreeding intra-African migrant in southern Africa (Keith *et al.* 1992). The atlas records come mainly from the northern parts of southern Africa: northeastern KwaZulu-Natal (where it is rare), eastern Swaziland (one record; Parker 1994), northward through the eastern and northern Transvaal to Zimbabwe, Botswana and northern Namibia. There are scattered records from the northern Cape Province.

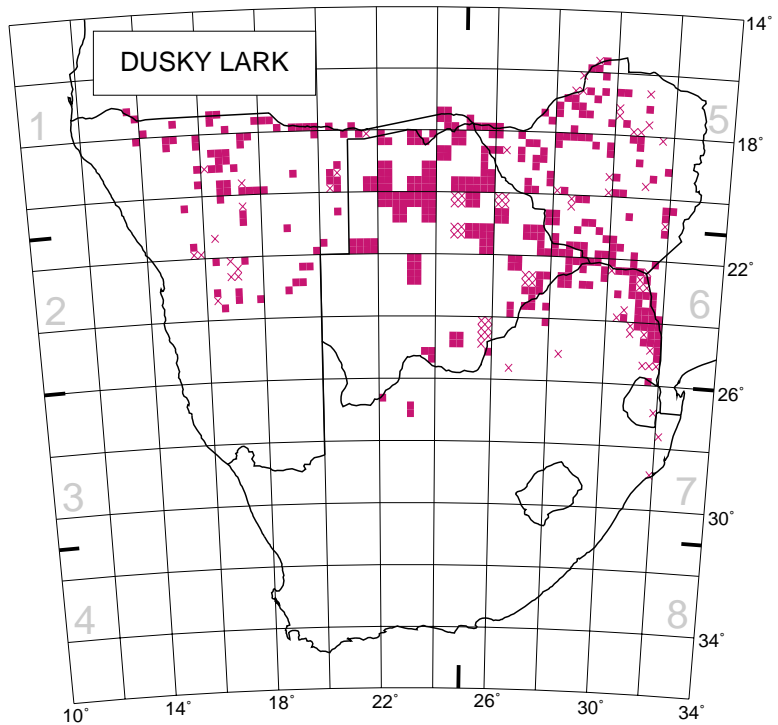
It is usually seen in small flocks, occasionally singly or in large flocks (Maclean 1993b). This is a distinctive lark but can be confused with the Groundscraper Thrush *Turdus litsitsirupa*.

In southern Africa, it occurs mainly in broad-leaved savannas, and forages in clearings and in short grass, on bare patches within or on the edges of woodland, and in parks and on lawns. It appears to have been most frequently recorded in the eastern Transvaal lowveld and along the Limpopo Valley, suggesting a preference for the lower-lying woodlands in the region.

Outside of southern Africa it occurs and breeds in central Angola, western and southern Zaire, northern Zambia and western Tanzania, migrating south in late October and November and returning to breeding areas in the north April–June (Hunter 1991; Keith *et al.* 1992; Herremans 1994d). Irwin (1981) stated that it is a passage migrant through Zimbabwe to wintering areas in the Transvaal lowveld and southern Mozambique, and is less frequently recorded on southward than on northward migration. This pattern is confirmed by the models which show two peaks in reporting rate in Zone 5 (Zimbabwe), slightly before and after the arrival and departure, respectively, of the birds from Zone 6 (the Transvaal). In Zone 6 the reporting rates were relatively stable during the period of their presence.

The Dusky Lark is not considered to be threatened and appears to be adequately conserved, both on its breeding grounds in central Africa and in its nonbreeding range in southern Africa.

W.R.J. Dean



Recorded in 461 grid cells, 10.2%
 Total number of records: 870
 Mean reporting rate for range: 4.5%

Reporting rates for vegetation types

