

Slender Bulbul

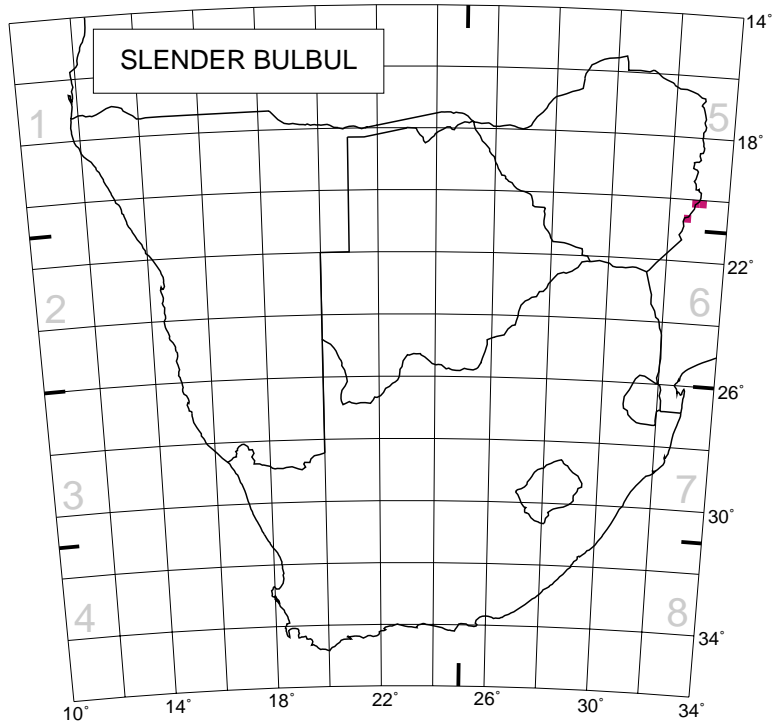
Kleinboskruiper

Phyllastrephus debilis

Because the Slender Bulbul is so much smaller than most other members of the bulbul family, it can easily be mistaken for a large warbler. Nevertheless the limited range that it occupies in the atlas region is probably accurately reflected on the map. Far northern KwaZulu-Natal was thoroughly covered during the atlas period and extensive collecting in eastern Zimbabwe in the past has never produced records away from the immediate vicinity of the Haroni–Rusitu confluence (2033AA), where the altitude is about 350 m, and a few kilometres up the Haroni River to about 800 m. It has nevertheless not yet been recorded a little further north in apparently similar habitat at about 800 m in the lower Pungwe and Honde valleys (1832DB) (Irwin 1981). This is essentially a lowland bird recorded from the Mozambique coast south of Vilancoulos (Clancey 1971c) and further north to the Tana River in Kenya, and it extends inland to the Usambaras and to the Ulugurus and other Tanzanian mountains (Keith *et al.* 1992).

Within its small range in Zimbabwe it is common, feeding and breeding in the shrub layers within primary and secondary forest, but foraging up into the canopy. Elsewhere in its range, it is recorded from thick coastal scrub and outside the forest in woodland (Keith *et al.* 1992).

The limited number of observations probably reflect a resident status. None of the standard references suggests any migratory movements. It does breed in the Haroni–Rusitu forests October–January (Irwin 1981). This accords with the November–December peak breeding period for many insectivorous forest birds in this region.



Recorded in 3 grid cells, 0.1%
 Total number of records: 26
 Mean reporting rate for range: 45.6%

A.N.B. Masterson

