

Livingstone's Flycatcher

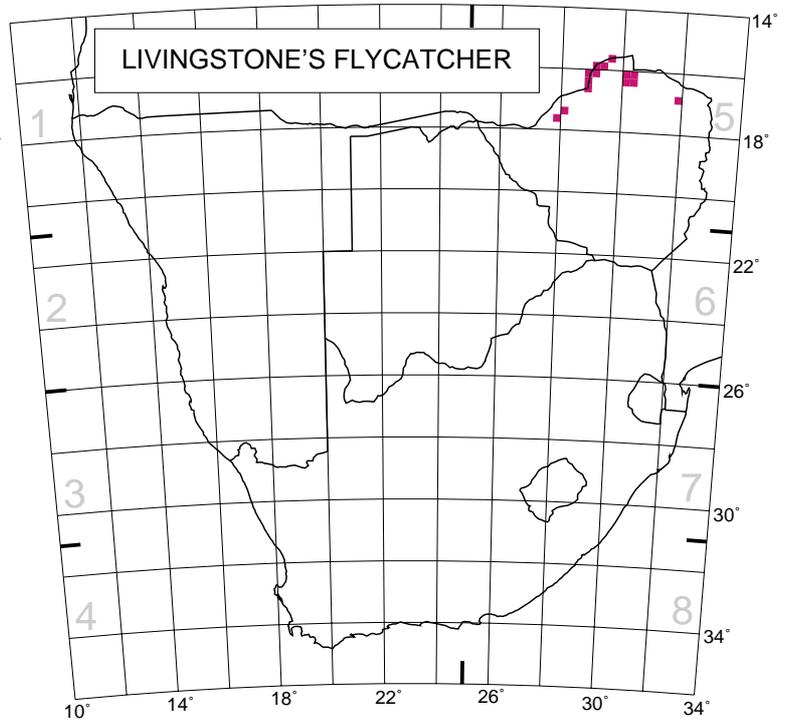
Rooistertvlieëvanger

Erythrocerus livingstonei

Within the atlas region, the nominate race of Livingstone's Flycatcher is essentially confined to the floor of the middle Zambezi Valley, from the upper reaches of Lake Kariba downstream to the Zimbabwe–Mozambique border. It ranges further downstream to Tete, northwards to northern Zambia and Malawi, and to southern Tanzania. An eastern coastal race *E. l. francisi* occupies much of southern Mozambique southwards to the Limpopo River (Clancey 1971c). This race, with more distinctive dark tail spots, also comes into eastern Zimbabwe up the Mazowe and Ruenya rivers to about 800 m (Irwin 1981), accounting for the most easterly record on the map.

It is a bird of riparian forest and dry thicket where it forages in midstratum and canopy. Such habitat occurs in restricted ribbons and isolated patches within larger expanses of dry woodland, such as Mopane. In the Kariba basin, much suitable habitat was inundated when the dam was established and, compared to Irwin (1981), there are now fewer records from this area. Downstream of Kariba it is widespread below the escarpment. It was probably under-recorded both in the Zambezi and lower Mazowe valleys because of limited coverage.

It is generally regarded as resident but it can be most elusive, particularly in summer when all woody vegetation is in leaf. The model suggests lower conspicuousness during late summer and autumn. There are Zambian breeding records December–January (Benson *et al.* 1971) and that is when it breeds south of the Zambezi (unpubl. data). The nest of this genus, a ball with side entrance enclosed by leaves (Moyer *et al.* 1992), is most unlike that of other flycatchers; perhaps the species more properly belongs with the warblers.



Recorded in 14 grid cells, 0.3%
 Total number of records: 70
 Mean reporting rate for range: 11.7%

Livingstone's Flycatcher has a restricted range in the region and it is sensitive to the habitat destruction which occurs when humans and their goats settle in an area.

A.N.B. Masterson

