



Yellowthroated Longclaw

Geelkeelkalkoentjie

Macronyx croceus

The Yellowthroated Longclaw is widespread in Africa south of the Sahara, excluding Zaire, most of Angola and Zambia, and the drier western parts of southern Africa. In southern Africa it occurs in a discontinuous band along the eastern part of the subcontinent from about East London (3327BB) through KwaZulu-Natal, Swaziland, the eastern Transvaal east of the Drakensberg, and the eastern half of Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe the highest reporting rates are on the Mashonaland plateau in the northeast and it is absent from both the Limpopo and Zambezi valleys. The separated populations south and north of the Limpopo are considered to belong to the same subspecies, while the ranges of the two races in the region (Clancey 1980b) appear to be continuous in KwaZulu-Natal. In South Africa it ranges from sea-level to about 900 m, while in tropical Zimbabwe it is found from about 800 m to over 1600 m.

It is conspicuous and easy to identify, and the atlas data are reliable and comprehensive, although it is occasionally confused with the Orangethroated Longclaw *M. capensis*.

Habitat: In Zimbabwe it occurs in grassveld patches in miombo woodland, where the highest reporting rates were obtained. It occurs in relatively high-rainfall regions throughout its range in southern Africa. It occupies drier grassveld bordering vleis (Irwin 1981), preferring coarse, thick and rank grasses which may be either short or long but usually associated with thornveld or woodland. Bushes seem to be essential as perches. In West Africa it is found in clearings in forest but this has not been recorded in southern Africa.

Movements: The atlas reporting rates do not indicate seasonal movements and the species is generally considered resident. Locally, however, numbers vary considerably

from year to year, suggesting some local movement (Tarboton *et al.* 1987b; Maclean 1993b).

Breeding: There is a clearly defined breeding season in the wet summer months, September–March, with peak egg-laying November–January (Dean 1971; Irwin 1981).

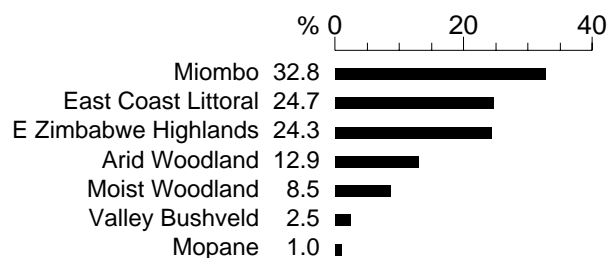
Interspecific relationships: In parts of Zimbabwe and KwaZulu-Natal all three species of longclaw share similar habitats. In the eastern Transvaal and Swaziland both Orangethroated and Yellowthroated Longclaws overlap; the Yellowthroated Longclaw generally favours the lower-lying areas and is always associated with scattered trees. Despite being the most widespread longclaw in Africa (Keith *et al.* 1992), little has been published on this species, nor is there much information on the intricate ecological relationship between it and the Orangethroated Longclaw.

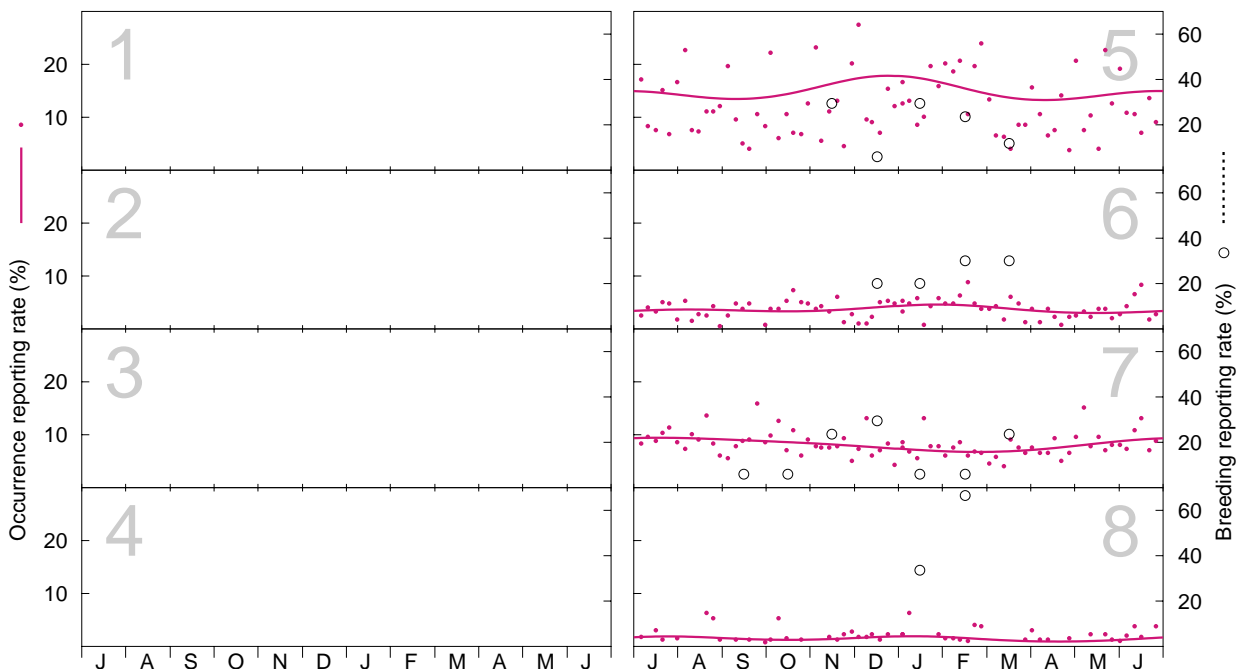
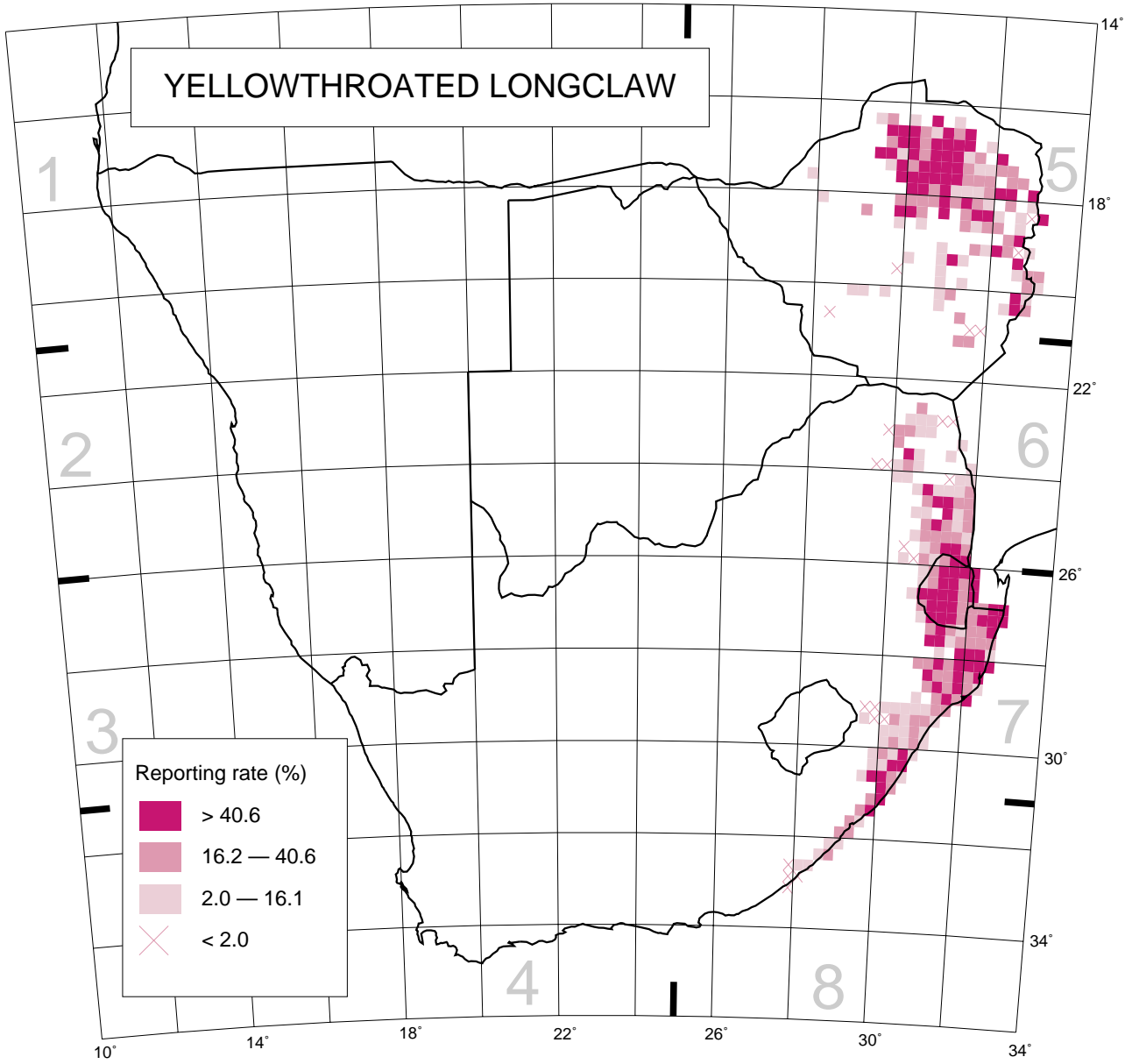
Historical distribution and conservation: There is no evidence that its historical distribution, as in McLachlan & Liversidge (1957), differs from the present. The Yellowthroated Longclaw is not considered threatened anywhere in its range in southern Africa.

D.H. Day

Recorded in 348 grid cells, 7.7%
Total number of records: 8781
Mean reporting rate for range: 27.2%

Reporting rates for vegetation types





Models of seasonality for Zones. Number of records (top to bottom, left to right):
 Occurrence: 0, 0, 0, 0, 1296, 417, 1591, 79; Breeding: 0, 0, 0, 0, 17, 10, 17, 3.