

Chestnutfronted Helmetshrike

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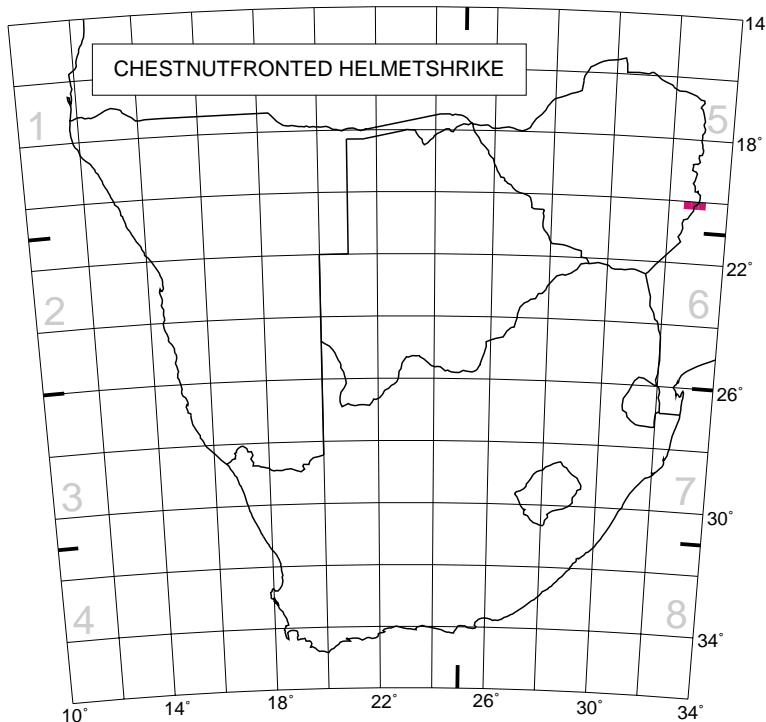
Prionops scopifrons

The Chestnutfronted Helmetshrike occurs only along the east coast of tropical Africa, extending south into southern Africa along the Mozambique coastal plain (Harris & Arnott 1988). In the atlas region it was recorded from a few localities in Zimbabwe adjacent to Mozambique. The best-known locality is at the Haroni-Rusitu confluence (2033AA) in eastern Zimbabwe (Irwin 1981), in which area it was recorded in three grid cells during the atlas period; most records span October–January. Elsewhere there have been records of birds at Ndumu Game Reserve (2632CC) (Clancey 1964b) and at the Pongola River (2731BC) in northern KwaZulu-Natal (Cyrus & Robson 1980).

It is a communal breeder which lives in groups of 3–10 birds. The density of groups is low, as they maintain large territories. It is fairly inconspicuous because it occurs in dense woodland and may be confused with the similar Redbilled Helmetshrike *P. retzii*.

It is a resident confined to lowland coastal and riverine forest and adjacent mature miombo woodland and thickets (Harris & Arnott 1988). Breeding has been recorded October–December (Maclean 1993b).

The Chestnutfronted Helmetshrike was not listed as threatened by Collar *et al.* (1994), but this may have been an oversight because it occurs at low densities in a very restricted range, and is threatened with extirpation in southern Africa because its habitat is being cleared for logging and for subsistence agriculture.



Recorded in 3 grid cells, 0.1%
 Total number of records: 12
 Mean reporting rate for range: 12.5%

C.J. Vernon and V. Parker

