

Broadtailed Paradise Whydah

Breëstertparadysvink

Vidua obtusa

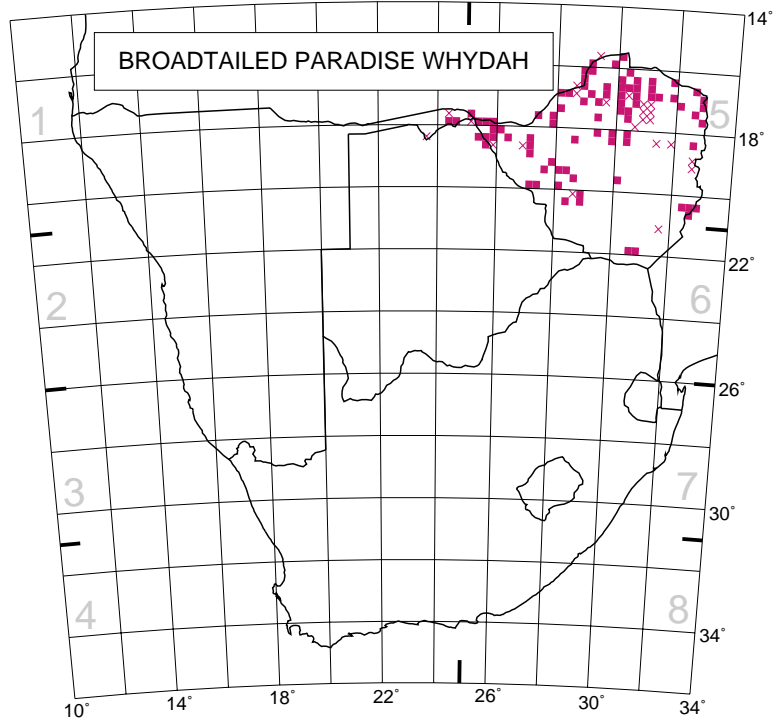
The Broadtailed Paradise Whydah occurs from Zaire and Kenya southwards to Angola, peripherally into the eastern Caprivi in Namibia and extreme northeastern Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique (Maclean 1993b). In Zimbabwe it is relatively common only in the northwest and at the eastern end of Lake Kariba, while elsewhere it is uncommon. It is generally of erratic occurrence which may well be the result of similarly erratic behaviour in its breeding host, the Goldenbacked *Pytilia* *Pytilia afra*. Breeding males have conspicuous plumage, and displaying birds may be a good indicator of the presence of the pytilia (Randall *et al.* 1994).

It prefers well-developed woodland of all types. Its congener, the Paradise Whydah *V. paradisea*, inhabits more open savanna. However, the Broadtailed Paradise Whydah will feed in more open country, especially during the nonbreeding season, when it may form mixed flocks with the Paradise Whydah.

The high degree of seasonality exhibited in the model indicates the conspicuousness of males in breeding dress, acquired December–February and usually lost by June. Furthermore, the whydahs (and in fact the entire viduid group) become difficult to identify in nonbreeding dress and are thus under-recorded in winter. In Zimbabwe it may occur virtually anywhere; Irwin (1981) indicated irregular movements and unpredictable presence from year to year. It was an extreme rarity in Botswana (Borello 1992b) until an invasion of thousands occurred in 1994; several displayed and most likely bred (Randall *et al.* 1994). A single historical record from the Transvaal was of several birds resident for five months and possibly breeding (Payne 1967, 1971; Tarboton *et al.* 1987b).

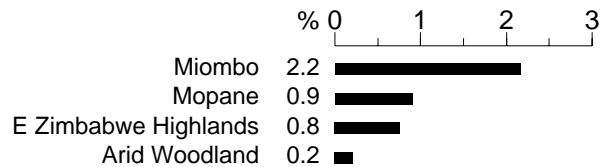
Only a single breeding record exists for the region: a specimen collected in Zimbabwe in March had an egg in the oviduct (Irwin 1981).

Although considered ‘rare’ in South Africa (Brooke 1984b), the Broadtailed Paradise Whydah is on the periphery of its range and, as an erratic wanderer in pursuit of its breeding host, is unlikely to be threatened by the cage-bird trade.



Recorded in 108 grid cells, 2.4%
 Total number of records: 243
 Mean reporting rate for range: 4.4%

Reporting rates for vegetation types



A.J. Tree

