

Green Coucal

Groenvleioerie

Ceuthmochares aereus

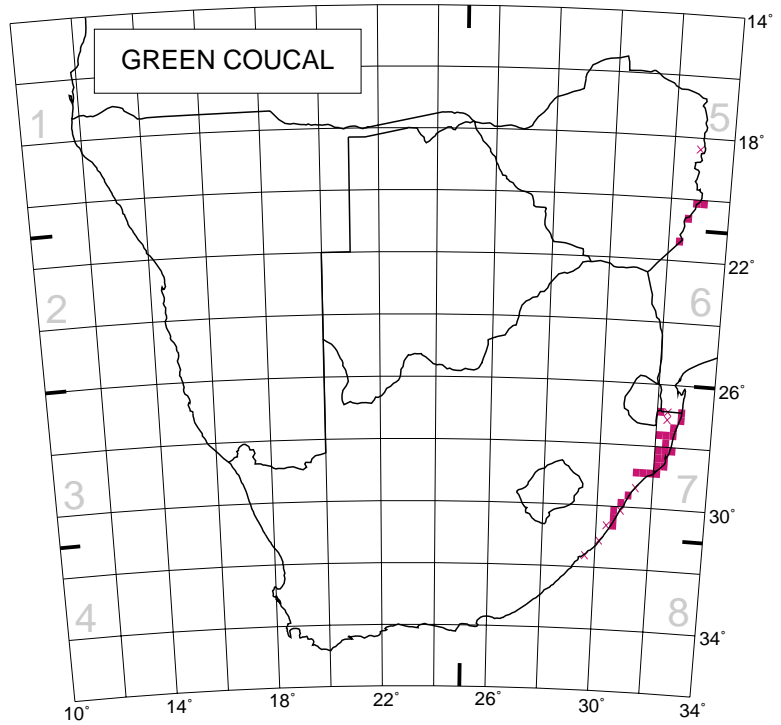
The Green Coucal is an Afrotropical species, widely distributed throughout the forests of Central Africa, occurring from Senegal to East Africa and southwards to Mozambique, reaching the atlas region marginally in far eastern Zimbabwe and on the east coast of South Africa. The centre of the distribution in the atlas region is in KwaZulu-Natal north of the Tugela River (2931AB), occurring more sparsely to the south, into the Transkei where it is rare and possibly vagrant (Quickelberge 1989). There is a record from Uitenhage (3325CD) in the eastern Cape Province (Skead 1967b).

It is uncommon and inconspicuous in lowland evergreen and riverine forests or thick bush, and is confined in southern Africa to the East Coast Littoral in KwaZulu-Natal and the Transkei, and to lowland forest in Zimbabwe (Irwin 1981). It seldom flies but moves secretively in dense canopy vegetation, creeping about in tangles. This is a shy species, usually detected by its characteristic call.

It is usually regarded as resident (Rowan 1983) but is migratory in some parts of its range in Kenya and Tanzania (Fry *et al.* 1988). There is an increase in the reporting rate in KwaZulu-Natal in spring, when it calls at the onset of breeding. However, it is not particularly vocal, and it is likely to be more common than atlas data suggest. It breeds October–December (Dean 1971; Irwin 1981; Maclean 1993b).

The distribution in southern Africa is similar to that of several other tropical forest species, such as the Southern Banded Snake Eagle *Circaetus fasciolatus* and White-eared Barbet *Stactolaema leucotis*, occurring in the humid subtropical parts of KwaZulu-Natal and the southeastern lowlands of Zimbabwe.

Although forest habitats have been greatly reduced along the KwaZulu-Natal coast, the continued existence of the Green Coucal in South Africa is not presently threatened. It



Recorded in 36 grid cells, 0.8%
 Total number of records: 453
 Mean reporting rate for range: 6.3%

has been listed as a species requiring monitoring (Brooke 1984b). Its habitat in Mozambique is under pressure from deforestation (Ryan 1995).

A. Berruti

