



## Yellow Weaver

### Geelwewer

*Ploceus subaureus*

In southern Africa, the Yellow Weaver is a bird of the tropical coastal plain from Port Elizabeth (3325DC) north-eastwards, although it does penetrate inland along major river valleys. The same pattern of distribution is found in southern Mozambique (Clancey 1971c), and to the north through Tanzania to Kenya (Hall & Moreau 1970), with the furthest inland records coming from the Shire Valley and Lake Malawi (Benson & Benson 1977). There have been no records for Zimbabwe (Irwin 1981) and only one acceptable report from the Transvaal, in the Kruger National Park during an exceptionally wet season (Tarboton *et al.* 1987b). It was recorded several times in adjacent northeastern Swaziland (Parker 1994).

It can be confused with several other small yellow weavers in the region; any inland records, away from a river system on which Yellow Weavers are established, should be treated as doubtful.

**Habitat:** This is a largely granivorous weaver and not a forest bird, distributed on the coastal plain and in riverine habitats. Yellow Weavers nest primarily in reedbeds along rivers, but range more widely in woodland when not breeding (Maclean 1993b).

**Movements:** Seasonal reporting rates are biased by colonial breeding and dispersal into different habitat after breeding. Of 13 recoveries, one bird had moved 78 km, but all others were reported within 10 km of the ringing site (Craig 1982a).

**Breeding:** Breeding was reported August–April with a peak in early summer, much in line with the data of Dean (1971).

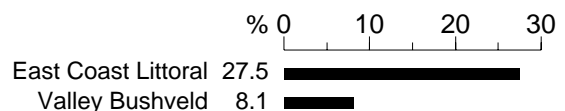
**Interspecific relationships:** It is gregarious and will flock and roost with other Ploceidae, also forming mixed colonies in some areas. Its distribution overlaps with eight other *Ploceus* weavers, of which especially Brownthroated *P. xanthopterus* and Golden *P. xanthops* Weavers occupy similar riparian and swamp habitat. The latter is larger, and the former is similar in size, but both are comparatively uncommon in the area of overlap with the Yellow Weaver. There is no evidence from the distributions for complementarity or competitive exclusion with any of the other *Ploceus* species.

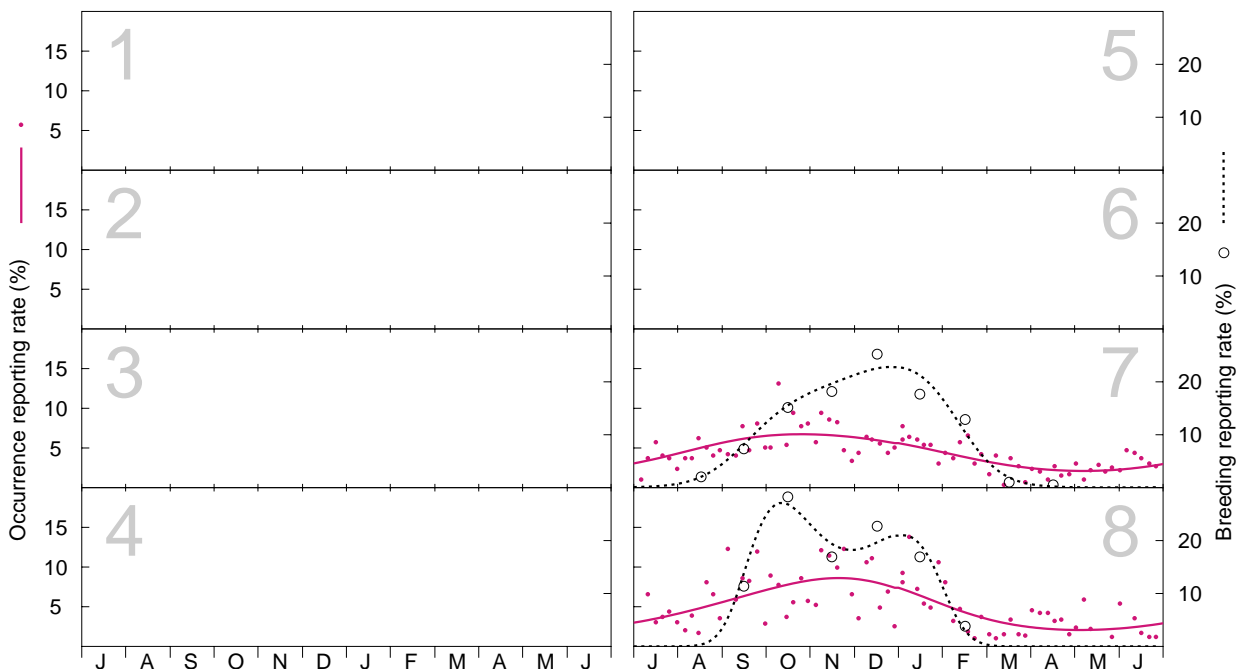
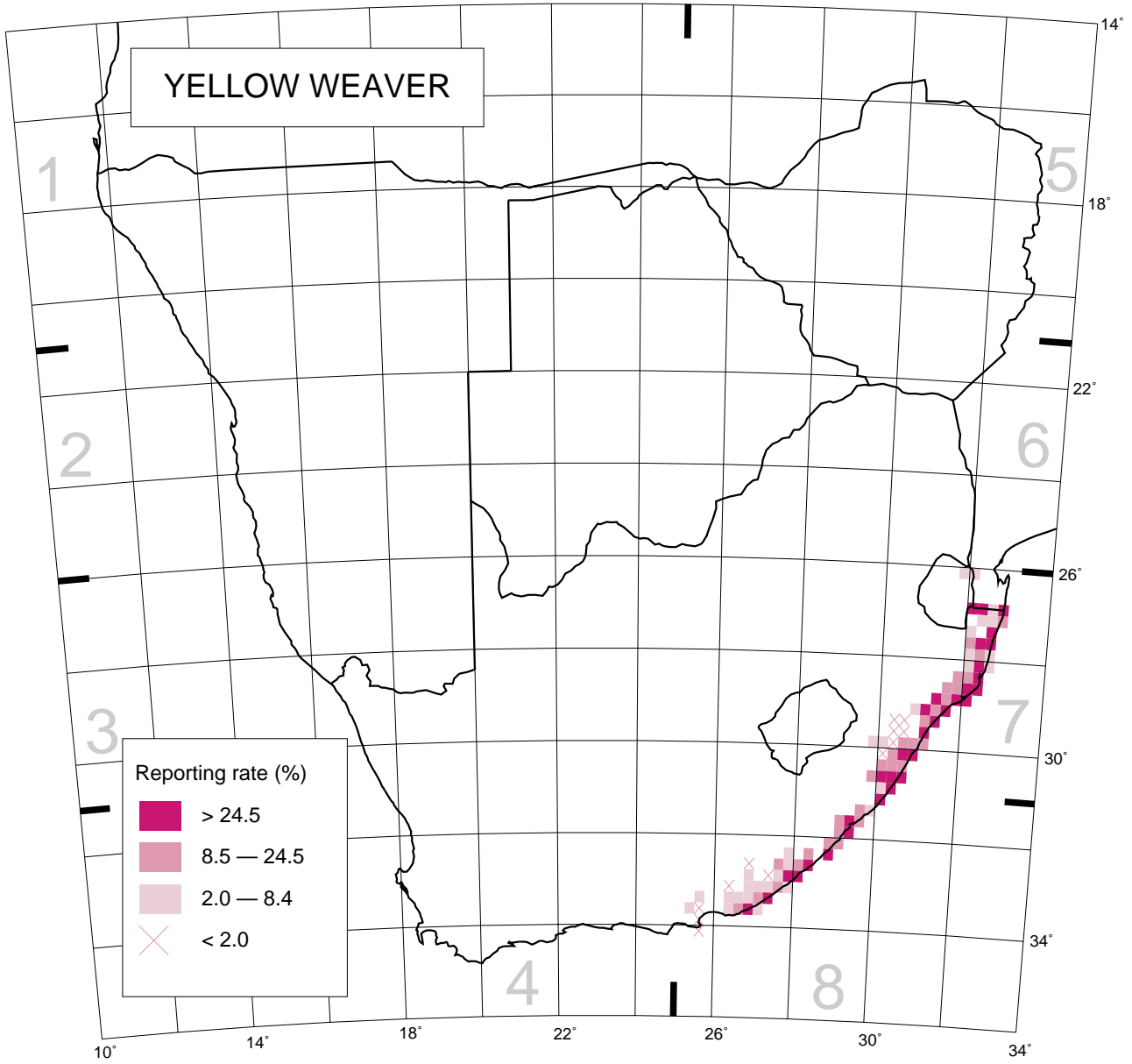
**Historical distribution and conservation:** No changes are evident. With its limited distribution in our region, the Yellow Weaver is perhaps vulnerable to habitat loss through development of the coastal belt, but it will probably coexist successfully with man.

A.J.F.K. Craig

Recorded in 103 grid cells, 2.3%  
Total number of records: 3318  
Mean reporting rate for range: 19.5%

Reporting rates for vegetation types





Models of seasonality for Zones. Number of records (top to bottom, left to right):  
 Occurrence: 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 862, 273; Breeding: 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 193, 53.