

Blackheaded Apalis

Swartkopkleinjantjie

Apalis melanocephala

In southern Africa the Blackheaded Apalis has a mainly coastal distribution in Mozambique, extending inland up the Busi River to the Haroni–Rusitu confluence (2033AA) in Zimbabwe at 350 m (Maclean 1993b). Its range extends northwards to East Africa. North of Beira it is not known west of Dondo–Inhamitanga (Cheringoma Plateau); it does not occur in the Urema Trough or on Gorongosa Mountain where the Chirinda Apalis *A. chirindensis* is found (Clancey 1971c; Irwin 1981). During the atlas period it was reported only from the region of the Haroni–Rusitu confluence. In the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe it is replaced by the Chirinda Apalis which occupies a similar ecological niche (Irwin 1981). There is no recently published information on its occurrence in Mozambique, but it has been recorded more than once on Bazaruto Island; this is the southernmost locality for this species in Mozambique, and it is apparently absent from the adjacent mainland (D. Butchart & V. Parker pers. comm.).

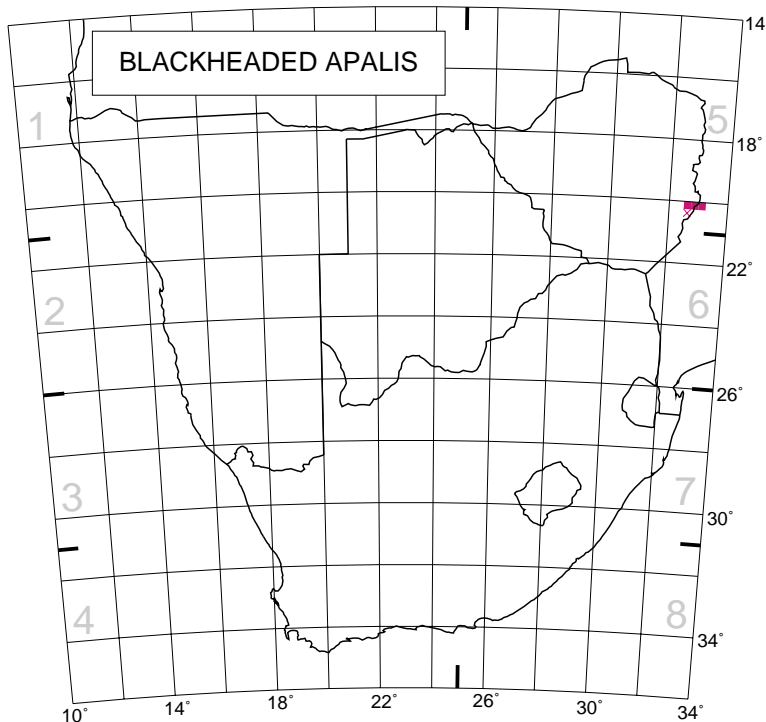
Its call is distinctive, but it is otherwise easily overlooked (Clancey 1971c). It is usually found in pairs or small groups, but may join mixed bird parties in winter (Maclean 1993b).

It is a common resident in the canopy of lowland evergreen forest and dense riverine bush in eastern Mozambique, with some movement to lower altitudes in winter (Maclean 1993b), while in Malawi it is found between 1000–1500 m in the midstratum and canopy of evergreen forest, and less frequently in riparian growth (Benson & Benson 1977).

It is known to breed November–February (Maclean 1993b), in October in Mozambique (Clancey 1971c) and October–November in Malawi (Benson & Benson 1977).

The Blackheaded Apalis is not endangered, but clearance of forest and riverine woodland and scrub for timber and agriculture, as is occurring at Haroni–Rusitu, along the eastern Zimbabwe border and probably in Mozambique, reduces its habitat.

D.B. Hanmer and W.J. Chadder



Recorded in 4 grid cells, 0.1%
 Total number of records: 15
 Mean reporting rate for range: 9.1%

