

Yellowbacked Widow

Geelrugflap

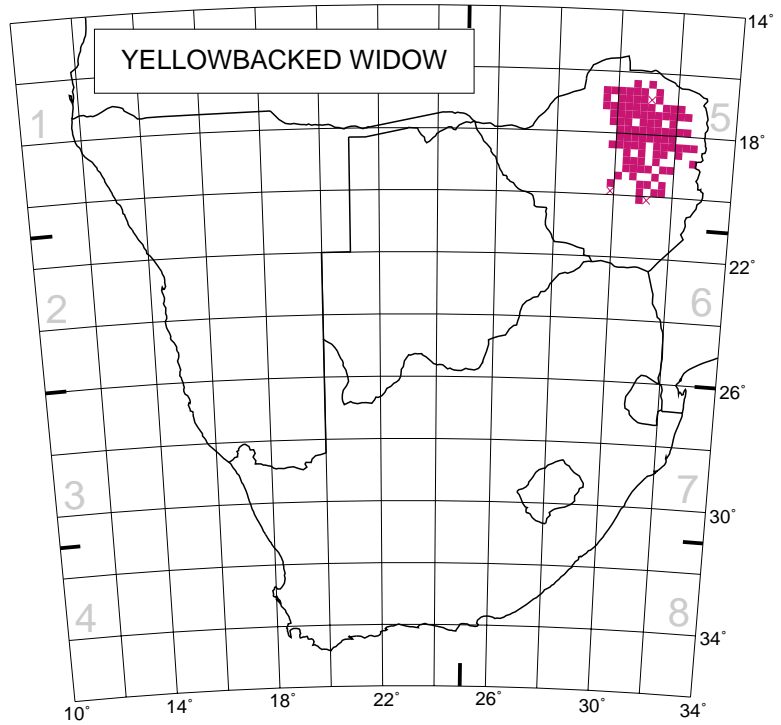
Euplectes macrourus

The Yellowbacked Widow occurs widely north of southern Africa in West and East Africa southwards to Angola and Zambia. Its southernmost limit is in Zimbabwe where it is uncommon and occurs locally in the highveld of Mashonaland.

It inhabits wetlands with associated rank grass and other herbaceous vegetation. It forages over large areas in small flocks which congregate at large overnight roosts. Its occurrence is dependent on rainfall and the associated growth of vegetation. Therefore, in years with only localized rainfall, it may appear in one region and be absent from neighbouring areas.

As with all *Euplectes*, it is difficult to identify and is easily overlooked when not in breeding plumage. This, rather than any migration out of the region, explains the strong seasonal pattern in the model. The atlas breeding records span December–February. Irwin (1981) recorded egg-laying in Zimbabwe from December–March, peaking in January when wetland grasses seed. The distribution map is similar to, but more comprehensive than that in Irwin (1981).

A.J. Tree



Recorded in 102 grid cells, 2.2%
 Total number of records: 762
 Mean reporting rate for range: 14.2%

Reporting rates for vegetation types

