

Project Title: Coordinated monitoring of the Endangered Spotted Ground-thrush *Zoothera guttata* in the East African breeding and non-breeding grounds.

Duration: 2007-2008

Funded by: The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund.

Overall goal:

To put in place a coordinated monitoring system for the East African sub-population of the Spotted Ground-thrush *Zoothera guttata*.

Objectives

- To gather baseline data for Spotted Ground Thrush population, habitat and threats status in East Africa
- To implement a monitoring system for the East African sub-population of Spotted Ground Thrush to cover the breeding, passage and non-breeding grounds and seasons of the species
- To monitor the East African sub-population of Spotted Ground Thrush in order to gather information that increases useful knowledge about the species which then feeds back to the stakeholders for conservation actions
- To build and strengthen a partnership network for coordinated and sustained monitoring and conservation of Spotted Ground Thrush and its forest habitat
- To use the outcomes from Spotted Ground Thrush monitoring as a tool for increasing awareness for conservation of Globally threatened species especially birds in the East African coastal forests

Rationale

Spotted Ground Thrush *Zoothera guttata* is an endemic resident and intra-African migrant bird species. The species is classified as endangered since it has very small and severely fragmented area of occupancy and its habitat continues to be degraded and destroyed. Although the species can be found in seven African countries (DRC, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania), *Z. g. fischeri*, one of the five recognised races of the species, is confined to and migrates within the coastal forests of Kenya and Tanzania. Recent records from Rondo Plateau in the coastal forests of Lindi District in Tanzania indicate that *Z. g. fischeri* breeds in southern Tanzania coastal forests. It is known as a non-breeding visitor to forests on the Kenya coast and north-eastern Tanzania from Lamu to Pugu Hills.

Since the bird is a cross-border species it is particularly difficult to conserve and requires concerted action. It is widely recognised that limited knowledge about the species distribution, movement and population size is a critical problem hindering its conservation, especially in East Africa. Monitoring the bird species can be made difficult by the fact that its habitat spread across the two East African countries. Therefore, a successful monitoring programme would call for concerted efforts. The proposed work will therefore involve coordinated monitoring for the East African sub-population of this enigmatic bird.

Monitoring this bird will (1) provide information that increase the knowledge about the species, (2) help in detecting and acting on threats to the species in good time, (3) generate data that will provide ammunition for advocacy and information for designing further interventions, and (4) help in assessing the effectiveness and progress in conservation efforts in place and those proposed in the action plans.

Main activities

- Collection of baseline data.
- Monitoring will be done at two levels (two-tier monitoring system): basic and detailed monitoring.
- Feedback of data to stakeholders.
- Formation of a partnership network/forum/interest group for sustained monitoring and conservation of the species.

Progress: Project is just starting. Monitoring protocols have however been developed.

Next steps: Actual implementation to start.

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Contact Us

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