



Botswana

Okavango

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Wanted! Have you seen this bird?

By [Peter Roberts](#) (users/peterroberts), 14 June 2012



http://www.zambezitraveller.com/sites/default/files/px_main_05_1.jpg

Despite being so striking in appearance, these curious characters of the bush are often, it appears, overlooked. What little is known of their biology derives mostly from work in South Africa. There are few reliable population estimates, highlighting the importance of the recent EWB survey in Botswana, and are thought to be declining, especially outside protected areas such as National Parks, perhaps being absent from up to 75% of their former range. Habitat destruction and human persecution are suspected to be the key factors responsible for declining populations, exacerbated by the slow reproductive rate and complex social biology of the species.

The southern ground hornbill is in urgent need of conservation attention so that population trends can be monitored and action taken before it joins the growing ranks of species threatened with extinction.

In 2011 the IUCN updated their assessment of the conservation status of the species from Least Concern to Vulnerable, a reflection of concern over population declines in southern Africa and the lack of data. There is an urgent need for data and research on the species to determine aspects of habitat use and breeding biology, information which is particularly important for establishing sound conservation strategies.

To assist with the collection of data for this species, the Zambezi Traveller is launching an online Ground Hornbill Sightings Form on our website. We'll accept records of sightings from anywhere in its range and pass them on to the relevant wildlife authorities, NGOs and researchers in each country. You can also read [Hornbill - Unite to save iconic bird species](#) (<http://zambezitraveller.com/bulawavo/conservation/hornbill-unite-save-iconic-bird-species>) about the research work being done by the Mother Africa Trust and [The avian art of seduction](#) (<http://zambezitraveller.com/harare/conservation/avian-art-seduction>) for more about ground hornbills.

We are especially looking towards safari guides and people working in the safari industry to regularly record and submit their ground hornbill sightings, and we encourage tourists to either support their efforts or, where possible, submit their own sightings, which are especially important from areas outside national parks.

Visit for information on how to submit your records online [here](#) (<http://www.zambezitraveller.com/content/southern-ground-hornbill-sightings>).

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