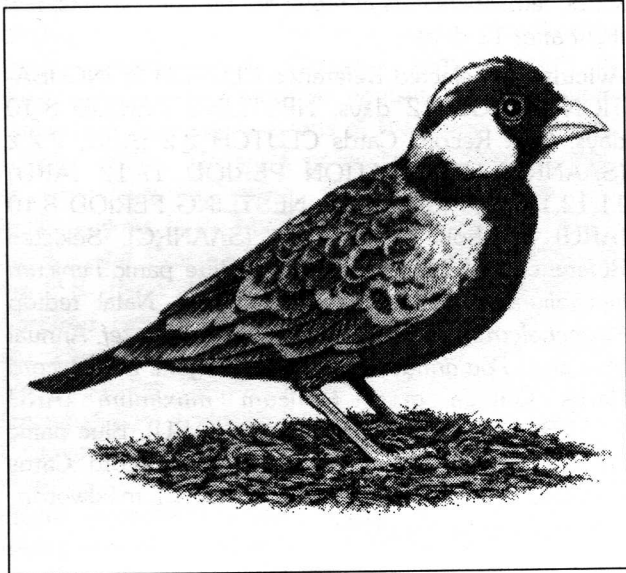


Grey-backed Finch-lark

Eremopterix verticalis 13cm

Alternative name: Grey-backed Sparrow-lark.



Description: Male. Headtop, lores, ring around eye, hindneck and ear-coverts white; chin, throat and underparts black; mantle, scapulars and wing-coverts dark grey, mottled dusky; flight feathers and tail ashy; iris brown; bill bluish to greyish; legs and feet pinkish grey. Female has head, breast and mantle brownish, mottled with pale grey; centre of belly black; bill whitish. Juvenile similar to adult female, but feathers of upperparts tipped buff.

Males. *E.v.damarensis* differs from the nominate race in being paler above, more sandy, the feathers margined with sandy buff.

E.v.harti differs from the nominate in having a darker, more blackish mantle; wing-coverts not so broadly margined with white. *E.v.khama* differs from the nominate in having upperparts greyish white; wing-coverts secondaries and broadly margined with white.

Voice: Described by Maclean as a sharp tinkling song 'twip twip twip chik' in flight.

Habitat: Sandy ground, burnt grasslands and cultivation.

Distribution: Northern and south-western Cape, western Free State and North-West province, South Africa to eastern Botswana.

E.v.damarensis north-western and northern Cape Province, South Africa to western and northern Namibia and western Angola.

E.v.harti northern Namibia, Angola and south-western Zambia.

E.v.khama north-eastern Botswana.

Feeding: Seeds 91% with plant material 1% and insects 8%.

Breeding: Nest a depression in the ground, the cup lined with dry grass and rootlets, situated against a shrub, grasstuft or stones on the south, south-eastern or eastern side as protection against fierce sun. Nest construction by female. Eggs pale white, speckled with brownish yellow, grey and brown, particularly at the thick end; clutch 2-3; incubation 11-13 days, by both sexes; fledging period 8-10 days; young fed by both parents; first flight after 13 days.

Aviculture: Selected Reference CLUTCH 2-3; INCUBATION PERIOD 11-13 days; NESTLING PERIOD 8-10 days. Nest Record Cards CLUTCH 2 (ARU) 2,2 (SAANRC) 3 (NASNRC) 2 (ANRC); INCUBATION PERIOD 12 (ARU) 12,13 (SAANRC) 12 (NASNRC) 12 days (ANRC); NESTLING PERIOD 9 (ARU) 8,10 (SAANRC) 10 (NASNRC) about 9 days (ANRC). Selected Reference WILDFOOD Seeds of Guinea grass *Panicum maximum* (ARU ADRC NASDRD SAADRC), Napier fodder *Pennisetum purpureum* (ADRC), Millet grass *Setaria woodii* (ARU). Diet Record Cards ANIMAL FOOD termites (ARU ADRC NASDRD SAADRC), mealworms (ARU), ants (ADRC).

Black-crowned Finch-lark

Eremopterix nigriceps 10-11cm

Alternative name: White-fronted Sparrow-lark.

Description: Male. Forehead white; cheeks, sides of neck and nape greyish white; mantle sandy grey, tinged cinnamon-pink; tail blackish brown, with sandy brown central feathers and black outer feathers; flight feathers dark grey, narrowly fringed with white; lores, chin, throat, breast, belly and rest of underparts black; iris brown; bill bluish white; legs and feet greenish white. Female upperparts rufous brown; lores, sides of neck pinkish buff; ear-coverts cinnamon-buff. Juvenile similar to adult female but indistinct dusky spots on rump and upper tail-coverts.

Male. *E.n.melanauchen* differs from the nominate race in being darker and more grey, less sandy; black on crown extends further back.

Voice: Described by Hollom *et al* as 'chee, dee-vee' or 'pooo, pee-voo-pee'.

Habitat: Semi-desert savanna, cultivation and on aircraft runways.

Distribution: Cape Verde Island

E.n.albifrons Mauritania to Nile valley. (Accidental) Algeria.

E.n.melanauchen Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan.

Feeding: Seeds and insects. Livefood in the form of spiders, grasshoppers, small locust hoppers, small beetles, caterpillars and Assassin bugs. In Chad recorded also feeding on the seeds of *Panicum turgidum*.

Aviculture: Nest Record Cards CLUTCH 2 (ANRC); INCUBATION PERIOD 12 days; NESTLING PERIOD 9 days. Selected Reference WILDFOOD Guinea grass *Panicum maximum*, *P. parvifolium*. Selected Reference ANIMAL FOOD termites.

Fischer's Finch-lark

Eremopterix leucopareia 11cm

Alternative name: Fischer's Sparrow-lark.

Description: Male. Crown and nape buff-brown; ear-coverts, band across hindneck white; chin and centre of breast black; rest of underparts white, tinged with buff; mantle and back greyish brown; tail blackish; iris brown; bill whitish; legs and feet blackish brown. Female lacks the facial adornment of the male; rest of underparts greyish brown. Juvenile similar to adult female, but has whitish tips to the feathers of the upperparts.

Voice: Described by Williams & Arlott as a low 'tweet,ess' flock call.

Habitat: Short grass plains from sea-level to 1800m.

Distribution: Uganda, Kenya and Malawi.

Feeding: Seeds and insects.

Breeding: Nest, a shallow scrape in the ground lined with dry grass. Eggs creamy white, spotted and blotched brown with mauve-grey under markings; clutch 2-3.

Aviculture: Personal Communication CLUTCH 2; INCUBATION PERIOD 13 days; NESTLING PERIOD 12 days. Nest Record Cards CLUTCH 2,2,2 (ARU) 2 (ARU); INCUBATION PERIOD 12,13 (ANRC) 12 days (ARU); NESTLING PERIOD 9,10 days (ANRC). Diet Record Cards WILDFOOD Guinea grass *Panicum maximum* (ARU ADRC), Black seed finger grass *Digitaria ternata*, Foxtail millet *Setaria italica* (ADRC). Diet Record Cards ANIMAL FOOD termites (ARU ADRC).

Corn Bunting

Emberiza calandra 17,5cm

Description: Sexes similar. Upperparts pale brown, streaked with blackish; white on tail; underparts whitish; iris brown; bill yellowish; legs and feet yellowish. Juvenile similar to adult, but upperparts more heavily streaked.

Voice: Described by Gallagher & Woodcock as a long 'kwit' or 'pit' or 'kwit-it-it'; the song is like the rattling of a bunch of keys.

Habitat: Cultivation, slopes with scattered bushes and damp grasslands.

Distribution: Morocco, coastal Libya to Egypt (winters).

Feeding: Weed and grass seeds, cereals, leaves and invertebrates namely adult and larval beetles, ants, earwigs, damsel flies, grasshoppers, bugs, spiders, millipedes, earthworms, snails, seeds of dock *Rumex*, rape *Brassica*, Knotgrass *Polygonum*, sycamore *Acer*, grasses, wheat *Triticum*, oats *Avena*, barley *Hordeum* and rye *Secale*.; in India also rice. Feeding data not confined to Africa.

Breeding: Female builds nest of dried grass in long grass or similar vegetation or on the ground. Eggs pale grey or pale brown, streaked with blackish brown; clutch 4-7; incubation 12-13 days, by female only; nestling period 9-11 days; usually 2 broods.

Aviculture: Selected Reference INCUBATION PERIOD 12-13 days; NESTLING PERIOD 9-11 days.

Yellowhammer

Emberiza citrinella 16-17cm

Alternative name: Yellow Bunting (n nominate).

Description: Male. Entire head lemon-yellow, streaked dusky; mantle and back reddish brown, streaked dusky; rump and upper tail-coverts chestnut; tail greyish, outer feathers white; chin, throat, breast and underparts lemon-yellow, streaked reddish brown on breast and flanks; iris brown; bill bluish horn; legs and feet colour deep pinkish. Female is pale reddish brown, streaked dusky; entire head and belly paler yellow. Juvenile similar to adult female, but almost lacks all yellow.

Voice: Described by Lockley as 'bit-o-bread-and-no-chee-eeese'.

Habitat: Cultivation and open country with bushes.

Distribution: Algeria and Tunisia (migrant) Morocco (vagrant).

Feeding: Seeds of weeds, grain, grass shoots, fruit and invertebrates, namely seeds of spruce *Picea*, beech *Fagus*, chickweed *Stellaria*, crowberry *Empetrum*, mouse-ear *Cerastium*, fleabane *Coryza*, dandelion *Taraxacum*, plantain *Plantago*, grasses, including cereals, *Festuca*, *Poa* and *Lolium*, grasshoppers, lacewings, caddis flies, adult and larval beetles, earwigs, bugs, spiders, woodlice, earthworms and snails.

Breeding: Female constructs a bulky structure of grass stalks, roots and moss, lined with hair or fine vegetable matter, on the ground, in the grass, bush, ivy, bank or on a wall. Eggs white or pale pinkish with brown or purple brown streaking; clutch 3-5; incubation 12-14 days, by female only; nestling period 11-13 days, nestling fed by both sexes; 2 broods, sometimes 3.

Aviculture: Selected Reference INCUBATION PERIOD 12-14 days; NESTLING PERIOD 12-13 days. Selected Reference WILDFOOD Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara*, dandelion *Taraxacum* sp., dock *Rumex* sp., Sow-Thistle *Sonchus oleraceus*, chickweed *Stellaria* sp.,