



# A CLOSER LOOK AT LBJS

## RUFOUS-EARED WARBLER

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The Rufous-eared Warbler *Malcorus pectoralis* is largely confined to the Karoo and southern Kalahari, with an isolated population around Etosha Pan in northern Namibia. With its long, slender tail it superficially resembles a prinia, but is easily recognised by its reddish face, white throat and variable black collar. It shares the semi-arid plains with

Karoo and Black-chested prinias, but typically occupies more open habitats, often running mouse-like over open ground with its tail cocked.

It was placed in the genus *Prinia* until Gordon Maclean highlighted its many differences from the prinias, including having 10 (not 12) tail feathers, plain eggs and an untidy nest (unlike the neatly woven prinia nests). Genetic evidence

confirms that it is closer to the cisticolas than the prinias. It forms part of a radiation of distinctive warblers that includes a few other arid-country species like the Cinnamon-breasted Warbler, but its closest relatives are forest species from farther north in Africa: Grey-capped Warbler, Oriole Warbler and the Black-headed and Black-faced rufous warblers.

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