

Prematurely and newly fledged birds are characterized by pale, not dull black toes, also by pale tips to the four outermost primaries (P 7 - 10) and the tail feathers. Pale tips to other feathers in swifts are indications of extreme freshness, irrespective of the age of the bird. Most species in *Apus* have a larger area of the frons pale as juvenals than as adults and here I agree with Mr. Rohloff that this is a useful age character, particularly if both adults and juvenals are available for comparison since it is a question of degree. The shape of the outer tail feather, once observed, can be used without the other age class present for comparison.

I have looked at many hundreds of skins of the genus *Apus* and have always found that degree of gloss was a function of freshness of the feathers, being most obvious in fresh feathers, irrespective of age. To quote Brooke again "a greenish wash or gloss which with wear turns dark bluish-purple in dark forms and dull brownish in pale forms.". The African Whiterumped Swift is, of course, a dark form.

Mr. Rohloff states that his bird was an adult on 5 November 1977 but he does not say how he determined this. I suspect that most ringers' statements on the age classes of swifts ringed other than in a nest are guesses on which too much reliance should not be placed. I hope that Mr. Rohloff and his friends will continue to try and ring swifts and add to the small body of data already available for a most interesting family.

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Dear Sir,

LONGEVITY FROM RETRAPS

I was very interested to read Mrs. Dale Hanmer's article in Volume 10 1981 of SAFRING NEWS on the above-mentioned subject.

It occurs to me that the publication of any significant longevity record, whether by trapping or by recovery, serves a real

purpose if only to indicate where comparative information is available and, with lists for Zambia and MalaWi now extant, one from Zimbabwe would not be amiss.

My wife and I have been ringing since October, 1968, mainly at three stations in Zimbabwe:-

- (a) Garden, Belvedere, Harare, 17 49S; 31 01E.
Oct. 1968 - Dec. 1972
- (b) Muruwati Farm, Mazoe, 17 36S; 30 56E.
Jan. 1970 - Dec. 1977
- (c) Seldomseen, Vumba, 19 07S; 32 45E.
Oct. 1977 - to date

I attach a table compiled from our recapture/recovery index which can serve as the nucleus of Zimbabwean records, using Mrs. Hanmer's criteria for age and elapsed time* as far as applicable, and quoting our longest record only. The ringing station and whether the record is a recovery is indicated by quoting (a), (b) or (c), with a + sign to indicate a recovery. The superscript in the 'time elapsed' column indicates the number of times that the bird was handled after its original capture and ringing.

Now what about a South African list?

A.J. Manson, P.O.Box 812, MUTARE, Zimbabwe

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- * 1 = pullus
 - 2 = fully grown, year of hatching quite unknown
 - 3 = hatched during calendar year of ringing
 - 4 = hatched before calendar year of ringing, exact year unknown
 - 5 = hatched during previous calendar year
 - 6 = hatched before previous calendar year, exact year unknown

Time elapsed between ringing and latest retrapping is given in the order years-months-days.

In the "Known Age" column, figures are given to the nearest six months.

TABLE

RING NO.	AGE/ SEX	FIRST RINGED	LAST RETRAP / RECOVERY	TIME ELAPSED	KNOWN AGE
Blackcollared Barbet <i>Lybius torquatus</i>					
643-04850	6	02.10.71 (b)	17.04.76	4.06.15 (4)	6,0
Terrestrial bulbul <i>Phyllastrephus terrestris</i>					
2-05529	4F	01.05.71 (b)	27.05.79	8.00.26 (8)	9,5
Stripedcheeked Bulbul <i>Andropadus milanjensis</i>					
BB-03924	4M	02.10.77 (c)	07.10.81	4.00.05 (15)	5,5
Kurrichane Thrush <i>Turdus libonyana</i>					
643-09922	4	28.10.73 (b)	23.07.78	4.08.26 (1)	6,0
Stonechat <i>Saxicola torquata</i>					
X-18847	4M	16.11.73 (b)	04.06.78	4.06.18 (4)	5,5
Whitebrowed Robin <i>Cossypha heuglini</i>					
2-04940	4M	04.12.70 (b)	06.03.77	6.04.02 (6)	7,5
Cape Robin <i>Cossypha caffra</i>					
AA-64662	4M	22.12.77 (c)	12.01.82	4.00.21 (22)	5,5 contd.

RING NO.	AGE/ SEX	FIRST RINGED	LAST RETRAP / RECOVERY	TIME ELAPSED	KNOWN AGE
Starred Robin <i>Pogonocichla stellata</i>					
AA-64665	5F	22.12.77 ^(c)	25.01.82	4.01.03 ⁽²⁾	5,0
Swynnerton's Robin <i>Swynnertonia swynnertoni</i>					
AA-64526	3	03.10.77 ^(c)	23.11.81	4.01.20 ⁽¹⁰⁾	4,5
Lesser Swamp Warbler <i>Acrocephalus gracilirostris</i>					
A-97041	2	14.01.73 ^(b)	06.05.79	6.03.23 ⁽¹⁾	7,0
African Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus baeticatus</i>					
X-21791	2	11.11.74 ^(b)	25.06.79	4.08.14 ⁽³⁾	5,5
Barthroated Apalis <i>Apalis thoracica</i>					
662-12007	2	07.06.70 ^(b)	01.11.75	5.04.25 ⁽⁵⁾	6,0
Chirinda Apalis <i>Apalis chirindensis</i>					
X-21416	2	19.04.74 ^(c)	06.06.77	3.01.17 ⁽²⁾	4,0
Bleating Bush Warbler (Brevicaudata group) <i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>					
X-02318	2	04.12.70 ^(b)	25.12.76	6.00.21 ⁽⁵⁾	7,0

contd.

RING NO.	AGE/ SEX	FIRST RINGED	LAST RETRAP / RECOVERY	TIME ELAPSED	KNOWN AGE
Singing Cisticola <i>Cisticola cantans</i>					
601-38073	4	(Inyanga) 19.02.69	15.04.74	5.01.24 (1)	6,0
Redfaced Cisticola <i>Cisticola erythrops</i>					
AA-24655	4F	(b) 22.07.73	30.10.77	4.03.08 (3)	5,0
Roberts's Prinia <i>Prinia robertsi</i>					
X-28413	4	(c) 10.07.78	23.10.81	3.03.13 (6)	4,0
Paradise Flycatcher <i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>					
A-99936	3M	(b) 13.12.70	12.10.75	4.10.00 (1)	5,5
Tropical Boubou <i>Laniarius aethiopicus</i>					
502-03761	4F	(b) 04.12.70	25.12.76	6.00.21 (3)	7,0
Olive Sunbird <i>Nectarinia olivacea</i>					
X-28207	5F	(c) 22.12.77	02.02.82	4.01.11 (16)	5,0
Collared Sunbird <i>Anthreptes collaris</i>					
X-28206	5	(c) 22.12.77	10.02.82	4.01.19 (4)	5,0

contd.

RING NO.	AGE/ SEX	FIRST RINGED	LAST RETRAP / RECOVERY	TIME ELAPSED	KNOWN AGE
<i>Yellow White-eye Zosterops senegalensis</i>					
X-13683	2	19.11.72 (b)	17.04.77	4.04.29 (2)	5,0
<i>House Sparrow Passer domesticus</i>					
2-33740	3F	14.03.70 (a)	24.08.74	4.05.10 (2)	5,0
<i>Spectacled Weaver Ploceus ocularis</i>					
2-04948	5F	04.12.70 (b)	28.12.75	5.00.24 (3)	6,0
<i>Spottedbacked Weaver Ploceus cucullatus</i>					
2-75063	5M	21.10.73 (b)	23.03.78 +	4.05.02 (3)	6,0
<i>Masked Weaver Ploceus velatus</i>					
2-33011	5M	09.08.69 (a)	05.03.77 +	7.06.27 (1)	8,5
<i>Golden Weaver Ploceus xanthops</i>					
2-56665	5M	17.06.72 (b)	06.02.77	4.07.19 (2)	6,0
<i>Red Bishop Euplectes orix</i>					
A-145608	5M	05.11.72 (b)	14.01.79	6.02.09 (2)	7,5

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RING NO.	AGE/ SEX	FIRST RINGED	LAST RETRAP / RECOVERY	TIME ELAPSED	KNOWN AGE
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Redcollared Widow *Euplectes ardens*

A-114155	5F	30.07.71 (a)	Aug 1977 +	6.05 (1)	7,5
A-146096	5M	28.01.73 (b)	17.12.78	5.10.20	7,0

Whitewinged Widow *Euplectes albonotatus*

A-114107	5F	06.02.71 (b)	19.12.76	5.10.13 (1)	7,0
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Jameson's Firefinch *Lagonosticta rhodopareia*

622-11809	5M	28.02.70 (b)	05.12.76	6.09.05 (1)	7,5
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Bully Canary *Serinus sulphuratus*

AA-31259	5M	21.07.74 (b)	01.10.78 +	4.02.20 (1)	5,0
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