

LOCAL BIRD RINGING STATISTICS FOR THE 1981-1982 RINGING YEAR

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It was originally planned to have this report ready for publication in the December 1982 issue of Safring News but returns from some ringers have only recently been received. By the time this issue is distributed another ringing year will be almost over, so the report is 12 months old. Hopefully the contents will provide a stimulus to those ringers who have been active over the last year and encourage them to submit their 1982/1983 schedules promptly.

RINGING EFFORT

A total of 23 075 birds were ringed in the SAFRING area between July 1981 and June 1982. This is 5,3% up on the total for 1979/1980 and 12,8% higher than the 1980/1981 total. It is to be hoped that this increase marks the beginning of a firm upward trend in ringing activity in southern Africa.

Table 1 overleaf gives a breakdown of ringing effort by region and by club, society or organisation responsible. As in the last two years, the Sea Fisheries Research Institute has been responsible for the largest input of ringed birds (23,2% of the grand total); John Cooper's African Seabird Group is second with 2 704 Swift Terns *Sterna bergii* (11,7%), the majority of which were caught and ringed on two days. The best individual effort was by Mrs Dale Hanmer who ringed 2 138 birds, 9,3% of the total. One other ringer, Mr. A.J. Tree of Zimbabwe, reached a four-figure annual total with 1 444 birds ringed.

Table 2 on page 30 lists amateur ringers who banded over 100 individuals of one or more species. Two other 'amateurs' narrowly missed inclusion, each with a ringing total for one species in the upper nineties. The use of the word 'amateur' here is meant to denote those for whom bird ringing activities do not form part of their paid work. Many such are fully qualified professionals in their official capacity. It is of interest to note that, of the total number of birds ringed, such amateurs were responsible for ringing 41,3%. Conservation Department sponsors of SAFRING collectively ringed 14,1%, and non-contributing user organisations were responsible for ringing the remaining 44,6% (of which the Sea Fisheries Research Institute did more than half).

TABLE 1

RINGING EFFORT IN 1981/1982 RINGING YEAR

Area Organisation	No. of Active Ringers	No. of Species Ringed	No. of Birds Ringed	Percentage of total Birds Ringed
<u>CAPE PROVINCE</u>				
Sea Fisheries Institute		3	5 353	23,2
African Seabird Group		1	2 704	11,7
Cape Bird Club	8	74	1 322	5,7
Eastern Cape	6	36	1 081	4,7
Percy FitzPatrick Institute		3	339	1,5
Sanccob Foundation		1	85	0,4
Provincial Administration		3	19	0,1
Department of Forestry		13	17	0,1
<u>MALAWI</u>				
S.A. Ornithological Society	1	132	2 138	9,3
<u>NATAL</u>				
Natal Bird Club	14	142	1 926	8,3
<u>ORANGE FREE STATE</u>				
Provincial Administration		3	550	2,4
S.A. Ornithological Society	1	2	10	<0,1

TABLE 1

RINGING EFFORT IN 1981/1982 RINGING YEAR

Area Organisation	No. of Active Ringers	No. of Species Ringed	No. of Birds Ringed	Percentage of total Birds Ringed
<u>SUB-ANTARCTIC ISLANDS</u>				
Percy FitzPatrick Institute		3	388	1,7
<u>S.W.A./NAMIBIA</u>				
S.W.A. Administrartion		55	480	2,1
S.W.A. Scientific Society	2	20	49	0,2
<u>TRANSVAAL</u>				
Provincial Administration		13	2 202	9,5
Witwatersrand Bird Club	10	84	1 003	4,3
Department of Forestry		59	414	1,8
Vulture Study Group		2	252	1,1
N. Tvl. Ornith. Society	2	24	141	0,6
Post Graduates	2	2	53	0,2
<u>ZIMBABWE</u>				
Orn. Association of Zimbabwe	11	152	2 549	11,0

TABLE 2

AMATEURS WHO HAVE RINGED 100 OR MORE BIRDS OF A
SINGLE SPECIES IN THE 1981/1982 RINGING YEAR

RINGER	REGION	SPECIES	NUMBER
J. Bunning	Witwatersrand	Cape White-eye <i>Zosterops pallidus</i>	112
A. Hewitt	Witwatersrand	Masked Weaver <i>Ploceus velatus</i>	103
T. Robertson	W. Cape	Laughing Dove <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	224
		Cape Sparrow <i>Passer melanurus</i>	177
A. Schumann	Natal	Bronze Mannikin <i>Spermestes cucullatus</i>	342
A.J. Tree	Zimbabwe	Threebanded Sandplover <i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>	144
		Little Stint <i>Calidris minuta</i>	109
		European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	459
		African Sand Martin <i>Riparia puludicola</i>	143

NATURE AND DISTRIBUTION OF RECOVERY AND RECAPTURE REPORTS

The number of recoveries (ringed birds found dead, dying or permanently injured) processed during the period under review was 453. However, 65 of these were old records not previously reported (26 were Cape Vulture recoveries from the Vulture Study Group), or reported but overlooked in earlier years and found languishing in various dusty nooks of the Bird Ringing Unit. The actual number of recoveries made during the 1981/1982 ringing year was therefore 388, of which 105 (27%) were reported to the Zoo, Pretoria, the rest coming directly or indirectly to SAFRING via routes other than the Zoo. However, only 184 of the recoveries involved movement away from the ringing place and thereby were more likely to have involved the general public, and the 105 Zoo reports constitute 57% of this number.

Only seven of our rings were reported from north of our area, seven birds ringed in earlier years on Marion Island were recovered there and two birds were recovered on ships at sea. Of the remaining 372 reported from the SAFRING area, 48 reports (12,9%) were in Afrikaans and the balance in English. Telephonic reports totalled 61 (16,4%).

Thirteen ringers supplied recapture data on Schedule 2 forms and 12 'accidental' recaptures were reported by members of the public. One Safringed wader was recaptured by a wader study group in West Germany. The regional distribution of recoveries and recaptures within southern Africa (including Malaŵi) is given in Table 3 overleaf.

The first column of Table 3 is the best guide to the regional distribution of recoveries by the general public and it is evident, as in previous years, that a significant proportion of ringed birds are found on beaches. The considerable disparity between the first two columns is due to the inclusion in the second column of birds which have either died at the banding site as deserted chicks (largely on the offshore islands and not necessarily as a result of ringing activities), or been killed by predators in nets or traps. Duck traps can be particularly vulnerable to this form of hazard because the funnels are large enough to admit dogs, jackals and otters, as well as smaller mustelids.

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TABLE 3

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN
RECOVERIES AND RECAPTURES IN 1981/1982

REGION	RECOVERIES		RETRAPS	
	REPORTED BY PUBLIC	ALL	PUBLIC	RINGERS
Cape and Transkei coast	63	69	2	28
Transvaal	33	120	-	22
Cape inland	27	31	3	73
Natal inland	16	16	3	24
Zimbabwe	15	18	1	91
Orange Free State	8	8	-	-
South West Africa coastline	7	7	3	-
Natal coast	3	3	-	-
South West Africa inland	2	2	-	-
Botswana, Mozambique	2	2	-	-
MalaWi	-	14	-	251
Offshore Islands (Cape and S.W.A.)	-	82	-	243
TOTAL	176	372	12	732

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