

# NOTES & NEWS

## PREDATOR RECORDS FROM RING RECOVERIES

There have of late been a couple of interesting recoveries of rings from predators, plus some detailed accounts which provided strong circumstantial evidence on the identity of the predator. An earlier record is included as it has not previously been mentioned in Safring News.

Redknobbed Coot *Fulica cristata*

BP07466 ringed Barberspan 20.10.1969. Found in stomach of a crocodile *Crocodilus niloticus* run over by a tractor in a sugar cane field at Nkwalini in Zululand 05.07.1974.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

P671.255 ringed at Tiligul, Odessa on 23.06.1980. The bird was found on 11.02.1981 in the dunes at Mtwalume Beach, Natal, where it was allegedly being approached by a Black Mamba *Dendroaspis polylepis*. The finder, a Natal Parks Board Ranger, reported that the bird died the following day, so it was evidently sick but had not been bitten by the snake prior to his arrival. Mambas are normally predators of birds and it is probable that the tern would have provided a meal for the snake had the Ranger not intervened.

Cape Teal *Anas capensis*

K02985 ringed as juvenile, De Hoop Vlei, Bredasdorp, on 17.12.1976. Ring found by Alistair Robertson in pellet (casting) of Giant Eagle Owl *Bubo lactius* at Potberg on 27.10.1982. The age of the pellet is not known.

Bateleur *Terathopius ecaudatus*

917602 ringed as nestling at Satara in Kruger National Park on 23.07.1981. Remains with ring found 77 km distant on 06.11.1982 at the scene of a lion kill. Circumstantial evidence suggests bird was killed by lion *Panthera leo*.

Cape Cormorant *Phalacrocorax capensis*

836078 ringed 11.12.1980 at Malagas Island, western Cape. Remains found on 12.12.1982 at Hoanib River Oasis in Skeleton Coast Park, S.W.A/Namibia. Bird had been eaten by lion *Panthera leo*.

Cape Gannet *Morus capensis*

927364. Dr. Jeremy Cliff of the Natal Anti-Shark Measures Board found the remains of two juvenile gannets in the stomach of a 2,2 m Tiger Shark *Galeocerdo cuvieri* netted off Karridene on the Natal south coast on 24.04.1983. The remains included one foot with the above mentioned ring. The gannet had been ringed on Bird Island, Algoa, on 18.03.1983

#### LIGHT RELIEF

Excerpts from letters, ancient and modern, reporting recoveries of ringed birds:

Gannet 536-09114, recovered at Porto Amboin, Angola, 1958.

"These birds are appreciated here for tanning of the breast skin."

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From a letter addressed personally to the Director of the National Zoological Gardens in 1976 concerning a Laughing Dove. (Fish Hoek is a town on the Cape Peninsula).

"Travelling home to Fish Hoek by train on the evening of March 22, I was approached by the conductor, Mr.J.T. Roos, who asked me what to do. He (Mr. Roos) had just picked up a dead Turtle Dove on the train itself, with an aluminium band round one of its claws and on which appeared the embossed letters. "Inform Zoo Pretoria 554052". I said I would write to you and accordingly am herewith enclosing it for your attention (see sheet pinned to this letter).

Please be good enough to acknowledge receipt and let me know how this bird came to be travelling by train to Fish Hoek!"

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Swallow 662-24345 recovered at Tororo, Uganda 1967.

"I hereby notify you that I read an advertisement on a lost swallow from your zoo."