



2. Moult: Moult is a key feature in the annual cycle of all birds, yet the recent review by Craig (1983, Ostrich 54: 220-237) illustrates just how little we know about it in southern African birds. We require a National Moult Scheme in which SAFRING provides standardized cards to interested ringers and subsequently takes responsibility for housing completed cards in the same manner it now does for Nest Record Cards.

3. Weight: Patterns of daily, seasonal and geographical weight variation can throw light on many aspects of a species' biology. Many ringers already note weight on the SAFRING form, but often not in conjunction with ancillary data such as age, sex, moult and size (e.g. wing length) which permits its detailed interpretation. The current SAFRING forms themselves are severely deficient in this respect in not providing a column to note the important variable, time of day.

The two themes raised here merely amplify and extend ones already broached by Terry Oatley in previous editorials, i.e. Safring News 10: 1-2 (1981) and 12: 1-2 (1983). In summary, we need to do all we can to encourage greater ringing in South Africa by removing all unnecessary restrictions on ringers, and at the same time enable ringers to maximise both their own enjoyment and their ornithological contribution by promoting the potential inherent in ringing additional to the obvious goal of recoveries of ringed birds.

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