

## FOREIGN NEWS

### NIGERIAN RINGING

During 1970, 3517 birds were ringed including 2114 Yellow Wagtails Motacilla flava and 150 Willow Warblers Phylloscopus trochilus. Recoveries reported include a Sand Martin Riparia riparia to Czechoslovakia and several Yellow Wagtails to Finland.

(Ref: Sharland, R.E. 1972 'Ringing in Nigeria 1970'  
Nigerian Orn. Soc. 9 (33) : 1 - 6.)

### FOREST MIST-NETS

Using a pulley system, mist-nets can be hoisted to 18m. (54 ft.) in the forest. The rig allows a series of mist-nets to be pulled up so that they hang in a single curtain. Up to 600 sq.m. can be supported by the ropes. The rig was devised for use in sub-tropical rain forest in New Zealand and allowed the capture and study of species which normally fly far too high for ordinary nets.

(Ref: Whitaker A.H. 1972- Bird Band 43 (1) : 1 - 8.)

### UNUSUAL RECOVERIES

One ringed Gannet Sula bassana was recovered from the stomach of a shark, while another was found dead on a beach, covered with Portuguese Men-of-War jelly fish. A Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita carrying a B.T.O. ring landed on a trans Atlantic trimaran off the West Coast of Africa.

(Ref: B.T.O. News May 1972 No. 51)

(The latter is equivalent to a S.A. record of a European Swallow ringed on 12.1.69 at Rosherville Dam, Johannesburg, which flew exhausted on to a ship in the middle of the North Sea (28.5.69). The bird died later. - ED.)

### BIRDS DEAD ON ROADS

On major interstate highways in the U.S. bird remains disappeared within 2 hours ; on hardtop country roads the remains stayed for daylight hours and disappeared during the first night.

(Ref: Stewart, P.A. 19 - Wilson Bull. 83 (2) : 203 - 204)

(This gives some idea of the chances of recovering ringed birds in this manner - ED.)

### HEIGHT OF MIGRATION

A small aircraft in the U.S.A. was fitted with additional lights and used to count birds migrating at night. 50% flew between 500 and 1000 ft. - a few above 5000 ft.

(Ref: Bellrose F.C. 1971 - Auk 88 (2) : 397 - 424.)

## NAVIGATION BY SOUND

A new theory for bird navigation has been added to the celestial and magnetic ones. The clear audibility of sounds at considerable altitudes 2000 metres or more, to balloonists gave the authors the idea. The use of sound echoes from the earth might help to compensate for wind drift and enable birds to navigate in thick cloud.

(Ref: D'Arms, E.D. & Griffin, D.R. 1972: Auk 89 (2) : 269 - 279)

## SWAN OR REED-WABLER SONG

An observation of two Reed-Warblers Acrocephalus scirpaceus caught in a mist-net is described. One of the birds gave vent to repeated bursts of song between occasional struggles. The other was silent. Both were males. Apparently it is not unusual for birds to sing in mist-nets or holding bags - the normal explanation being that this is a displacement activity. On the occasion described however, one male was resident (a retrap) and the other a recent arrival (unringed) and the explanation given is that the singing was a continuation of a territorial dispute.

(Ref: Spencer, R. 1971 - Brit. Birds 64 (1) : 341.)

(Has anyone observed singing birds in mist-nets in Southern Africa?  
- ED.)

## AUSTRALIAN RINGING

During the period 1 July, 1969 to 30 June, 1970, 72437 birds of 387 species were ringed. This effort was carried out by 113 'A' ringers and 62 'B' ringers. 12 617 "recoveries" were made but the author does not distinguish between recoveries - birds found dead, retraps - birds caught a second or subsequent time and controls - birds caught by other ringers. One of the more impressive of the studies is that on full grown albatrosses caught by hoop nets off-shore from small boats. One group has ringed 2374 Wandering Albatrosses in 10 years and had controls of birds ringed virtually all round the Antarctic. The Australians started a moult inquiry in 1969.

(Ref: Purchase, D. 1971 - C.S.I.R.O. Australia Tech. Paper No.22 : 1 - 77)

## EAST AFRICAN RINGING

In the report for the season 1970/71, a total of 17513 birds is reported ringed. Of this total, 10630 were palearctic migrants. These totals are a fine achievement for the small group of only 21 ringers. Species ringed include 900 Little Stint 107 Curlew Sandpipers 818 Ruff, 2770 European Swallow, 1029 Willow Warbler, 3463 Yellow Wagtails. Unusual recoveries mentioned are a European Reed Warbler Acrocephalus scirpaceus, Kenya to Saudi Arabia, and a Blackcap Sylvia atricapilla to Iran. No controls were made of S.A. - ringed birds but we can go on hoping.

(Ref: Backhurst, G.C. Journal of E.A.N.H.S. 136 : 1 - 16)

### BIRD MOVEMENT

Considerable bird movement continues in the area. Last week-end a mallard duck flew into a wall at Theatre Plain (Yarmouth Mercury.)

(Ref: Punch 11 - 17 Oct. 1972 : 503).

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Contributions from ringers relevant to any of the sections in Ringings News are very welcome. Articles may be in either official language and should be typed in double spacing, using wide margins. B. & W. Glossy prints of photographs of ringed birds or any ringing procedure or site are also very welcome. Suggestions for improvements to the format or content, together with all other material for the publication, should be addressed to: The Editor 'Ringings News' National Unit for Bird Ringing Administration, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape.

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## KENNISGEWING AAN BYDRAERS

Bydrae van beringers wat aan enige van die seksies in Beringingsnuus toepas is baie welkom. Artikels mag in enige van die twee offisiële tale wees en moet in dubbel spasiëring getik word met breë kantlyne. S. & W. glansafdrukke van portrette van geringde voëls of enige beringingsmetodes of terrein is ook baie welkom. Voorstelle vir verbetering van die formaat of inhoud saam met alle ander materiaal vir die publikasie, moet geadresseerd word aan: Die Redakteur, 'Beringingsnuus', Nasionale Eenheid vir Voëlberings Administrasie, Universiteit van Kaapstad, Rondebosch, Kaap.