

AGEING & SEXING

IDENTIFICATION, AGEING AND SEXING GUIDES PUBLISHED IN *SAFRING NEWS*, 1972-1993

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Since the first number of *Safring News* in 1972, 44 papers have provided criteria for the identification, ageing or sexing of southern African bird species (Table 1). The list of species in Table 1 shows a fair degree of spread through the families of southern African birds, with the seedeaters best represented. But there are some conspicuous gaps, even amongst families regularly ringed. There are no barbets, mousebirds, warblers, flycatchers, shrikes or starlings in Table 1. More than half the species listed are passerines, in contrast to their frequent under-representation in studies of southern African birds (A.J.F.K. Craig, *Ostrich* 58: 23 (1987)).

Obviously, there are many other relevant papers scattered through the ornithological literature, and the standard field guides contain much useful information, not only on identification, but also on ageing and sexing. But the papers in *Safring News* are written from the viewpoint of the ringer. They are therefore designed to be useful

from the bird-in-the-hand perspective, when some of the field characteristics might fail to be useful, but when there is opportunity to examine the bird in detail and use characteristics not visible in the field.

The compilation of all this information into a guide for southern African ringers is a project, first mooted in 1984 (J. Bunning, *Safring News* 13: 75-76), that remains outstanding – in both meanings of the word: ‘excellent’ and ‘still pending’!

For ringers whose sets of *Safring News* do not extend back to the earlier volumes and who are ringing any of these species, SAFRING will supply photocopies of those articles that they require.

Comments on the usefulness of any of these guides should be sent to SAFRING. Ringers who have developed techniques for ageing and/or sexing species not listed in Table 1 are encouraged to write them up for *Safring News*.

Table 1. Identification, ageing and sexing guides published in *Safring News*, 1972-1993.

Species	Content	Author	Volume: page numbers ¹
African Penguin <i>Spheniscus demersus</i>	sexing	J. Cooper	1(1):23-25
ducks Anatidae	cloacal sexing	D.M. Skead	2(1):14-17

Lesser and Greater Flamingos <i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i> <i>P. minor</i>	identification of chicks	H. Berry	3(2):26-28
Blackshouldered Kite <i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	potential sexing	M.B. Schmidt, P.J. Whitehouse & F. von Maltitz	3(3):20-21
	sexing by pelvic separation	F. von Maltitz	5:25-26
Redknobbed Coot <i>Fulica cristata</i>	failure to sex	W.R.J. Dean & D.M. Skead	7(2):9-11
Ringed Plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	ageing	A.J. Tree	6:25-29
Kittlitz's Plover <i>Ch. pecuarius</i>	ageing	A.J. Tree	2(2):23-25 add. 3(2):33
Crowned Plover <i>Vanellus coronatus</i>	ageing using moult	K.Z. Edwards	4:20-21
waders Scolopacidae	ageing using moult	A.J. Tree	3(3):21-24
	ageing using moult	M. Waltner	5:14-16
Curlew Sandpiper <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	ageing	H. Pfister	1(1):26
Little Stint <i>C. minuta</i>	ageing, sexing	A.J. Tree	3(2):31-33
Ruff <i>Philmachus pagnax</i>	ageing, sexing	M. Schmidt, J. Reed & M. Fagan	3(1):29
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>	ageing	L.G. Underhill & R.P. Prŷs-Jones	15:44-49
Laughing Dove <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	ageing	C. Hunter	2(3):21-23
Passerines	number of visible primaries	R.K. Brooke	15:43-44
	potential ageing and sexing problems	R.J. Dowsett	16:17-20
	rejoinder to Dowsett	R.A. Earlé	16:85-86

European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	subspecies recognition	H.P. Mendelsohn	2(2):21-22
South African Cliff Swallow <i>Hirundo spilodera</i>	ageing, sexing	R.A. Earlé	14:48
Cape Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus capensis</i>	ageing, sexing	J. Harwood	2(3):20-21
thrushes <i>Turdus</i> spp.	ageing, sexing	T.B. Oatley	5:24
Anteating Chat <i>Myrmecocichla formicivora</i>	ageing, sexing	J.J. Herholdt & R.A. Earlé	16:99-100
Cape Sugarbird <i>Promerops cafer</i>	ageing, sexing	H.W. Seiler & M.W. Fraser	14:91-92
Gurney's Sugarbird <i>Promerops gurneyi</i>	ageing, sexing	D.H. de Swardt	19:57-60
sunbirds <i>Nectarinea</i> spp. in Zimbabwe	identification, ageing, sexing	A.J. Tree	20:13-20
Miombo D.C. Sunbird <i>Nectarinia manoensis</i>	ageing, sexing	S. Lane	21:39-40
Greater D.C. Sunbird <i>Nectarinia afra</i>	ageing, sexing	D.H. de Swardt	20:21-25
Whitebrowed Sparrowweaver <i>Plocepasser mahali</i>	sexing	R.A. Earlé	12:3-5
Thickbilled Weaver <i>Amblyospiza albifrons</i>	ageing, sexing	D.B. Hanmer	13:79-80
	plumage aberrations	H.T. Laycock	14:43-44 & 45-47
Cape Weaver <i>Ploceus capensis</i>	identification, ageing, sexing	C.C.H. Elliott	2(1):22-23 errata 2(2):25 reprinted 15:63
	caution	P. Barnard	16:45-48
Brownthroated Weaver <i>Ploceus xanthopterus</i>	identification, ageing, sexing	D.B. Hanmer	13:77-78
Red Bishop <i>Euplectes orix</i>	identification, ageing, sexing	G.H. Wilson	2(2):22-23
Yellowrumped Widow <i>E. capensis</i>	identification, ageing, sexing	G.H. Wilson	2(2):22-23

waxbills Estrildidae	ageing	D.B. Hanmer	18:61-64
Common Waxbill <i>Estrilda astrild</i>	ageing, sexing	P. Barnard	17:79-83
Redheaded Finch <i>Amadina erythrocephala</i>	ageing, sexing	J.M.H. Rajmakers	21:3-6
Bronze Mannikin <i>Spermestes cucullatus</i>	ageing	P.F. Scogings	17:39-40
Pintailed Whydah <i>Vidua macroura</i>	identification, ageing, sexing	P. Barnard	20:71-76
Forest Canary <i>Serinus scotops</i>	ageing, sexing	P. Barnard & R.J. Dowsett	20:69-70
general	failure of otoscope techniques for sexing	D.A. Ward	17:29-30

¹ The year of publication is obtained by adding 71 to the volume number. In Volumes 1-3 and in Volume 7, each issue of *Safring News* was numbered separately from page 1; the numbers in parentheses following the volume give the issue number for these four volumes.
