

Editorial

This is a full issue of *Safring News*, thanks to all the contributors! Some papers are analyses of several years of ringing effort, while others focus on specific species or groups.

In September 2000 I attended the Tenth Pan-African Ornithological Congress in Kampala, Uganda. It was exciting to meet ringers and ornithologists from many African countries again.

During an informal meeting we discussed the need to improve ringing links throughout Africa. An example of our lack of knowledge about each other is the fact that I had never heard of Malcolm Wilson, who has been ringing in Uganda for some years, until shortly before this Congress! The benefits of better communication would include tackling projects spanning many countries such as the colour ringing of Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*. Some Cattle Egrets move regularly from South Africa to central Africa. Naturally such projects would require funding.

A possible way of improving communication between ringers in Africa would be to change this publication from *Safring News* to *Afring News*. *Afring News* would provide a forum for ringing results from eastern Africa and elsewhere. Owing to the small numbers of ringers in the rest of Africa, this change will result in a small increase in the number of readers, and will enable ringers throughout Africa to keep in touch with each other. These ideas still need to be put to the SAFRING Steering Committee.

After the congress I spent a few days in Nairobi and had a ringing session with the ringing group there. It was exciting to work with the group of enthusiasts and see how similar the process is there. It was fun to handle some species not found in southern Africa, for instance Baglafaecht's Weaver *Ploceus baglafaecht*. Colin Jackson, who started the ringing group, is revising the age codes, and these could be used throughout Africa.

The ringing training workshop at Wakkerstroom was very successful (see article in this issue). The organization of the workshop was much improved due to the lessons learned at Witsand. A project for the future is to work on an ageing and sexing guide. In the next few months I hope to put a standard form on the web-page for ringers to fill in information for species they know well. In the meantime, send ageing and sexing articles to *Safring News*!

Ringers are encouraged to participate in large scale ringing projects, particularly European Swallows and Redbilled Queleas. The Department of Agriculture has again made some limited funds available for ringing quelea, so go out and get them!

Unfortunately Cynthia Best was retrenched in October due to financial constraints. Cynthia is thanked for her work at SAFRING over the last seven years.

A special thanks to our sponsors – see the next page.

Dieter Oschadleus

***Safring News to change to Afring News?
See above!***