FOREIGN NEWS

GOSHAWK BANDING

The report covers details on 383 Brown Goshawks Accipiter fasciatus ringed in Australia in a 17 year period. Data discussed include sex ratios (55% ♂♂), movement (max. 910 km) and mortality (15,4% in birds ringed as nestlings, 7,3% in immatures and 5,3% in adults).
(Ref:Purchase,D. (1973) Australian Bird-Band 11:71-75)

WADER STUDIES AT MÜNSTER, W.GERMANY (in German)

Seasonal fluctuations in different species are described. The sewage farm is used as a moulting ground for species such as the Green and the Wood Sandpipers, and the Ruff. Includes discussion on the difficulties of establishing genuine changes in numbers.
(Ref:Harengerd,van M., Prünte,W and Speckman,M. (1973) Die Vogelwelt 94:121-143)

ETHIOPIAN RINGING 1973

Ringing was carried out by only five ringers, but a total catch of 6 156 birds of 314 species was made. This included 125 White Pelicans, 9 Cape Teal, 116 Curlew Sandpiper, 409 Little Stint, 50 Ruff, 85 Namaqua Dove, 50 Pied Kingfishers and 160 European Swallows.

Recoveries of interest include a White Pelican from Lake Shala to Lake Nakuru, Kenya; a Grey Heron from Poland to Ethiopia (no details); a Buzzard ringed in June 1908 with a Rossitten ring at Dassow, Germany and recovered in November 1923 at Makalle, near Tembien; a Masked Shrike recovered at Kuwait.
(Ref:Ash,Dr.J.S. Cyclostyled report)

PTARMIGAN MOULT

Scottish Ptarmigan Lagopus mutus have three moults a year. This paper discusses moult in relation to climatic and other factors. It explores sex differences such as the difference in timing between the onset of winter-white plumage. The moulting system, when examined in detail, seems quite complex.
(Ref:Watson,A. (1973) J.Zool.Lond. 171:207-223)

INCREASE IN RUFF POPULATION

The Ruff was first reported wintering in the U.K. in 1934. In the last 15 years, the population has increased ten fold. The author considers that this increase is caused either by a very early return of migrants or by birds being forced off the continent by bad weather orconstitutes a genuine new wintering population. Only further ringing studies will show which is the correct answer.
(Ref:Prater,A.J. (1973) Bird Study 20:245-250)

LONGEVITY RECORDS

The Editor of the Ring includes in a recent issue a list of longevity records in S.A. birds, taken from the 15th Ringing Report. While it is gratifying to see the interest taken in the report, longevity information from only two years of recoveries will obviously not contain a full sample. It is hoped that NUBRA computer programmes will be available in the next few months which will

be able to sort and print all recoveries ever made of individual species. We then expect to publish an up-to-date list of the longest lived birds on our books to date.

In a second list of Euring longevity records, the following may be of interest to Safring readers:-

Ciconia ciconia	29 yrs	- 3 mnths	- 18 days
Buteo buteo	24 "	4 "	7 "
Calidris canutus	10 "	11 "	15 "
Philomachus pugnax	8 "	9 "	? "
Larus argentatus	31 "	11 "	10 "
Sterna hirundo	24 "	11 "	15 "
Hirundo rustica	15 "	11 "	18 "
Acrocephalus scirpaceus	11 "	01 "	13 "
Sturnus vulgaris	20 "	00 "	18 "

(Ref:Rydzewski, W. (1973) The Ring 75:40-41 & The Ring 76:63-70)

WASH WADER REPORT 1971/72

This large booklet contains much of interest to wader enthusiasts including considerably more analysis data than has been included before. Information on weights, for example, show that in peak migrant passage time, July to September, birds are able to put on very large fat reserves in short periods of time. In late winter, February to April, the food situation becomes precarious and overwintering birds appear to rely on fat reserves to tide them over this period.

SHARP DECREASE IN NUMBERS OF WHITETHROATS (Sylvia communis) DURING THE PERIOD 1968 - 1969

It has been found in Seden,Holland that Whitethroats which in the spring, after returning from the wintering quarters in Africa, were tested for chlorinated hydrocarbons, had a higher percentage than those which were tested in the late summer.

This does seem to indicate, that these birds had been more affected by pesticides while in their African wintering quarters, than while in their breeding quarters in Sweden.

Berthold (J.F.Ornithologie 3, 1973) draws attention to a strong decrease in numbers of Whitethroats, Sedge Warblers Acrocephalus schoenobaenus, Sand Martins Riparia riparia, Redstarts Phoenicurus phoenicurus and the Pied Flycatcher Ficedula hypoleuca.

Counts carried out by the British Trust for Ornithology have shown a decrease of 77% in numbers of Whitethroats in the period 1968-1969. There is strong evidence to show that the casualties occurred in the African wintering quarters.

The same drastic decrease was observed during ringing activities on the Mettnau peninsula at the Boden See in S.W.Germany during the period 1969-1970. The decrease continued with the result that in 1972 8% less Whitethroats were caught than in 1968.

A sharp decrease has also been observed in the Camarque in France

Analyses of the yearly ringed birds in the Netherlands, also show a sharp decrease for Whitethroats and Redstarts for the period 1968 - 1969.

Suggested reasons for these sharp declines are drought and the application of pesticides in the wintering quarters south of the Sahara.
(Ref: Westra,D.(1973) - Op het Vinetow 22:6-11)
(translation/summary submitted by Prof.G.J.Broekhuysen.)