

AN UNUSUAL RECOVERY

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At Melville Koppies Nature Reserve, where a ringing project is being carried out, a pair of Spotted Eagle Owls Bubo africanus are known as a breeding resident. I have attempted to locate the perches of these birds, to collect pellets. After one of the pellets collected was found, on dissection, to contain bird bones, it was speculated that rings used for the ringing project may also be recovered from the pellets.

Altogether 15 pellets have been collected and dissected, these contained a large proportion of bird bones, but no rings were found. In addition six out of seven pellets found by other visitors to the Koppies have also been dissected and were found to be similar in contents as the 15 previously examined.

The latest pellet handed to me by Dr. Guy Berry was collected at the Koppies on 19th October, 1975. This pellet had a bone fragment sticking out of the side of the pellet with a ring still attached (see photos).

The ring number, 4-34329 was easily visible. On checking with the ringing records it was found that this ring had been put on to an immature Red-faced Mousebird, Colius indicus at the Koppies on 18th January, 1975.

