THE BIOMETRICS AND MOULT OF THE TURNSTONE IN THE SOUTH-WESTERN CAPE

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Little has been published on the biology of the Turnstone although it is one of the commonest waders. This paper describes the biometrics and moult and makes comparisons with data from Europe. Adults arrive in the Cape in September and start a moult which takes until March to complete. In contrast European birds complete moult by November. Mass is relatively stable at 100 - 110 g for most of the year but increases through the two weeks prior to migration, the rate of increase in mass is 1,5g/day. Young birds remain to winter and exhibit peculiar moult patterns. South African Turnstones are slightly smaller than those found in Europe. Possible origins are discussed.

PRIMARY MOULT, MASS AND BREEDING CYCLES OF THE EUROPEAN STARLING ON DASSEN ISLAND

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A total of 676 European starlings were caught and ringed on Dassen Island and a total of 224 recaptures was made over the period July 1971 to December 1972. Birds were aged as adults or juveniles and details of mass and primary moult were collected. All breeding attempts found were recorded to an estimated two-week period of laying.

The moulting season extends from November to March commencing one to two months after egg-laying.

Adults commence moulting earlier than juveniles and juveniles take longer to complete their moult. Slower moult in juveniles is due to their moulting a significantly fewer number of feathers at one time and not to a slower rate of individual feather growth.

Data are given on individual duration of moulting juveniles.

Differences in moult pattern between the two age classes are discussed in relation to body mass.
