

close on 7 700 for the former and 23 000 for the latter. Most Turnstones were found on rocky shorelines away from normal birding and count areas but, surprisingly, the largest concentrations of Sanderling were in the two large lagoon areas, but also good numbers on rocky and mixed rock/sand shores, and sandy beaches.

It is interesting to note that while the Sanderling does not seem to be confined to a particular area of the southern African coastline the population of Curlew Sandpiper in this area seems to be the same each year with very little interchange with the population summering in the South West and Western Cape.

I have one complaint - not enough copies of the report were published.

REWARDS FOR RECOVERIES

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I would like to comment on the question of rewards for recoveries, following Pat Morant's interesting article in Safring News 6 (1) 1977: 34-37. Firstly, humans being what they are, financial incentives offered as bait to encourage people to report ringed birds must inevitably result in abuse and corruption (the Cape Vulture Gyps coprotheres, for example, would be extinct within a fortnight if me and my mates got R10 for each recovery!). On the other hand, one can acknowledge people in non-monetary ways. A nice example of this is practiced by the Japanese Bird Banding Scheme. At the Fourth Pan African Ornithological Congress in Seychelles in 1976, some of us had the pleasure of meeting Mr Masashi Yoshii, Chief of the Bird Migration Research Centre, and he showed us how they "reward recoveries" in Japan.

They have designed a very neat and pretty little tie-pin, which features a miniature bird ring, complete with return address and serial number. The whole thing is silver-plated, and they send one to every person who reports the recovery of a Japanese-ringed bird. The tie-pins are mere trinkets, without any real commercial value, yet they mean something and are a tangible form of "reward" for the person who took the trouble to report the recovery. Nobody would bother to shoot birds in order to fill his top drawer with tie-pins, so the danger of the system being abused is minimal.

Many of the people reporting recoveries in our part of the world are relatively unsophisticated, and a little token like a shiny tie-pin, or a little medallion, or even a nicely printed certificate, would impart a sense of recognition, and make people willing to report further recoveries. More important, such tokens would very often become talking points in the community, and would effectively spread the message about bird-ringing at

grass-roots level.

The capital needed to implement such a scheme would be minimal, and the results could be excellent, and certainly would pay dividends in the long term. How about it, SAFRING?



The Japanese "Recovery Reward" tie-pin, seen here on the Endangered Wildlife Trust's distinctive tie. I've never recovered a Japanese bird, but I managed to persuade Mr Yoshii to part with one of his pins!