

SUGGESTED CHANGES IN RECOMMENDED BIRD RING SIZES

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As a result of ringing a number of species with the ring sizes recommended in Appendix 5 of the Ringer's Manual we are unhappy about 18 of these recommendations. We have in addition ringed nine species that do not presently occur on the list.

While we are of the opinion that many of the recommendations require re-examination we do not claim that our suggested new sizes are necessarily better, it will be noted that we do tend to opt for larger ring sizes. Our experience with the Longtailed Wagtail has shown us that a ring which makes a "snug fit" may collect dirt and cause a sore/callous and lead to serious inconvenience for the bird, and in one case its probable death.

We request comments on our proposed new sizes especially from workers who have recaptures spread over any length of time.

A comparison of the recommended ring sizes from Appendix 5 (if they exist) and our new suggested ring sizes are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF RING SIZES

SPECIES ROBERTS NUMBER	NAME	RING SIZE (1)	
		CURRENTLY RECOMMENDED	OUR SUGGESTION
10	Yellow-nosed Albatross	-	16
129	Yellow-billed Kite	-	12,5
167	African Marsh Harrier	8	10
171	Gymnogene	-	12,5
264	Wood Sandpiper	3	3/4,3
286	Antarctic Skua	-	12,5
287	Southern Black-backed Gull	8	11
312	Rameron Pigeon	-	8
360	Grass Owl	11	10/11
395	Giant Kingfisher	8	2,5/4,3 (2)
410	Little Bee-eater	2,3	3
496	Wire-tailed Swallow	-	2,3
517	Fork-tailed Drongo	3	4,3
527	Southern Black Tit	2,3	3
545	Black-eyed Bulbul	3	4,3
558	Natal Thrush	-	4,3
559	Cape Rock-thrush	-	3
627	Bleating Bush Warbler	1,8	2,3
645	Black-backed Cisticola	-	2,3/3
655	Dusky Flycatcher	1,8	2,3
664	Black Flycatcher	2,3	3
685	African Pied Wagtail	2,3/3	3
686	Cape wagtail	2,3/3	3
688	Long-tailed Wagtail	2,3/3	3
707	Fiscal Shrike	3/4,3	4,3
813	Red-collared Widow	2,3	2,3/3
824	Red-backed Mannikin	1,8	1,8/2,3

NOTES: (1) All sizes in mm

(2) For use of 4,3mm on the Giant Kingfisher flatten the ring slightly.