



BIRD RINGING

WHY DO WE RING BIRDS?

WE RING BIRDS FOR US TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THEM AS INDIVIDUALS AND SO THAT WE CAN LEARN ABOUT HOW LONG THEY LIVE AND WHEN AND WHERE THEY MOVE. PLACING A LIGHTWEIGHT, UNIQUELY NUMBERED, METAL RING AROUND A BIRD'S LEG PROVIDES A RELIABLE AND HARMLESS METHOD OF IDENTIFYING BIRDS AS INDIVIDUALS.

THE METAL RING IS LIKE A PERSONAL NAME TAG, AND EACH RING HAS ITS OWN NUMBER. SCIENTISTS FIT RINGS ONTO BIRD'S LEGS TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THEIR LIVES, SUCH AS HOW LONG THEY LIVE FOR, AND HOW FAR THEY MOVE. THEY KEEP RECORD OF THE DATE AND PLACE WHERE THE RING WAS FITTED AND COMPARE THAT TO WHERE AND WHEN THE RINGED BIRD WAS FOUND AGAIN. SOME BIRDS, ESPECIALLY WADERS, SOME SWALLOWS, WARBLERS, ETC, ARE MIGRATORY. THIS MEANS THAT THEY FLY THOUSANDS OF KILOMETERS TO SOUTH AFRICA EVERY YEAR, AND THEN BACK TO THEIR BREEDING GROUNDS FAR NORTH IN SIBERIA. BIRD RINGS HELP SCIENTISTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHERE THESE BIRDS FLY TO AND FROM, AND HOW WE CAN HELP TO CONSERVE THEM.

RINGING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

THE SOUTH AFRICAN BIRD RINGING UNIT (SAFRING) ADMINISTERS BIRD RINGING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

THERE ARE CURRENTLY AROUND 130 ACTIVE RINGERS OPERATING IN SOUTH AFRICA AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. ABOUT 70 000 BIRDS ARE RINGED ANNUALLY.

A SAFRING AUTHORITY CARD IS ANNUALLY ISSUED TO APPROVED RINGERS. A PROVINCIAL RINGING PERMIT IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT FOR ANYONE RINGING BIRDS AND IS RENEWED ANNUALLY. WRITTEN PERMISSION NEEDS TO BE OBTAINED FROM THE LAND OWNER.

SAFRING HAS A STRICT CODE OF ETHICS TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF BIRDS HANDLED.



HOW ARE BIRDS CAUGHT FOR RINGING?



BIRDS ARE CAUGHT FOR RINGING IN A VARIETY OF WAYS. THE METHOD MOST FREQUENTLY USED TO CATCH FULLY-GROWN BIRDS IS THE MIST NET. THIS IS A FINE NET ERECTED BETWEEN POLES, AND IS DESIGNED TO CATCH BIRDS IN FLIGHT. THIS METHOD IS VERY EFFECTIVE BUT BIRDS CAN ONLY BE REMOVED SAFELY FROM MIST NETS BY EXPERIENCED RINGERS.



DID YOU KNOW

AROUND 10% MAY BE RETRAPPED BY RINGERS RINGING REGULARLY AT ONE SITE (CONSTANT EFFORT SITE) ON AVERAGE FEWER THAN 1% BIRDS OF RINGED IS SUBSEQUENTLY REPORTED TO SAFRING, SO EVERY REPORT OF A RINGED BIRD IS OF VALUE.



WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A RING / RINGED BIRD

1. IF YOU FIND A DEAD BIRD, TAKE IT OFF THE DEAD BIRDS LEG, STRAIGHTEN IT OUT, AND TAPE IT ONTO A PIECE OF PAPER.
2. IF YOU FIND A LIVE BIRD WITH A RING ON ITS LEG: DO NOT REMOVE THE RING AS YOU MAY INJURE THE BIRD. CAREFULLY READ THE NUMBER, WRITE IT DOWN AND SEND THE INFORMATION TO SAFRING.



3. WRITE DOWN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION.

- ☒ YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS
- ☒ ALL THE NUMBERS ON THE RING
- ☒ THE DATE YOU FOUND THE RING
- ☒ THE PLACE YOU FOUND THE RING (LOCATION - GPS POSITION IF POSSIBLE)
- ☒ RECORD THE POSITION AND ORDER OF COLOUR RINGS IF ANY.

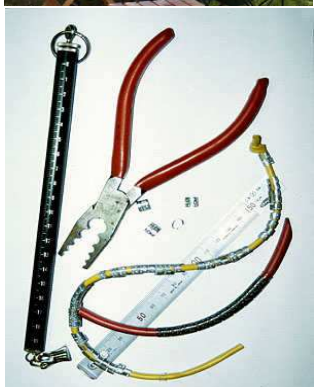


- ☒ THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF FINDING THE RING:

- ☒ HOW YOU FOUND THE RING
- ☒ DESCRIBE THE BIRDS CONDITION, OR HOW YOU SUSPECT THE BIRD DIED
- ☒ CAN YOU IDENTIFY HOW LONG THE BIRD HAS BEEN DEAD

4. MAIL THE INFORMATION TO: SAFRING
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
RONDEBOSCH
7701

OR VISIT THE WEBSITE & COMPLETE THE ONLINE FORM
OR SUBMIT THE INFORMATION VIA EMAIL



SOUTH AFRICAN BIRD RINGING UNIT

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