

TWENTY-SECOND RINGING REPORT FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

P. D. MORANT

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SUMMARY

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A report on ringing activities for southern Africa from July 1978 to June 1979 is presented. A total of 17 841 birds of 365 species and one hybrid was ringed. Ringing activity appears to have stabilized at this level from which it can be expected to grow as the benefits of project-orientated ringing are realized.

INTRODUCTION

This report covers the activities of bird ringers operating under the aegis of the South African Bird Ringing Unit (SAFRING) from July 1978 to June 1979 in which 17 841 birds of 365 species and one hybrid were ringed. This represents a 6% increase in the number of birds ringed in comparison with the 1977/78 period and the end of the decline which began during 1973/74 (Morant 1979, 1980). The number of species ringed rose by 5,5% from 346 in 1977/78 to 365. One intention of the policy promoting project-orientated ringing was the encouragement of specialization which it was hoped would produce a higher ratio of birds ringed to species ringed thus enhancing the rate of recovery for those species. However five long-term ecological projects have added considerably to the number of species ringed.

DISTRIBUTION OF RINGING ACTIVITY

Ringing was undertaken in all the provinces of South Africa as well as South West Africa, Zimbabwe, Malaŵi and Botswana. Unlike previous years when most birds were ringed in the Cape Province, Transvaal and Rhodesia (Vernon 1977, Morant 1979), ringing activity in 1978/79 was more evenly spread throughout southern Africa (Table 1). The Ornithological Society of Zimbabwe (4 259), the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology (3 133) and the Natal Bird Club

TABLE 1
REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF BIRD RINGING ACTIVITY FROM JULY 1978 TO JUNE 1979

Region	No. ringers	No. species ringed	No. birds ringed	Percentage of total no. of birds ringed
Cape Province	17	112	5 414	30,3
Natal	6	121	3 020	16,9
Zimbabwe	9	183	4 259	23,9
South West Africa	3	68	450	2,5
Transvaal	14	97	2 843	15,9
Malaŵi	1	117	1 009	5,7
Botswana	1	1	18	0,1
Sub-Antarctic islands	1	7	828	4,6
Totals	52	365*	17 841	99,9

*This figure represents the total number of species ringed in southern Africa, *i.e.* it is not the sum of the regional totals listed above.

(3 020) were the most active organizations accounting for 58,4% of all birds ringed (Table 2). The most active individual ringers were A. J. Tree (2 082), R. A. Earlé (2 079), A. J. Manson (1 078) and D. B. Hanmer (1 009).

TABLE 2
RINGING ACTIVITY OF ORGANIZATIONS FROM JULY 1978 TO JUNE 1979

Organization	No. species ringed	No. birds ringed	Percentage of total birds ringed
<i>Cape Province</i>			
Cape Bird Club	86	1 563	8,8
Cape Divisional Council, Rondevlei	19	140	0,8
Cape Provincial Administration	25	128	0,7
Percy FitzPatrick Institute	13	3 133	17,6
Eastern Cape Bird Club	5	85	0,5
Sea Fisheries Branch	4	365	2,0
<i>Natal</i>			
Natal Bird Club	121	3 020	16,9
<i>Zimbabwe</i>			
Ornithological Society of Zimbabwe	183	4 259	23,9
<i>South West Africa/Namibia</i>			
South West Africa Administration	4	111	0,6
South West Africa Scientific Society	62	339	1,9
<i>Transvaal</i>			
Transvaal Provincial Administration	16	1 515	8,5
N. Transvaal Ornithological Society	15	71	0,4
Witwatersrand Bird Club	82	1 257	7,0
<i>Malaŵi</i>	117	1 009	5,7
<i>Sub-Antarctic Islands</i>	7	828	4,6
<i>Botswana</i>	1	18	0,1
Totals	365*	17 841	100,0

*This figure represents the total number of species ringed in southern Africa, *i.e.* it is not the sum of the totals listed above.

BIRDS RINGED

The 20 most frequently ringed species in 1978/79 accounted for 57% of the rings used; eleven of these species did not appear on a similar list for 1977/78 (Table 3). The fact that the 20 most frequently ringed species accounted for a smaller proportion of the rings than in 1977/78 is possibly the result of a more even application of ringing effort. In 1977/78 the number of birds ringed per species (of the 20 most frequently ringed species) ranged from 129 to 2 353, whereas in 1978/79 the range was from 239 to 1 983. As in the past (Morant 1979), the strong amateur interest in raptors is not reflected by the numbers ringed although the picture may change if techniques for trapping communally-roosting species such as the Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* can be devised.

TABLE 3
THE TWENTY MOST FREQUENTLY RINGED SPECIES DURING JULY 1978 TO JUNE 1979

Species	No. birds	Grand totals 1948-1979	Remarks
Jackass Penguin <i>Spheniscus demersus</i>	1 983	14 163	
Wandering Albatross <i>Diomedea exulans</i>	427	1 060	A B
Cape Gannet <i>Morus capensis</i>	362	44 699	A
Yellowbilled Duck <i>Anas undulata</i>	768	54 577	
Redbilled Teal <i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>	464	10 457	
Cape Vulture <i>Gyps coprotheres</i>	334	4 476	A B
Threebanded Sandplover <i>Charadrius tricollaris</i>	335	2 751	A B
Curlew Sandpiper <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	243	17 551	
Little Stint <i>Calidris minuta</i>	459	13 529	
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i>	239	2 705	A B
Wood Sandpiper <i>Tringa glareola</i>	258	2 457	A B
Silver Gull <i>Larus novaehollandiae</i>	305	8 577	A
Swift Tern <i>Sterna bergii</i>	799	2 960	B
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	641	139 251	
European Sedge Warbler <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	348	1 569	A B
Cape White-eye <i>Zosterops pallidus</i>	317	8 816	
Spottedbacked Weaver <i>Ploceus cucullatus</i>	261	5 074	A B
Redbilled <i>Quelea quelea</i>	680	92 794	
Red Bishop <i>Euplectes orix</i>	494	27 743	
Bronze Mannikin <i>Lonchura cucullata</i>	432	7 174	A B

A = did not feature on same list for 1977/78

B = did not feature amongst the top 20 species ringed

TABLE 4
THE TEN MOST FREQUENTLY RECOVERED OR RETRAPPED SPECIES IN 1978/1979

Species	No. southern African ringed recoveries*	No. foreign ringed recoveries	Totals
Jackass Penguin <i>Spheniscus demersus</i>	400	—	400
Wandering Albatross <i>Diomedea exulans</i>	7	—	7
Bank Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax neglectus</i>	20	—	20
Yellowbilled Duck <i>Anas undulata</i>	17	—	17
Redbilled Teal <i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i>	11	1	12
Whitefaced Whistling Duck <i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	17	—	17
Cape Vulture <i>Gyps coprotheres</i>	15	—	15
Black Oystercatcher <i>Haematopus moquini</i>	7	—	7
Silver Gull <i>Larus novaehollandiae</i>	18	—	18
Swift Tern <i>Sterna bergii</i>	12	—	12

*Birds with rings bearing the legend "Inform Zoo Pretoria".

BIRDS RECOVERED

690 recoveries were processed during the period under review; 18 of these were foreign-ringed birds. The 10 species most frequently recovered or retrapped represent 76% of all recoveries in 1978/79 (Table 4). Notable is the large number of Jackass Penguins *Spheniscus demersus* reported; the result of systematic searches for ringed birds at the breeding colonies. A full list of foreign-ringed birds recovered in SAFRING's area plus southern-African ringed birds recovered outside the region is presented in Appendix 1. SAFRING's area comprises the Republic of South Africa, South West Africa, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Moçambique, Malaŵi, Gough Island and the Prince Edward islands. This appendix includes some birds recovered before July 1978 as the reports of their recovery reached SAFRING only in the 1978/79 ringing year.

DISCUSSION

The volume of ringing undertaken under the auspices of SAFRING appears to have stabilized. It will probably remain around the current level unless the number of new ringers increases significantly. The end of the war in Zimbabwe should also allow ringing activity in that country to return to its former strength.

The value of the educational and conservation awareness aspects of ringing is well established, but some difficulty is experienced when attempting to integrate them with a properly managed scientific study. One disadvantage of project-orientated ringing in its present form is that ringers involved generally do not wish to spend time training newcomers, with the result that it is becoming difficult for novices to obtain the necessary skills. Ways of overcoming this problem are presently being considered and include the possible establishment of preserved areas in which long-term ringing studies under the supervision of professional organizations will be undertaken.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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P. D. Morant, South African Bird Ringing Unit, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch 7700.

APPENDIX 1
 BIRDS RINGED OUTSIDE SOUTHERN AFRICA AND RECOVERED IN THE REGION, AND BIRDS RINGED IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND RECOVERED ELSEWHERE
 DURING THE PERIOD JULY 1978 TO JUNE 1979*

Species, ring number and age	Locality and date ringed	Locality and date recovered	Displacement, time elapsed
Blackbrowed Albatross <i>Diomedea melanophris</i> CF 150105 pullus	Îles Kerguelen (49 20S; 70 15E) 17 February 1976	Mossel Bay, Cape (34 12S; 22 08E) Found dead, April 1978	4242 km W 25,4 months
Yellownosed Albatross <i>Diomedea chlororhynchos</i> 10-48339 one year +	Nightingale Island (37 28S; 12 32E) 18 September 1964	At sea off S.W. Africa (19 25S; 12 18E) Dead, 22 August 1977	2006 km NE 155,1 months
Northern Giant Petrel <i>Macronectes halli</i> J-00709 one year +	Wolf Bay, S.W. Africa (26 49S; 15 08E) 28 September 1977	Easy Cove, New Zealand (47 10S; 167 35E) Found dead, June 1978	11331 km SSE 8,0 months
Northern Giant Petrel <i>Macronectes halli</i> 130-73716 pullus	Macquarie Island (54 45S; 158 35E) 29 January 1976	Betty's Bay, Cape (34 22S; 18 55E) Found dead, 21 October 1978	9378 km WNW 32,7 months
Northern Giant Petrel <i>Macronectes halli</i> 131-33158 pullus	Macquarie Island (54 45S; 158 35E) 16 January 1977	Oyster Bay, Cape (34 10S; 24 36E) Found dead, 17 July 1978	9191 km WNW 18,0 months
Manx Shearwater <i>Puffinus puffinus</i> EB-53812	Copeland Island, Ulster U.K. (54 41N; 05 31W) 4 August 1978	Muizenberg, Cape (34 06S; 18 30E) Found dead, 9 January 1979	10131 km S 5,1 months
Trinidad Petrel <i>Pterodroma arminjoniana</i> 5-16133 full grown	Round Island, Mauritius (19 51S; 57 48E) 16 October 1973	Round Island, Mauritius (19 51S; 57 48E) retrapped, August 1978	0 km 57,4 months
White Stork <i>Ciconia ciconia</i> C-29670 pullus	Siemionowka, Poland (52 54N; 23 50E) 9 July 1977	Bristown, Cape (30 37S; 23 30E) Dead, 29 December 1977	9282 km S 5,6 months

*Note: some birds recovered prior to July 1978 are included as the reports of their recovery only reached SAFRING in the 1978/79 ringing year

APPENDIX 1 (continued)

Species, ring number and age	Locality and date ringed	Locality and date recovered	Displacement, time elapsed
White Stork <i>Ciconia ciconia</i> E-02486 pullus	Segeberg, West Germany (53 50N; 10 09E) 14 July 1974	Lake McIlwaine, Zimbabwe (20 50S; 30 50E) Found sick or injured - died, 4 December 1978	8532 km SSE 52,6 months
Knobilled Duck <i>Sarkidiornis melanotos</i> 657-00877 full grown	Chiredzi Research Stn. (21 01S; 31 33E) 27 March 1973	Lusaka, Zambia (15 25S; 28 17E) Shot, 15 October 1978	711 km NNW 66,6 months
Redbilled Teal <i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i> IG-01053 one year +	Monze District, Zambia (15 51S; 27 14E) 7 November, 1973	Salisbury, Zimbabwe (17 57S; 31 08E) Shot, 29 December 1978	476 km ESE 61,7 months
Redbilled Teal <i>Anas erythrorhyncha</i> 6-50170 one year +	Barberspan, Transvaal (26 33S; 25 36E) 2 November 1977	Mchinji, Malawi (13 48S; 32 53E) Caught and released, 21 April 1978	1607 km NNE 5,6 months
Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i> K-04032 one year +	Holme Park, Transvaal (24 56S; 28 32E) 10 October 1975	Near Medina, Saudi Arabia (24 28N; 38 20E) Presumed dead, 7 October 1978	5818 km NNE 35,9 months
Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i> 7-38123 full grown	Bronkhorstspuit, Transvaal (25 36S; 28 44E) 11 February 1973	Ukraine, USSR (50 00N; 39 00E) Found dead, 15 May 1978	8463 km N 63,1 months
Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i> 4-50283 one year +	Walvis Bay, S. Africa (22 52S; 14 31E) 31 March 1977	Libreville, Gabon (00 23N; 09 27E) Shot, 16 December 1978	2641 km N 17,5 months
Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i> 4-28492 one year +	Marcus Island, Cape (33 03S; 17 58E) 28 April 1976	Lecce, Italy (40 23N; 13 41E) Found dead, 1 May 1978	8784 km N 24,1 months

APPENDIX 1 (continued)

Species, ring number and age	Locality and date ringed	Locality and date recovered	Displacement, time elapsed
Curlw Sandpiper <i>Calidris ferruginea</i> 2-46552	Bottelary, Cape (33 08S; 18 05E) 1 April 1972	Pazardjik, Bulgaria (42 11N; 28 18E) Dead, 28 December 1976	8435 km N 56,8 months
Little Stint <i>Calidris minuta</i> K-03237 one year +	Lake Nakuru, Kenya (00 22S; 36 05E) 6 September 1979	Crowborough Sewage Works, Salisbury, Zimbabwe (17 52S; 30 54E) Retrapped, 13 January 1979	2026 km S 40,2 months
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i> 4-23904 one year +	Langebaan, Cape (33 05S; 18 02E) 4 March 1973	Triaize, France (46 23N; 01 12W) Retrapped, May 1978	9040 km N 62,0 months
Knot <i>Calidris canutus</i> 4-29249 three years	Langebaan, Cape (33 05S; 18 02E) 14 December 1974	Triaize, France (46 23N; 01 12W) Retrapped, 7 May 1978	9040 km N 40,7 months
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i> BB-15168 one year +	Swakopmund, S.W.A. (22 44S; 13 32E) 3 January 1977	Le Crotoy, France (50 13N; 01 37W) Shot, 9 August 1978	8262 km NNNW 19,1 months
Sanderling <i>Calidris alba</i> BB-21708 one year +	Olifants River, Cape (31 42S; 18 12E) 10 October 1977	Javoslavskaja, USSR (57 35N; 38 18E) Dead, September 1978	10100 km N 10,6 months
Ruff <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> 5-18713 three years	Apex Pan, Transvaal (26 13S; 28 20E) 14 October 1972	Jakutia, USSR (68 20N; 145 30E) Dead, 13 May 1976	13801 km NNE 42,9 months
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i> 2-90402 full grown	Firle Sewage Works, Salisbury, Zimbabwe (17 56S; 30 56E) 31 January 1976	Gorkij Region, USSR (57 04N; 45 07E) Dead, 9 May 1978	10900 km NNE 27,2 months

APPENDIX 1 (continued)

Species, ring number and age	Locality and date ringed	Locality and date recovered	Displacement, time elapsed
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> P5-11212	Odessa Region, USSR (45 40S; 31 09E) 6 June 1977	Saldanha Bay, Cape (33 04S; 31 09E) Mercy killed, 3 April 1978	10666 km NNE 9,9 months
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> 4-75715 pullus	Odessa Region, USSR (45 40N; 31 09E) 14 June 1977	Morgan's Bay, E. Cape (32 44S; 28 20E) Found dead, 27 March 1978	10424 km S 9,4 months
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> P7-10969 pullus	Odessa Region, USSR (46 40N; 31 09E) 23 June 1977	Chaka's Rock, Natal (29 31S; 31 14E) Found sick, died 8 May 1978	10181 km S 10,5 months
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> JA-01730 pullus	Moland, Norway (58 31N; 08 54E) 17 June 1978	Plettenberg Bay, Cape (24 04S; 23 22E) Found dead, November 1978	10377 km SSE 5,0 months
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> B-55705	Sodermanland, Sweden (59 18N; 15 41E) 20 July 1958	Melkbosstrand, Cape (33 43S; 18 27E) Dead, 11 December 1979	10341 km S 256,7 months
Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i> H1-13191 pullus	Kunda, Estonia (59 32N; 26 33E) 20 June 1978	Ifafa, Natal (30 27S; 30 39E) Dead, 15 November 1978	10008 km S 4,8 months
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i> 20-25886 pullus	Griend, Netherlands (53 15N; 05 15E) 3 June 1971	Keurboomsvier, Cape (34 02S; 23 24E) Dead, 29 November 1978	9858 km SSE 89,8 months
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i> 62-88674	Trischen, W. Germany (54 03N; 08 40E) 15 June 1975	Scottburgh, Natal (30 18S; 30 45E) Mercy killed, 5 March 1979	9612 km SSE 44,6 months

APPENDIX 1 (continued)

Species, ring number and age	Locality and date ringed	Locality and date recovered	Displacement, time elapsed
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i> DR-18028 pullus	Farne Islands, U.K. (55 37N; 01 37E) 23 June 1975	Cape Columbine, Cape (32 49S; 17 52E) Presumed dead, 9 March 1979	9800 km SSE 44,5 months
Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i> DR-40219 pullus	Aberdeenshire, U.K. (57 19N; 01 59W) 10 July 1976	Simonstown, Cape (31 12S; 18 26E) Retrapped, 13 January 1979	10350km SSE 30,0 months
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> AA-64508 full grown	Muruwati Farm, Zimbabwe (17 35S; 30 55E) 13 November 1977	Suny, USSR (50 48N; 33 52E) Found dead, 29 May 1978	7605 km N 6,5 months
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> X-24584 one year +	Borrowdale Vlei, Zimbabwe (17 42S; 31 08E) 9 March 1978	Rostov Region, USSR (47 14N; 39 30E) Dead, 24 July 1978	7265 km N 4,5 months
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> A1-49078 one year	Mérose Dam, Transvaal (26 08S; 28 04E) 2 December 1973	Voroshilovograd, USSR (49 26N; 38 11E) Dead, 5 May 1978	9939 km SSW 53,0 months
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> AA-45518	Vlaakteplaas, Transvaal (26 21S; 28 11E) 4 December 1977	Chernigov, USSR (50 36N; 32 23E) Dead, 30 May 1978	10180 km S 5,8 months
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> K4-32902	Celinograd, USSR (42 31N; 70 38E) 22 May 1977	Lake St Lucia, Natal (28 23S; 32 25E) Dead, 18 December 1978	8796 km SSW 18,8 months
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> KK-54529 pullus	Winchester, U.K. (51 01N; 01 19W) 24 June 1976	Gokwe, Zimbabwe (18 07S; 28 58E) Dead, 26 January 1977	8231 km SSE 7,0 months

APPENDIX 1 (continued)

Species, ring number and age	Locality and date ringed	Locality and date recovered	Displacement, time elapsed
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> KP-40524 one year	Norfolk, U.K. (52 01N; 01 26E) 21 August 1977	Sipolilo, Zimbabwe (16 43S; 30 45E) Dead, 19 December 1977	8147 km SSE 3,9 months
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> KA-81195 pullus	O'kret, Poland (52 02N; 19 51E) 4 September 1977	Beestpoort, Transvaal (24 43S; 28 29E) Killed during aerial spraying of pest birds, 26 January 1978	8571 km S 4,7 months
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> AO-83059 pullus	Worcester, U.K. (52 15N; 02 15W) 24 June 1978	Grahamstown, Cape (33 19S; 26 32E) Dead, 8 January 1979	9913 km SSE 6,4 months
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> KV-90459 full grown	Yorkshire, U.K. (53 31N; 01 04W) 8 September 1977	Springfontein, Cape (32 18S; 22 36E) Dead, 25 January 1978	9807 km SSE 4,5 months
European Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i> 3-07617 pullus	Nautse, Estonia (58 36N; 23 09E) 19 July 1977	Headlands, Zimbabwe (18 13S; 31 59E) Killed by car, 15 November 1977	8575 km S 3,8 months