

EDITORIAL

The long-established ringers, those who have quietly (or in some cases, noisily) carried on whilst a succession of 'hot seat' incumbents have come and gone, may have wondered how much the latest R.O. would rock the boat. Each of my predecessors has steered SAFRING on an individual course and made a personal contribution to the progress of the South African Bird Ringing Scheme.

My own objective is to make SAFRING a top flight service organisation and to give every encouragement and assistance possible to ringers, be they amateurs or professionals. I want to see more people involved in bird ringing, including those who would like to pursue nothing more sophisticated than a back garden ringing programme.

This statement may raise eyebrows in some quarters, but the great advantage of having an organisation such as SAFRING is that data on all projects is permanently stored and no matter how small the scale or completeness of any project, the cumulative records of several such projects can provide valuable data for single species studies. Also, of course, every bird ringed has the potential of contributing dramatic new information to our knowledge. Put another way, there is a place in the scheme for every one of the whole spectrum of ringers, from the professional pursuing exacting research to the amateur enthusiast whose inquiry extends no further than to establish what sort of birds, and how many, visit his garden.

Both I and my assistant, Mirella Rammesmayr, are employed in a permanent capacity, which means that, unless fate intervenes, you are stuck with us for better or worse. We are both determined that it will be for the better, and hope that this fact is becoming self-evident.

It appears to be a tradition that a new Ringing Organiser only manages to produce one issue of SAFRING NEWS in his first year of office. There are, I think, good reasons for this, one of which is the question of copy. The bulk of this issue is contributed by two ringers. I would prefer not to have to harass ringers to put pen to paper and hope that more of you will feel encouraged to contribute articles, anecdotes and comments in the New Year.

Best wishes for 1982.

Terry Oatley,

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