

appear reasonable in this case. Brown Snake Eagles are well named and have been known on occasions to allow their predatory zeal to exceed their discretion. Perhaps this individual did tackle prey bigger than he/she could subdue.

LONG-LIVED ALUMINIUM RING

Just to confound the usual beliefs and bitter experience concerning the effective lifespan of an aluminium ring in the exacting marine environment, gannet 536-05922, ringed as a nestling at Malagas Island on 25.02.1954 by Dr. Geoff McLachlan, was washed up dead at Lambert's Bay in December 1979. The number on the ring was still clearly legible after 310 months. The recovery provides an interesting longevity record for *Morus capensis* and an unexpected reward for Geoff McLachlan who was subjected to much criticism 25 years ago for using aluminium rings on sea birds!

COLOUR RINGING CHAOS

The following extracts are from an article by Bruno Ens published in the Wader Study Group Bulletin No. 31 (April 1981). It was written because the author was genuinely concerned that "good opportunities to gather valuable information (thousands of colour-banded oystercatchers combined with an even greater number of enthusiastic birdwatchers) were being missed because of the disastrous complexity of ringing schemes."

"Having observed oystercatchers from three different ringing schemes I am convinced that inaccurate observations can no longer