

date, a lot of data has been amassed on moult, weights and populations (Fagan in prep.), of which little has been documented for southern Africa. This forms interesting comparisons with the work of ringers in East Africa and Malawi.

I have other plans in the offing for pursuing Rallidae again elsewhere in the Transvaal, and I am hoping for more success with this little-known group of birds.

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#### KAROO LONGEVITY

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I have been inspired by Hanmer's paper (1981) to produce some figures from my own ringing records from Klaarstroom in the Karoo (See Table 1).

I started ringing in January 1971, over three years before Hanmer began. In my study, nets were only set for 5 or 6 days a month using two or three nets at a time. Hanmer tabled lists of 117 birds of 56 species and 19 families or sub-families, these being the three oldest birds of any species which had been ringed over 4 years before the last recapture, though in many cases only one or two individuals qualified. My own records under these conditions amounted to 22 birds, belonging to 11 species of 9 families or sub-families. All but one of the families, the Zosteropidae, are also represented in Hanmer's list but only two species, the Southern Crombec *Sylvietta rufescens* and the Masked Weaver *Ploceus velatus* belong to both lists. Whereas Hanmer's list includes 11 Sylviidae and 9 Ploceinae, mine includes only one of each family or sub-family except the Sylviinae and the Ploceinae with two each.

The oldest bird ringed at Klaarstroom was a Masked Weaver almost 8 years old. Two Fiscal Shrikes *Lanius collaris* were also over 7 years old when last retrapped. Hanmer, with a shorter

TABLE 1

SPECIES	NO. RINGED	FIRST RINGED	LAST RETRAP	TIME Y	ELAPSED M D	
Laughing Dove <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	91	02.01.79	01.04.82	3	2	30
Cape Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus capensis</i>	129	04.12.75	26.09.80	4	9	22
		15.02.75	04.05.79	4	2	17
Chestnutvented Titbabbler <i>Parisoma subcaeruleum</i>	30	25.10.72	05.05.79	6	6	10
Cape Robin <i>Cossypha caffra</i> (Note: 2 others over 4 yrs)	137	17.01.71	11.10.76	5	8	25
		12.10.76	07.05.82	5	6	25
		26.10.72	29.04.79	6	6	3
Southern Crombec <i>Sylvietta rufescens</i>	16	01.07.75	29.06.80	4	11	28
Barthroated Apalis <i>Apalis thoracica</i>	4	24.09.71	30.08.76	4	11	6
Fiscal Shrike <i>Lanius collaris</i>	35	18.11.72	14.08.80	7	8	27
		25.10.72	27.10.79	7	0	2
		24.10.72	27.04.79	6	6	3
Cape White-eye <i>Zosterops pallidus</i> (Note: 1 other over 4 yrs)	344	12.01.75	17.08.80	5	7	5
		22.02.71	10.01.76	4	10	19
		14.11.71	07.01.76	4	1	24
Cape Sparrow <i>Passer melanurus</i>	402	26.11.76	31.05.82	5	6	5
		26.11.76	03.10.81	4	10	7
		28.02.76	22.11.80	4	8	25
Masked Weaver <i>Ploceus velatus</i>	767	26.02.71	24.02.79	7	11	29
		27.06.75	05.12.81	6	5	8
		11.01.78	14.08.80	2	7	3
Cape Weaver <i>P. capensis</i> (Note: 1 other over 4 yrs)	521	24.10.73	26.06.80	6	8	2
		15.04.76	29.09.80	4	5	14
		25.11.75	05.05.79	3	5	10

ringing period, had 67 birds believed to be over 6 years and one weaver over 9 years.

Omitting the *Apalis Apalis thoracica*, for which the figures are too small to be reliable, the birds with the best chance of reaching 4 years of age are the Fiscal Shrike, the Crombec, the Cape Robin *Cossypha caffra* and the Chestnutvented Titbabbler *Parisoma subcaeruleum*. It will be noted that all but the Fiscal Shrikes are birds of thick bush and streamside cover; and those with the least chance are the two weavers, which feed and nest in exposed positions.

REFERENCES : -

Hanmer D.B. 1981. Longevity from Retraps. Safring News 10: 12-22

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