

I.O.C. ROUND TABLE ON RINGING

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It was exciting to have an opportunity to meet my counterparts from ringing stations around the world, at the I.O.C. in Durban in August 1998. Representatives were asked to give a talk on ringing activities in their continents.

Dr Fernando Spina started by discussing the progress in Europe, where the ringing schemes of individual countries share information under EURING's umbrella. Dr John Tautin of the Bird Banding Lab, USA, described the activities in North America where the USA and Canada work closely together. Dr Barry Taylor told us about the Bird and Bat Banding Scheme in Australia. Dr Spina spoke on behalf of Kio Ozaki of Japan, who was unable to attend. Ines Nascimento, of Brazil, could unfortunately not attend the I.O.C. and there was no other representative from South America.

I shared the status in Africa where the scope of SAFRING's activities in southern Africa make it the largest scheme, followed by the Ringing

Scheme of Eastern Africa, based in Kenya. There have been ringing programs in Ghana, Nigeria and other countries but these have lacked staff and finances to ensure continuity. The issue of an 'AFRING' was examined and in the future SAFRING may well host the data curation for all ringing in Africa. I also presented a brief overview of banding effort in the sub-Antarctic, where various countries ring seabirds and the data are deposited at SAFRING.

One of the main discussion points was the feasibility of setting up a standing committee for bird-ringing. Such a committee would look at the world wide standardization of ringing codes, for instance.

Although our time was very limited, it was great to see the extent of ringing in other countries. In Europe and America millions of birds are ringed annually, while in South Africa we have not reached a total of two million in 50 years! In the former continents, however, the rings are largely free (*i.e.* government sponsored) and ringers only pay for their equipment, fuel and other related costs.

WEB PAGES

If you are connected to cyberspace, you may want to surf the sites of bird-ringing schemes through the world. You will find enough links from these starting points to keep you from ringing for days!

USA Bird Band. Lab	http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/
USA BBL report	http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/homepage/recwbnd.htm
Europe	http://www.club.innet.be/~year1559/index.HTM
SAFRING	http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu/p_safr1.htm
Sweden	http://www.nrm.se/rc/
ABBBS	http://www.environment.gov.au/bg/plants/birdnbat/intro.html
Bird links	http://www.ntic.qc.ca/~nellus/links.html
Birds Australia	http://avoca.vicnet.net.au/~birdsau/
Australian Bird Study	http://www.absa.asn.au/
