

FOREIGN NEWS

Compiled by Cynthia Best

FIRST RECOVERY OF THE NOMINATE RACE PEREGRINE FALCON *FALCO P. PEREGRINUS* FROM SWEDEN TO TROPICAL AFRICA

Roland Staav

Bird Ringing Centre, Swedish Museum of Natural History, Box 50 007, SE- 104 05 Stockholm, SWEDEN

The Peregrine Falcon is a widespread species distributed over all continents and 19 different subspecies have been recognised. Falcons breeding in northern temperate and arctic zones are highly migratory (del Hoyo *et al.* 1994). Birds belonging to the tundra race *anatum* probably spend the winter in East Africa, as far south as Natal (Urban *et al.* 1986). The species is considered widespread in Africa on the basis of specimens collected in places such as KwaZulu-Natal

Province, in South Africa, and in Angola. These appear to indicate a strong presence of this species as a wintering bird (Moreau 1972). Until now, however, there has been no proof through any ringing recovery.

However, on 15 March 1995, the remains of a peregrine and the Swedish Ring 90A04656 was found in a field at Thionk-Essyl, Bignona, Casamance, in Senegal, West Africa, 12°47'N, 16°35'E (Stolt *et al.* 1997). The remains of the bird, including the ring, were sent to the Museum of Natural History in Stockholm for verification. The peregrine was a female, ringed in a brood of three young, on a cliff in Swedish Lapland on 12 July 1991. The greater circle distance between the birthplace and the recovery location, in southern Senegal, is 6 467 kilometres. This record is rather amazing because it is the first ringing recovery of a northern peregrine from the tropics.

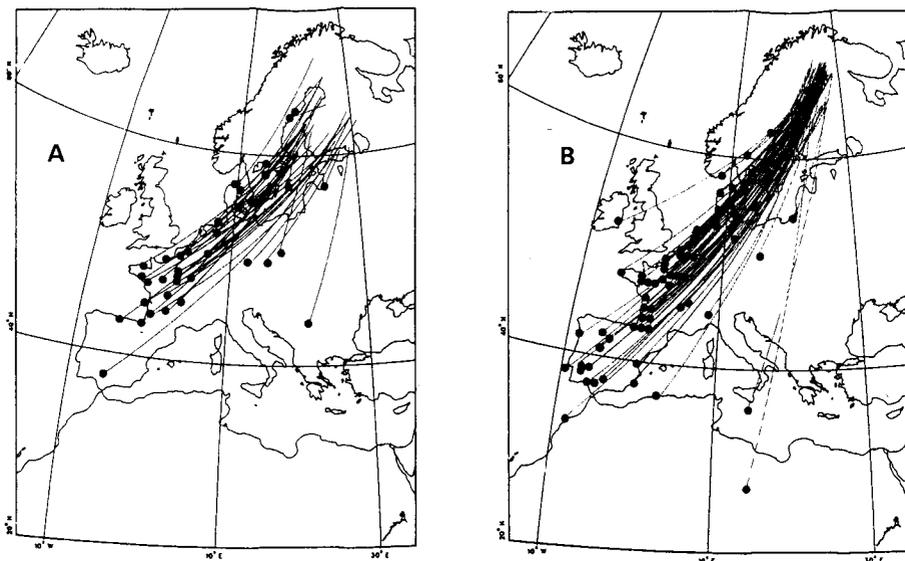


Figure 1. Recoveries of Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* ringed: 1913-1975 (A); 1976-1997 (B).

Peregrines of the nominate race, breeding in Fennoscandia, normally migrate to western and southwestern Europe, where they spend the winter. However, there appears to be a tendency nowadays for the peregrines to migrate further south and southwest. More birds are being found in Spain and Portugal and, in later decades, some have also been found in North Africa (Saurola 1998). For distribution patterns of Finnish recoveries, see maps in the 1997 Yearbook of the journal *Linnut* on page 67. There are recoveries of Finnish birds from Morocco, Algeria and Libya, and also a Swedish male from the west coast, which was found in Goulimine, Morocco, in 1983 (*Report on Swedish bird ringing for 1987*).

REFERENCES

- DEL HOYO, J., ELLIOTT, A. & SARGATAL, J. eds. 1994. Handbook of the birds of the World. Vol 2. pp. 274-275. *New World Vultures to Guinafowl*. Barcelona: Lynx Edicions.
- SAUROLA, P. 1998. Bird ringing in Finland 1997. *Linnut-vuosikirja 1997*. p. 67.
- BIRD RINGING CENTRE. *Report on Swedish Bird-ringing for 1987*. Stockholm: Swedish Museum of Natural History. p. 37.
- STOLT, B.O., EKSTRÖM, L., FRANSSON, T., STAAV, R., SÄLLSTRÖM, B. & SÄLLSTRÖM, U.B. 1997. *Report on Swedish bird-ringing for 1995*. Stockholm: Bird Ringing Centre, Swedish Museum of Natural History. p.66.
- URBAN, E.K., FRY, C.H. & KEITH, S. 1986. Birds of Africa. Vol.II. London, New York: Academic Press.

First it was the French, then the Italians and, most recently, the Spanish: Ringing Schemes seem to be under pressure world-wide – so any ringers wanting to put their marketing or PR skills to the test, are encouraged to try their hand at fund-raising initiatives for Safring.

ICONA – Madrid Ringing Office, SPAIN
Madrid, 16th December 1997

To all Bird Ringing Schemes

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you very much for all your letters in response to our appeal for financial solutions for the Ringing Office at the Institute for Nature Conservation (ICONA).

The Ringing Bureau's two-member staff were employed for only three months of 1997, (due to Spanish Ministry of Environment shortfalls). For this reason, our work suffered several stoppages during the year and finally we were forced to close the ringing office at the beginning of 1998.

However, at last we have very good news. We now have a new four-year contract that could

solve, at least in part, the existential problems of our Scheme.

Now, however, we face the problem of the huge backlog of recoveries, stored in the Ringing Office during 1997 and we have to resolve the accumulated delays in processing them. We apologise for this situation and we will try to solve this problem in the course of the year. We ask for your patience and understanding in this regard.

The staff working in the Spanish Scheme have not changed. We are:

Head of the Scheme: Benigno Asensio

Members of the Ringing Bureau:

Angel Gómez and Francisco J. Cantos

Thank you very much, Sincerely yours

Dr. Francisco J. Cantos

ICONA Ringing Office

Recently Safring received the first Knot recovery from Spain on record – it would seem that the Spanish Ringing Scheme has indeed surmounted its logistical problems ! [ed.]