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SAFRING RINGING REPORT FOR 2015

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Following from the 49th summary of SAFRING ringing effort for 2014 (Pajmans & Oschadleus 2016), the database has grown to 2,516,615 records (initial, retrap, resightings and recoveries).

Ringing papers

A number of very interesting research articles have been published utilising the ringing data collected (Table 1). There have also been many popular articles published (within the bird newsletters, magazines, and online) as well as four articles in Afring News volume 44.

Ringing effort

The 2015 ringing year (1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015) was a moderately successful one with SAFRING receiving 65,172 ringing records (55,433 birds ringed; 9,180 recaptured; 224 resighted; 335 recoveries records) relating to 767 species (Figure 1). Although this is the lowest number of ringing records received since 1998, the recapture, recovery rate and overall species diversity was excellent.

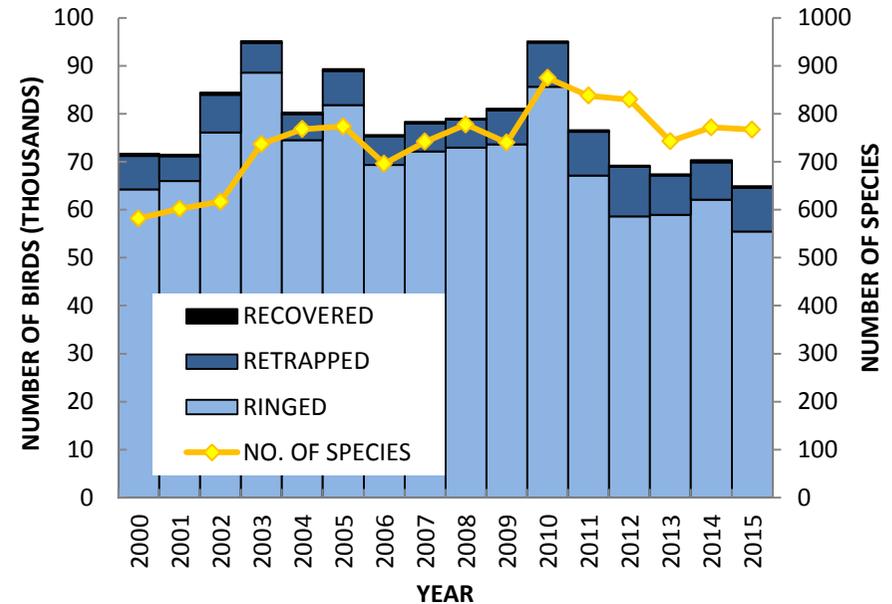


Figure 1. Trend in ringing effort over fifteen years from 2000 to 2015

During 2015 there were 248 active ringers/groups (Figure 2); 105 of which ringed over 100 birds and 9 of these ringed more than 1,000 birds (Table 3). Most of these ringers ringed a variety of species and were distributed across southern Africa. The top ringer, Dr Ursula Franke-Bryson (Ringer: 1240), ringed the most birds (4,832 birds), while the person who ringed the most species was Malcolm Wilson (Ringer: 1096) (219 species) (Table 3).

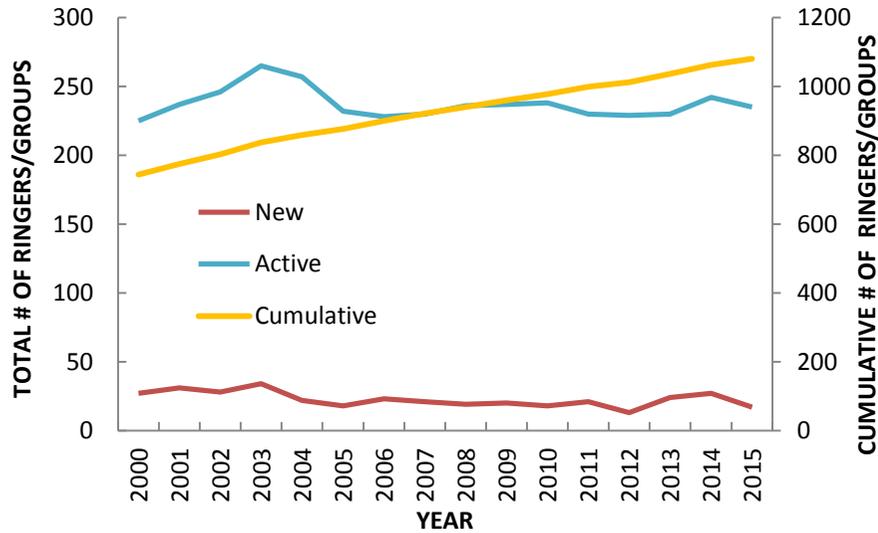


Figure 2. Number of active and new registered SAFRING ringers over fifteen years from 2000 to 2015. The cumulative total is shown in yellow.

The effort from ringers has been well distributed across southern Africa (Figure 3), with most records (ringing, retrap, recovery) originating from the South African provinces and Namibia (Table 2a). The South African province to produce the most ring records for the most species was KwaZulu-Natal (11773 records, 296 species; Table 2a,b).

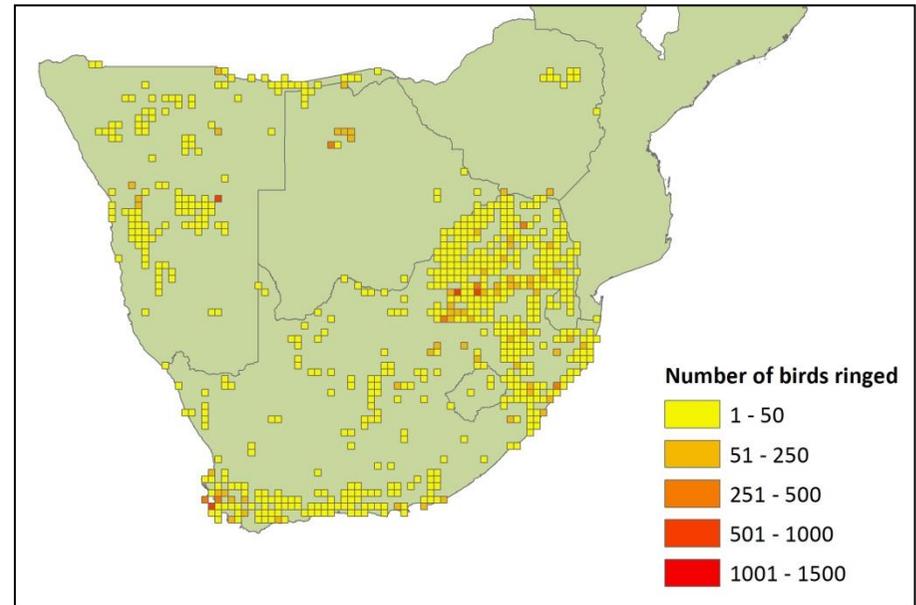


Figure 3. Distribution of ringing effort across southern Africa per each quarter degree grid cell within southern Africa in the 2015 ringing period. The colour coding of the grid cell indicates numbers of birds ringed in it

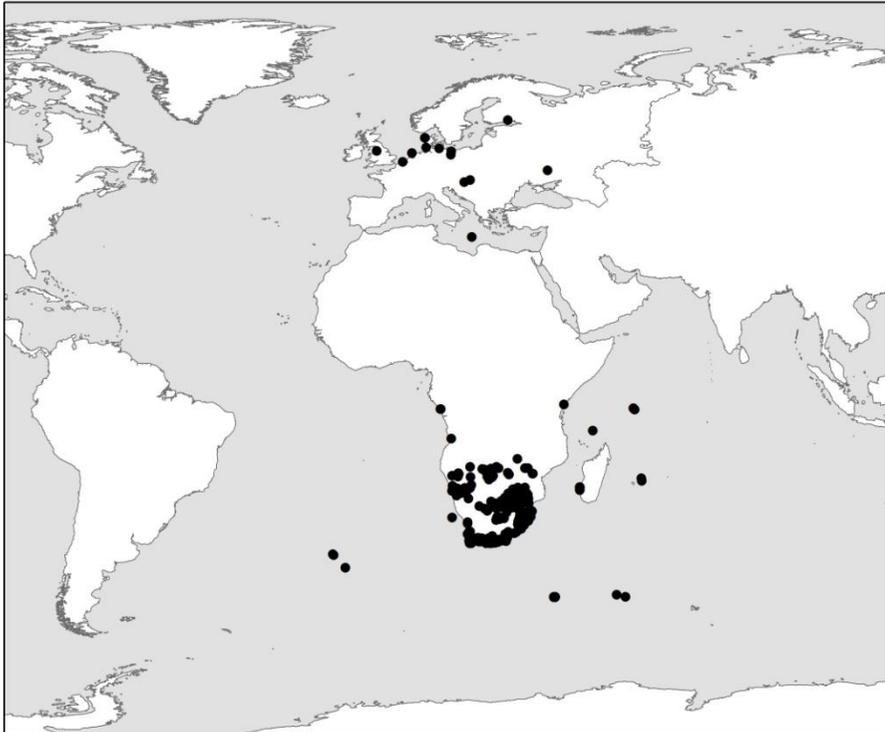


Figure 4. Positions at which birds with SAFRING rings were retrapped/recovered/resighted around the world, for the 2015 ringing year.

Of the 767 species ringed in 2015, the majority were not terrestrial as expected since this is where most ringers are active (Table 4). However, due to substantial research on the oceanic island sites we also received a large number of marine species (Table 4).

On average retrap and recovery records are limited. For two regions (Oceanic Islands and the Northern Cape), however, this is not the case (Table 2a). This outcome is a result of extensive research being

conducted within these regions. As this research uses colour rings in addition to the metal rings, resightings are very common.

401 recoveries of ringed birds were received by SAFRING representing 96 species. The most commonly recovered species were the Sociable Weaver, Kelp Gull, Laughing Dove and Cape Gannet (Table 4). This is primarily due to studies involving ringing of these species focusing on juveniles which have a lower survival rate than adults. For most recoveries (29.7%) the cause of death was unknown with many being found washed up on beaches, after dying at sea. Most others died through interaction with people around residential areas (Table 6).

Acknowledgements

We at SAFRING really appreciate all the effort of ringers and the general public (the latter in reporting recoveries), and would like to thank everyone that has taken part in ringing and resighting in Southern Africa. SAFRING is sponsored by the South African National Biodiversity Institute, and the Namibian Ministry of Wildlife and Tourism. The University of Cape Town provides accommodation and services.

References

Pajmans DM, Oschadleus HD 2016 Report on the 2014 ringing year. Biodiversity Observations 7(63): 1-11. Available online at http://oo.adu.org.za/pdf/BO_2016_07-063.pdf

Table 1. Some scientific publications produced utilising records within the SAFRING database for the year 2015.

Reviewed Papers		
Authors	Title	Journal (Vol. pages)
Thomas HL, Hockey PAR, Cumming GS	Solving the challenges of monitoring mobile populations: insights from studies of waterbirds in southern Africa	Ostrich (86 169-178)
Calder JL, Cumming GS, Maciejewski K, Oschadleus HD	Urban land use does not limit weaver bird movements between wetlands in Cape Town, South Africa	Biological Conservation (187 230-239)
Jansen DY, Wilson AM, Altwegg R	Climatic influences on survival of migratory African Reed Warblers <i>Acrocephalus baeticatus</i> in South Africa	Ardea (103 163-174)

Table 2a. Regional ringing effort in the 2015 ringing year (all regions with over 100 records).

Region	# of initial records	# of retrap records	# of recovery records	total records	% of total records
South Africa (total)	41788	6419	276	48488	75.1
- KwaZulu-Natal	10537	1216	20	11773	18.2
- Gauteng	9437	847	43	10327	16.0
- Western Cape	9270	1751	96	11122	17.2
- Limpopo	3501	208	13	3722	5.8
- Mpumalanga	2879	175	5	3059	4.7
- North West	2442	184	2	2628	4.1
- Eastern Cape	1886	460	29	2375	3.7
- Free State	1124	65	5	1194	1.8

- Northern Cape	712	1513	63	2288	3.5
Namibia	9218	1633	23	10874	16.8
Madagascar	887	70	0	957	1.5
Botswana	879	34	2	915	1.4
Seychelles	601	29	1	631	1.0
Oceanic Islands	259	969	3	1232	1.9
Mauritius	224	1	0	225	0.3
Zimbabwe	218	34	1	253	0.4

Table 2b. Regional ringing effort in the 2015 ringing year (all regions with over 100 records).

Region	# of Ringers	# of Species	Ave.# birds per ringer	% of total species per region
South Africa (total)	195	622	248.7	81.0
- KwaZulu-Natal	62	296	189.9	38.5
- Gauteng	60	237	172.1	30.9
- Western Cape	68	348	163.6	45.3
- Limpopo	70	274	53.2	35.7
- Mpumalanga	50	236	61.2	30.7
- North West	39	162	67.4	21.1
- Eastern Cape	34	147	69.9	19.1
- Free State	21	115	56.9	15.0
- Northern Cape	17	77	134.6	10.0
Namibia	27	226	402.7	29.4
Madagascar	1	3	957.0	0.4
Botswana	8	106	114.4	13.8
Seychelles	6	15	105.2	2.0
Oceanic Islands	5	11	246.4	1.4
Mauritius	2	6	112.5	0.8
Zimbabwe	2	63	126.5	8.2

Table 3. Top 20 ringers/groups over the 2015 ringing year: Most bird records (ringed/ retrapped and recovered). Code 1 = ringed birds, 2 = retraps, X = dead birds.

Name	Total	1	2	X	species
Dr. U Franke-Bryson (1240)	5156	4832	323	1	159
Mr D Heinrich (573)	2754	2359	390	5	144
Mrs K. Nelson (1540)	2202	1915	283	4	128
Gough Island (904)	1630	335	1287	7	12
Mr Neil Thomson (1476)	1402	969	431	2	40
Mrs R Pretorius (1334)	1396	1371	25	0	67
Mr M Wilson (1096)	1345	1307	38	0	219
A Pickles (1207)	1295	1202	91	2	89
Miss ML Marais (740)	1263	1231	32	0	77
Dr. HD Oschadleus (32)	1196	1081	114	1	70
Dr F Bothma (15179)	1179	1059	115	5	89
R Covas (1007)	1163	236	870	57	1
Dr M Brown (1089)	1058	921	121	16	87
Dr PB Taylor (1060)	1012	865	146	1	143
Mr H Bantjes (180)	960	881	77	2	110
S Zefania (1227)	957	887	70	0	3
G Middendorff (1531)	943	575	363	5	40
Mr P Dearlove (1030)	906	838	68	0	51
Mrs M. McCall (266)	889	808	81	0	47
Mr J Rajmakers (162)	886	845	41	0	140

	Dark-capped Bulbul	1277	1162	112	3
	Laughing Dove	1485	1126	337	21
	Cape Sparrow	1156	1052	99	5
	Red-headed Finch	1183	1049	134	0
	Common Waxbill	1003	859	143	1
	Village Weaver	893	832	59	2
	Cape Weaver	906	793	111	2
	Blue Waxbill	874	729	142	3
	African Reed-Warbler	782	690	92	0
Marine	Cape Gannet	1128	1046	65	17
	Kittlitz's Plover	745	695	50	0
	Swift Tern	698	658	31	9
	Hartlaub's Gull	316	310	4	2
	Kelp Gull	366	293	31	42
	Wandering Albatross	209	206	2	1
	White-tailed Tropicbird	204	188	15	1
	Lesser Noddy	159	159	0	0
	Sooty Albatross	263	122	141	0
	White-fronted Plover	129	115	13	1
Raptor	White-backed Vulture	285	219	64	2
	Steppe Buzzard	184	184	0	0
	Southern Pale Chanting Goshawk	186	172	9	5
	Spotted Eagle-Owl	135	122	8	5
	Lappet-faced Vulture	131	107	24	0

Table 4. The most frequently ringed species over the 2015 ringing year. Code 1 = ringed birds, 2 = retraps, X = dead birds.

	Species	Total	1	2	X
Terrestrial	Southern Masked-Weaver	5197	4810	376	10
	Barn Swallow	2906	2897	8	1
	Southern Red Bishop	2354	2145	204	4
	Cape White-eye	2400	2139	260	1
	Red-billed Quelea	2053	2043	8	2
	Lark-like Bunting	1768	1686	81	1

Table 5. Conditions of retrap/resighting for the 2015 ringing year

Condition	Grand Total
Sighting: of patagial tags	343
Sighting: of colour ringed bird	259
Alive: incubating egg(s)	153
Alive: one of a pair, breeding activity suspected	130
Alive: no other information	102
Alive: nest building	76
Sighting: ring number read in field	25
Alive: loafing in colony	6
Sick or Injured: taken to rehabilitation centre	9
Sighting: from camera trap	6
Sick or injured	10
Alive: with chick(s)	3
Attacked by: domestic cat	2
Alive: nesting at site	2
Alive: not breeding	2
Caught: ring removed and released	1
Collision: with a fence, line or wire	1
Collision: with motor vehicle	1
Controlled: ring replaced and bird released	1
Released: after being held captive	1

Table 6. Causes of bird mortality over the 2015 ringing year

Finding Condition	Total Number
Died: cause of death unknown	97
Carcass: found beached	22
Killed or attacked by: domestic animal	19
Collision: with motor vehicle	11
Collision: with a window	5
Sick or injured: subsequently died	4
Died: on long line from fishing vessel	4
Shot: it caused problems	4

Table 7. Foreign recoveries for the 2015 ringing year

Ring #	Details		
1798	White Stork (<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>) Sex: Unknown		
	Ringing record	Nestling/Pulli	Stockholm Scheme
	2014-06-19	5538N1334E	Sweden
	Recovery	1/2 to 1 year	Member of the public
	2015-01-24	2213S2905E	Limpopo
776621	Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) Sex: Unknown		
	Ringing record	Juvenile	Reykjavik Scheme
	2013-07-13	6414N1512W	Iceland
	Recovery	Adult plumage	SANCCOB
	2015-10-25	3349S1829E	Western Cape
1434229	Black-browed Albatross (<i>Thalassarche melanophris</i>) Sex: Unknown		
	Ringing record	Adult	British Trust for Ornithology
	2007-11-24	5401S3803W	South Georgia
	Recovery	Adult plumage	Member of the public
	2015-03-15	3404S1834E	Western Cape
1435533	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) Sex: Unknown		
	Ringing record	Nestling/Pulli	Arnhem Scheme
	2010-06-01	5315N0514E	Netherlands
	Retrap record	Adult plumage	SANCCOB
	2015-10-13	3350S1829E	Western Cape
1442762	Black-browed Albatross (<i>Thalassarche melanophris</i>) Sex: Unknown		
	Ringing record	Nestling/Pulli	British Trust for Ornithology
	2015-04-04	5400S3803E	South Georgia
	Recovery	0 to 1/2 year	British Trust for Ornithology
	2015-06-19	3449S2001E	Western Cape

Ring #	Details				
7142630	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	Sex: Unknown		2012-06-24	3242N3456E Isreal
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli	Stockholm Scheme	Retrap record	Adult plumage Mr JC Sinclair
	2011-05-30	5511N1000E	Denmark	2015-03-06	2347S3531E Mozambique
	Retrap record	Adult plumage	Mr A Tree	B41693	Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>)
	2015-11-15	2818S3213E	KwaZulu-Natal		Sex: Unknown
3T436	White Stork (<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>)	Sex: Unknown			Ringling record
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli	Helgoland Scheme		0 to 1/2 year
	2014-06-24	5401N0922E	Germany		2012-07-01
	Retrap record	1/2 to 1 year	Mr W Nesor		3242N3456E
	2015-01-01	2542S2757E	Gauteng		Adult plumage
4T640	White Stork (<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>)	Sex: Unknown			Mr JC Sinclair
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli	Helgoland Scheme		2015-03-06
	2015-06-29	5310N1102E	Germany		2347S3531E
	Recovery	1/2 to 1 year	Member of the public		BA32096
	2015-12-18	2721S3052E	KwaZulu-Natal		Osprey (<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>)
6A1572	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	Sex: Unknown			Sex: Unknown
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli	Helgoland Scheme		Ringling record
	2013-06-20	5343N2306E	Germany		Nestling/Pulli
	Retrap record	Adult plumage	Mr M Boorman		2012-06-26
	2015-12-18	2234S1430E	Namibia		5303N1323E
6A5394	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	Sex: Unknown			Recovery
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli	Helgoland Scheme		Adult plumage
	2015-06-26	5432N0830E	Germany		2015-11-15
	Retrap record	0 to 1/2 year	Mr M Boorman		1116N0416E
	2015-12-31	2234S1430E	Namibia		Member of the public
AT240224	Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Sex: Unknown			Niger
	Ringling record	Juvenile	Member of the public		BA34648
	2013-07-04	6147N2851E	Finland		Osprey (<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>)
	Recovery	Adult plumage	Mr W Maritz		Sex: Unknown
	2015-04-12	3407S1850E	Western Cape		Ringling record
B41678	Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>)	Sex: Unknown			Nestling/Pulli
	Ringling record	0 to 1/2 year	Tel-Aviv Scheme		2012-07-12
					4917N1929E
					Retrap record
					Adult plumage
					2015-01-17
					1837S2403E
					Member of the public
					Botswana
					D732586
					Barn Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>)
					Sex: Unknown
					Ringling record
					Juvenile
					2014-08-06
					5610N0650W
					British Trust for Ornithology
					United Kingdom
					Retrap record
					Adult plumage
					2015-12-14
					2214S2917E
					Mr M Wilson
					Limpopo
					DD04719
					Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)
					Sex: Unknown
					Ringling record
					Nestling/Pulli
					2014-06-18
					5258N0059E
					British Trust for Ornithology
					United Kingdom
					Retrap record
					1 to 2 year
					2015-10-18
					3401S2353E
					Member of the public
					Eastern Cape

Ring #	Details		
DD83254	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)		Sex: Unknown
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli	British Trust for Ornithology
	2014-06-22	5537N0137W	United Kingdom
	Retrap record	1 to 2 year	Member of the public
	2015-11-16	3405S1830E	Western Cape
DE01951	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)		Sex: Unknown
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli	British Trust for Ornithology
	2015-06-17	5212N0653W	United Kingdom
	Retrap record	1 to 2 year	Member of the public
	2016-08-09	3401S2542E	Eastern Cape
DERAN653	Black Stork (<i>Ciconia nigra</i>)		Sex: Unknown
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli	Helgoland Scheme
	2014-06-15	5015N0622E	Germany
	Retrap record	1/2 to 1 year	Member of the public
	2015-03-05	1310N1208W	Senegal
DK38117	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)		Sex: Unknown
	Ringling record	Adult	British Trust for Ornithology
	2015-09-13	5230N0404W	United Kingdom
	Retrap record	Adult	British Trust for Ornithology
	2015-12-21	2258S1425E	Namibia
HC914	White Stork (<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>)		Sex: Unknown
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli	Hiddensee Scheme
	2010-06-25	5241N1215E	Germany
	Recovery	Adult plumage	Member of the public
	2015-09-12	2721S3005E	Mpumalanga