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SAFRING RINGING REPORT FOR 2016

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AFRING NEWS

SAFRING RINGING REPORT FOR 2016

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Following from the 2015 SAFRING ringing summary (50th edition) (Paijmans et al. 2017), the database has grown to 2,604,636 SAFRING records (initial, retrap, resightings and recoveries). By including foreign scheme records the total is increased to 2,620,282 records.

Ringing papers

A number of research articles have been published during 2016 utilising the ringing data collected (Table 1). There have been many popular articles published (in bird newsletters, magazines, and online) as well as thirteen articles in AFRING News volume 45. On January 1st, 2016 AFRING News was moved to the Animal Demography Units journal, Biodiversity Observations, but still covers all faunistic observations relating to bird ringing. This move has led to increased visibility and article submissions.

Ringing effort

The 2016 ringing year (1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016) was a successful one with SAFRING receiving 73,716 ringing records (56,642 birds ringed; 9,574 recaptured; 6,986 resighted; 613 recoveries) encompassing 700 species (Figure 1). Although the number of initial records is similar to previous years, the recapture

and recovery rates increased notably, with the newly introduced resightings category (Code 4 - Ring/tag numbers read in the field) improving the overall total. As some records are still outstanding these values may differ in future summaries.

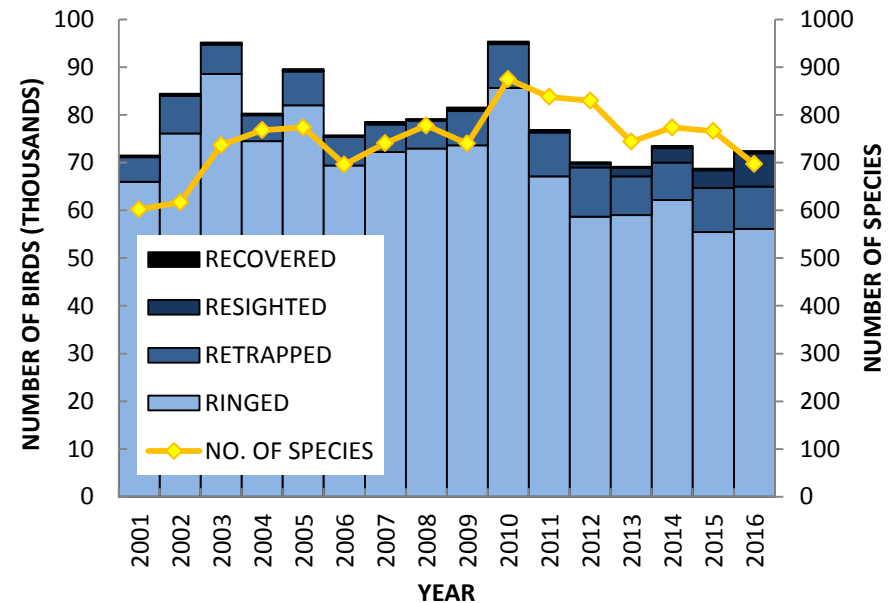


Figure 1. Trend in ringing effort over fifteen years from 2001 to 2016

During 2016 there were 236 active ringers/groups (Figure 2); 92 of which ringed over 100 birds and 14 of these ringed more than 1,000 birds (Table 2). Most of these ringers ringed a variety of species and were distributed across southern Africa. The top ringer, Dr Ursula Franke-Bryson, ringed the most birds (5,485 birds) becoming SAFRING's new top ringer of all time (totalling 50,980 initial records by the end of 2016). Along with this record Ursula also ringed the most species during 2016 (262 species) (Table 2). The citizen science ringer with the most retraps/resighting records over this period was Neil Thompson (616 records) who was only bested by the

Sociable Weaver Research Project (Rita Covas; 1048 records) and the researchers on Gough Island (1604 records). The large number of recovery records reported by the Sociable Weaver Research Project was a result of tracking the expected high mortality of chicks.

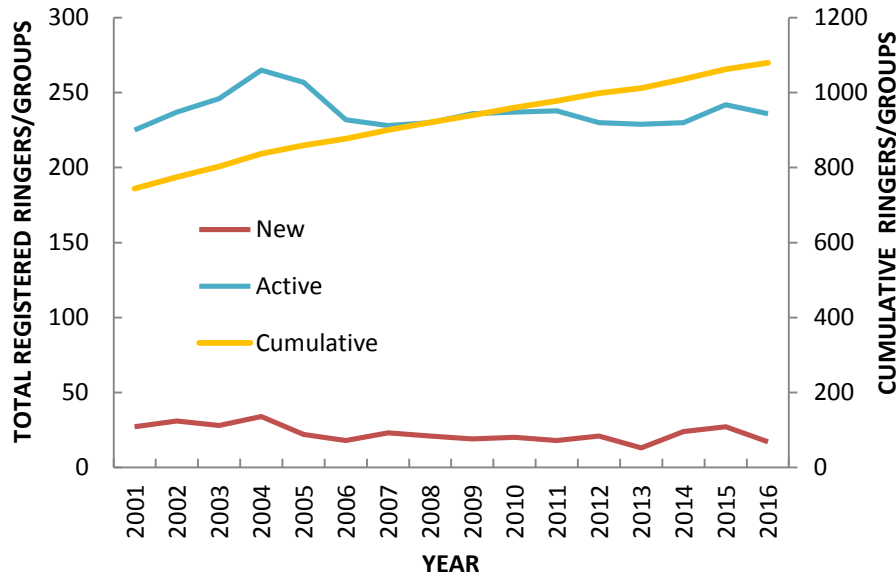


Figure 2. Number of active and new registered SAFRING ringers over fifteen years from 2001 to 2016. The cumulative total is shown in yellow.

The ringing effort has been well distributed across southern Africa (Figure 3), with most records (initial, retrap, resighting, recovery) originating from the South African provinces and Namibia (Table 3a). The South African province to produce the most ring records was the Western Cape (12,562 records; Table 3a), while KwaZulu-Natal had the most species records (302 species; Table 3b).

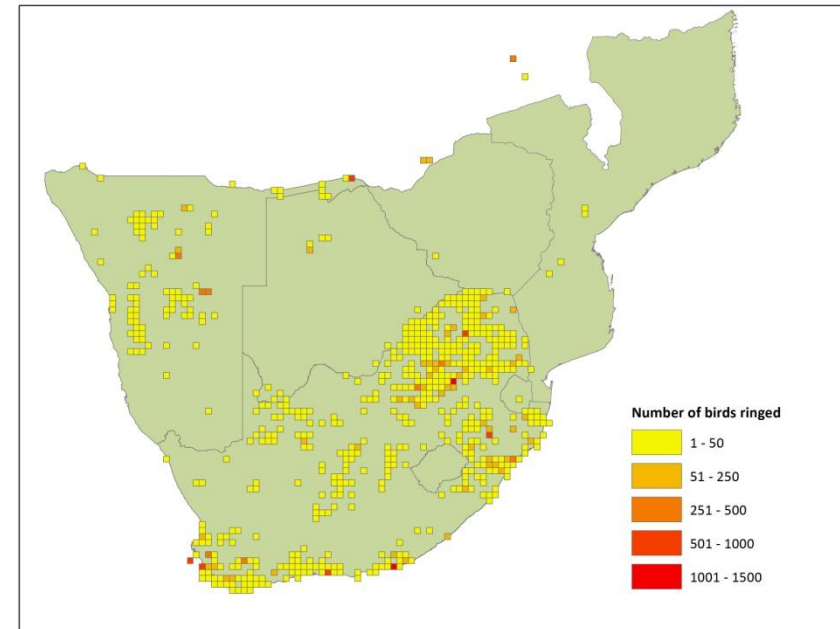


Figure 3. Distribution of ringing effort across southern Africa per quarter degree grid cell for the 2016 ringing period. The colour coding of the grid cell indicates numbers of birds ringed in it

Of the 700 species reported during 2016, most records were terrestrial birds (Table 4). This is a result of most ringers focusing efforts in these habitats, however, due to substantial research being done on oceanic islands, there were many marine records originating from island research sites (Tables 4). Due to various research projects being undertaken, a number of species have above average record numbers, including; Sociable Weavers (Sociable Weaver Research Project), Cape Gannets (Department of Environmental Affairs), albatrosses (various island projects), and vultures (Vulpro).

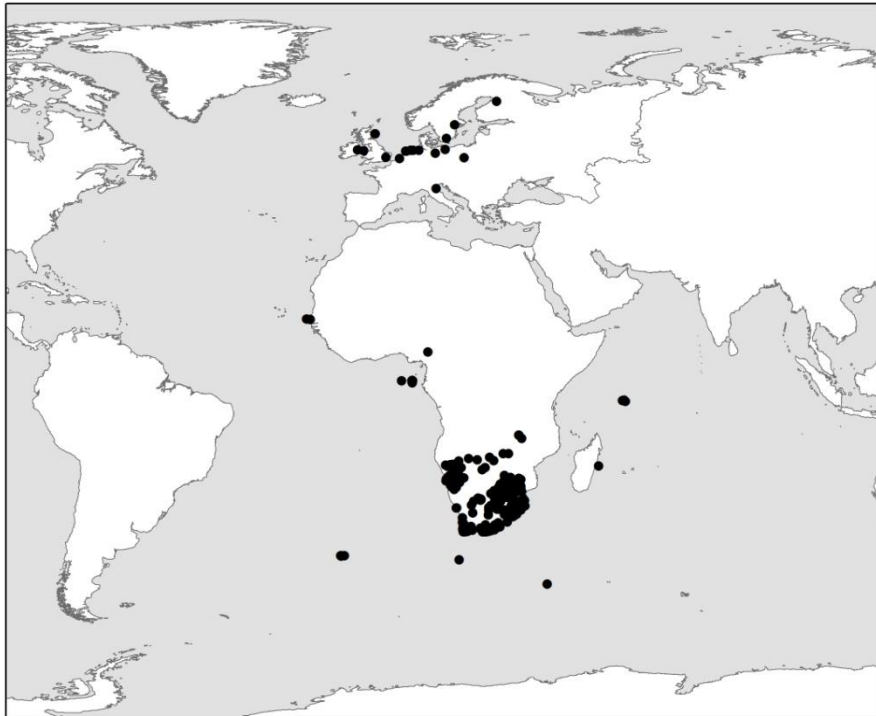


Figure 4. Positions at which birds with SAFRING rings were retrapped/recovered/resighted around the world, for the 2016 ringing year.

Retrap/Resighting/Recovery Effort

On average retrap and recovery records are limited and fall well below the total initial records for a region. For three regions (Oceanic Islands, North-West and the Northern Cape) this is not the case (Table 3a). This outcome is a result of extensive research being conducted within these sites. As this research uses colour rings/tags in addition to the metal rings, resightings are very common (Table 5). Most resightings are southern African in origin, however, a number of

interesting sightings of SAFRING rings have been reported in other parts of Africa and throughout Europe (Figure 4). Foreign ringed birds sighted in southern Africa where predominantly Common Terns (38 reports) and Sandwich Terns (219 reports), with a number of other interesting migrants being resighted in South Africa (Table 7).

Of the 613 recovery records received; the most recovered species are Sociable Weaver, Kelp Gull, Cape Gannet and Common Tern (Table 4). This is primarily due to related studies focusing on the juveniles; which have a lower survival rate than adults. Most recoveries did not have a known cause of death, with many being reported washed up on beaches and most others being found 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, Craig C, Johnson L, Oschadleus HD. 2017. SAFRING Ringing Report for 2015. Biodiversity Observations 8.33:1-8. Available online at <http://oo.adu.org.za/content.php?id=328>

Table 1. Some scientific publications produced utilising records within the SAFRING database for the year 2016.

Reviewed Papers		
Authors	Title	Journal (Vol. pages)
Jordaan RK, McIntyre T	Long-distance dispersal of a Cape Gannet <i>Morus capensis</i> after an extended period of nest-site fidelity	Marine Ornithology (44, 1-2)
Tatayah V, Brown R, Le Corre M, Nicoll M, Jones CJ	A 'Round Island Petrel' recovered from India.	Indian Birds (12, 5-6)

Academic Theses		
Author	Title	Institution
Jansen DYM	The use of ringing data in the study of climatic influences on common passerines	PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa
Burman MS	Citizen science reveals complex changes in Barn Swallow phenology in South Africa over three decades	PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa

Table 2. Top 20 ringers/groups over the 2016 ringing year: Most bird records (ringed/ retrapped and recovered). Code 1 = ringed birds, 2 = retraps, 4 = resightings, X = dead birds.

Name	Total	1	2/4	X	species
U Franke-Bryson (1240)	5684	5485	199	0	262
DEA (870)	3000	3000	0	0	2
R Covas (1007)	2400	1072	1048	280	1
D Heinrich (573)	2357	1977	376	4	136
Gough Island (904)	2167	554	1604	9	9

P Dearlove (1030)	2154	1983	170	1	59
Neil Thomson (1476)	1807	1190	616	1	52
M Brown (1089)	1772	1584	179	9	88
M Pinheiro de Melo (1022)	1718	1410	308	0	21
K Nelson (1540)	1691	1479	209	3	134
D Engelbrecht (1245)	1448	1283	165	0	86
HD Oschadleus (32)	1366	1161	205	0	55
M McCall (266)	1248	1112	136	0	45
J McLuskie (1422)	1228	1118	108	2	67
J Rawdon (1607)	1185	1039	146	0	186
M Pienaar (14997)	1117	933	184	0	80
K Dixon (1278)	1093	965	127	1	57
ML Marais (740)	1048	992	56	0	50
A Lee (1577)	1026	913	113	0	60
B Gopper (17026)	911	854	53	4	19

Table 3a. Regional ringing effort in the 2016 ringing year (all regions with over 100 records).

Region	# of initial records	# of retrap/resight records	# of recovery records	total records	% of total records
South Africa (total)	41593	12315	557	54466	76.3
- Western Cape	11246	1183	133	12563	17.6
- Gauteng	8417	1169	46	9632	13.5
- KwaZulu-Natal	8443	1052	31	9526	13.3
- North West	2478	6494	7	8979	12.6
- Limpopo	4150	403	18	4571	6.4
- Northern Cape	1867	1484	285	3636	5.1
- Eastern Cape	2719	384	25	3128	4.4
- Mpumalanga	1587	99	3	1689	2.4
- Free State	686	47	9	742	1.0
Namibia	7581	1474	15	9070	12.7

Region	# of initial records	# of retrap/resight records	# of recovery records	total records	% of total records
Seychelles	2311	189	3	2503	3.5
Oceanic Islands	555	1604	9	2168	3.0
Zambia	984	76	0	1060	1.5
Senegal	693	34	0	727	1.0
Sao Tome	383	28	0	411	0.6
Botswana	304	23	0	327	0.5

Table 3b. Regional ringing effort in the 2016 ringing year (all regions with over 100 records).

Region	# of Ringers	# of Species	Ave.# species per Ringer	Ave.# birds per ringer	% of total species per region
South Africa (total)	203	548	30	205	78.2
- Western Cape	78	256	13	144	36.5
- Gauteng	57	195	26	148	27.8
- KwaZulu-Natal	53	302	27	159	43.1
- North West	36	145	12	69	20.7
- Limpopo	50	250	21	83	35.7
- Northern Cape	29	91	7	64	13.0
- Eastern Cape	33	164	11	82	23.4
- Mpumalanga	47	200	14	34	28.5
- Free State	24	117	11	29	16.7
Namibia	21	221	20	361	31.5
Seychelles	8	20	7	289	2.9
Oceanic Islands	2	10	5	278	1.4
Zambia	2	128	70	492	18.3
Senegal	3	41	15	231	5.8
Sao Tome	1	20	20	383	2.9
Botswana	4	65	17	76	9.3

Table 4. The most frequently ringed species over the 2016 ringing year. Code 1 = ringed birds, 2 = retraps, 4 = resightings, X = dead birds.

	Species	Total	1	2/4	X
Terrestrial	Southern Masked-Weaver	5473	5057	405	11
	Southern Red Bishop	3549	3291	253	4
	Sociable Weaver	2533	1196	1055	282
	Red-headed Finch	2290	1922	365	3
	Cape White-eye	2258	2008	245	5
	Red-billed Quelea	1899	1891	8	0
	Laughing Dove	1576	1272	293	11
	Barn Swallow	1282	1278	2	2
	Dark-capped Bulbul	1187	1092	92	3
	Cape Weaver	1150	1042	106	2
	Common Waxbill	1114	809	303	2
	Lesser Noddy	883	865	17	1
	Cape Sparrow	833	788	43	2
	Cape Robin-chat	812	609	203	0
Village Weaver	809	771	35	3	
Marine	Cape Gannet	3093	3027	49	17
	Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross	753	159	587	7
	Tristan Albatross	632	103	526	3
	Wedge-tailed Shearwater	593	532	61	0
	Common Tern	583	525	45	13
	Sandwich Tern	580	64	512	4
	Swift Tern	575	517	56	2
	White-tailed Tropicbird	549	503	43	3
	Southern Giant-petrel	345	83	261	1
	Kelp Gull	324	274	15	35
Raptor	Cape Vulture	6210	74	6128	8
	White-backed Vulture	605	161	439	5
	Pygmy Falcon	157	63	94	0
	Southern Pale Chanting Goshawk	150	138	8	4
	Lappet-faced Vulture	107	88	18	1

Table 5. Conditions of retrap/resighting for the 2016 ringing year

Condition	Grand Total
No other information	8418
Sighting: of patagial tags	6453
Alive: incubating egg(s)	716
Sighting: of colour ringed bird	601
Alive: one of a pair, breeding activity suspected	159
Alive: Brooding Chick(s)	54
Sighting: ring number read in field	36
Alive: no other information	21
Alive: failed breeder	11
Sighting: from camera trap	10
Controlled: and released	10
Caught: and released	7
Sighting: ring number read in field	6
Caught: ring number read, released unharmed	5
Sick or injured	4
Sick or injured: Taken to rehabilitation centre	8
Controlled: colour rings added, released	4
Caught: and held captive	4
Alive: with chick(s)	3
Alive: nest building	3
Sick or injured: subsequent fate unknown	3
Alive: nesting at site	3
Alive: with dependant fledglings	2
Alive: not breeding	2
Caught: ring replaced and bird released	2
Controlled: ring replaced and bird released	2
Caught: ring removed and released	1
Caught: on boat deck	1
Exhausted: taken to rehabilitation centre	1
Trapped: entangled in fishing line, released and flew	1

Caught: second ring added, bird released	1
Sick or injured: taken to rehab but found to be fine	1
Alive: bird confiscated from illegal bird trade	1
Exhausted: bird released	1
Ring number reported, no further details	1
Alive: non-moulting juvenile	1
Alive: loafing in colony	1
Alive: foraging on beach	1
Exhausted: no other information	1

Table 6. Causes of bird mortality over the 2016 ringing year

Finding Condition	Total Number
Died: cause of death unknown	444
Carcass: found beached, cause of death unknown	34
Carcass: dead less than one week	26
Carcass: ring found with just part of carcass or skeleton	13
Killed or attacked by: domestic cat	11
Collision: with a window	10
Died: electrocuted	8
Poisoned: by red tide	7
Sick or injured: Euthanised	6
Died: on long line from fishing vessel, drowned	5
Ring found: no sign of carcass or skeleton	4
Collision: with a fence, line or wire	3
Died: in, or near nest	3
Sick or injured: subsequently died	3
Killed or attacked by: domestic dog	3
Shot: by pellet gun or rifle	3
Carcass: partly eaten by scavengers	3
Carcass: found in building	2
Killed or attacked by: domestic animal	2
Victim of weather: due to hail	2
Trapped	2

Finding Condition	Total Number
Died: drowned	2
Died: in fishing net	2
Collision: with motor vehicle (or found next to road)	2
Shot: to protect crops	2
Trapped: accidentally entangled with fishing	2
Died: of avian cholera or other disease	1
Victim of weather: due to rain	1
Killed or attacked by: wild mammal	1
Collision: with unknown object	1
Collision: with train (or found next to railway)	1
Collision: with a building	1
Shot: no reason given	1
Victim of weather: due to wind (or storm)	1
Ring number reported, no further details	1

Table 7. Foreign recoveries, retraps and resightings from South Africa during the 2016 ringing year

Ring#	Details	
1432153	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	Sex: Unknown
	Ringing record Nestling/Pulli	Arnhem Scheme
	2008-06-11 5315N0514E	Netherlands
	Recovery Adult plumage	Member of the public
	2016-10-30 3352S1829E	Western Cape
4295915	Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Sex: Unknown
	Ringing record Nestling/Pulli	Stockholm Scheme
	2013-07-30 5523N1249E	Sweden
	Recovery Adult plumage	Mr M. Ford
	2016-02-05 3425S1918E	Western Cape
4566617	Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Sex: Unknown
	Ringing record Nestling/Pulli	Stockholm Scheme
	2008-08-07 5612N1624E	Sweden
	Recovery Adult plumage	Mr M. Ford
	2016-02-05 3425S1918E	WC
7157534	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	Sex: Unknown

	Ringing record Nestling/Pulli	Copenhagen Scheme
	2016-06-12 5519N1058E	Denmark
	Recovery 1/2 to 1 year	Member of the public
	2016-12-25 3401S2323E	Western Cape
8866208	Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Sex: Unknown
	Ringing record 2 to 3 year	Copenhagen Scheme
	2015-08-06 5642N0814E	Denmark
	Recovery Adult plumage	Mr M. Ford
	2016-02-05 3425S1918E	Western Cape
8P560	White Stork (<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>)	Sex: Unknown
	Ringing record Nestling/Pulli	Gdansk Scheme
	2016-06-13 5212N2214E	Poland
	Recovery 1/2 to 1 year	Mr D.H. De Swardt
	2016-12-15 2924S2610E	Free State
99Z2217	Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Sex: Unknown
	Ringing record unknown	Belgium Scheme
	unknown	unknown
	Recovery Adult plumage	Mr M. Ford
	2016-02-05 3425S1918E	Western Cape
AT204157	Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Sex: Unknown
	Ringing record Juvenile	Helsinki Scheme
	2006-07-03 6207N2403E	Finland
	Recovery Adult plumage	Member of the public
	2016-02-27 3310S1804E	Western Cape
AT225520	Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Sex: Unknown
	Ringing record Nestling/Pulli	Helsinki Scheme
	2013-06-30 6001N2136E	Finland
	Recovery Juvenile	SANCCOB
	2016-01-02 3321S1809E	Western Cape
AT231723	Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Sex: Unknown
	Ringing record Juvenile	Helsinki Scheme
	2014-07-05 6007N2445E	Finland
	Recovery Adult plumage	Mr M. Ford
	2016-02-05 3425S1918E	Western Cape

CA0940	White Stork (<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>)	Sex: Unknown	Resighting	1/2 to 1 year	Member of the public
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli	2016-12-02	3249S1811E	Western Cape
	2015-06-29	5236N2554E			
	Recovery	0 to 1/2 year			Member of the public
	2016-01-03	3435S1944E			Western Cape
D453452	Barn Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Immature			BTO
	2013-08-26	5159N0115E			United Kingdom
	Recovery	Adult plumage			Member of public
	2016-03-10	2737S2713E			Free State
DE01951	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli			BTO
	2015-06-17	5212N0653W			Ireland
	Resighting	1 to 2 year			Member of the public
	2016-08-09	3401S2542E			Eastern Cape
DE52205	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Adult plumage			BTO
	2013-07-13	5719N0159W			United Kingdom
	Resighting	Adult plumage			Member of the public
	2016-01-23	3406S1836E			Western Cape
DT07012	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli			BTO
	2016-06-02	5718N0159W			United Kingdom
	Recovery	1/2 to 1 year			Member of the public
	2016-11-13	3402S2322E			Western Cape
HN941	White Stork (<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli			Hiddensee Scheme
	2015-05-26	5321N1044E			Germany
	Recovery	1 to 2 year			Member of the public
	2016-08-03	2919S2949E			KwaZulu-Natal
M69424	Osprey (<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli			Helsinki Scheme
	2016-07-16	6258N2753E			Finland
NLA1432153	Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli			Arnhem Scheme
	2008-06-11	5325N0514E			Netherlands
	Recovery	Adult plumage			Member of the public
	2016-10-30	3352S1829E			Western Cape
PH07219	White Stork (<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli			Budapest Scheme
	2015-07-09	4807N1930E			Hungary
	Retrap	1/2 to 1 year			Member of the public
	2016-01-18	2533S2926E			Limpopo
PH08973	White Stork (<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli			Budapest Scheme
	2015-06-15	4641N1912E			Hungary
	Retrap	1/2 to 1 year			B Coverdale
	2016-01-24	2927S3007E			KwaZulu-Natal
ST35074	Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Immature			BTO
	2013-08-19	5336N0007E			United Kingdom
	Recovery	Adult plumage			Mr M. Ford
	2016-02-05	3425S1918E			Western Cape
YE41RE41	Osprey (<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Juvenile			St.Petersburg Scheme
	2015-07-11	6057N3554E			Russia
	Resighting	Adult plumage			ADU non ringer
	2016-02-13	3313S1809E			Western Cape
Z483999	Barn Swallow (<i>Hirundo rustica</i>)	Sex: Unknown			
	Ringling record	Nestling/Pulli			BTO
	2016-08-15	5458N0508W			United Kingdom
	Retrap	0 to 1/2 year			Mr H Bantjes
	2016-12-03	2555S2818E			Gauteng

*BTO – British Trust for Ornithology