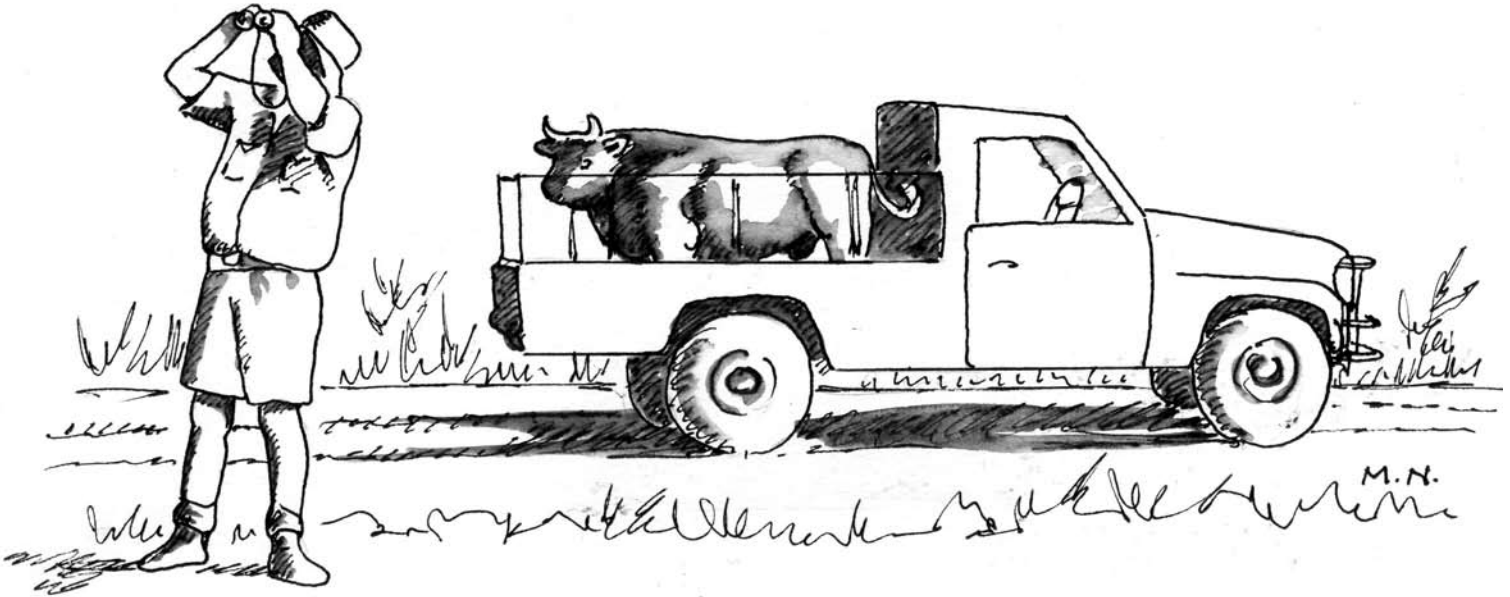


How YOU can contribute to the raptor monitoring and conservation activities of the BoPWG



Monitoring

Members of the public are encouraged to conduct baseline monitoring activities of raptors on their properties and surrounding areas. This can include the following:

- Recording all sightings of raptors by taking note of date, time, place, GPS coordinates (if possible), species (please ensure that the identification is correct), age and sex (if possible), habitat and activity at the time of observation.
- Recording all interesting activities of raptors, but also taking note of the same aspects as above. This could include arrival/departure dates during migration, hunting activity, diet, inter-species interactions, etc.
- Road surveys – doing regular (monthly) roadside counts of raptors during trips in the area. Details recorded here are the same as mentioned in the first point.

Nest monitoring

In order to effectively conserve a raptor species, detailed knowledge is required about its breeding biology. Breeding success information (i.e. the proportion of birds that successfully bred during a breeding cycle) provides extremely useful information about the health of the population and possible threats (such as disease). The following contributions can greatly assist in our knowledge of raptor breeding biology:

- Recording nest sites on your property and surrounding areas. Information on the site should include locality, date/s, time first recorded, type of nest, habitat, type of tree, estimated height above ground, etc.
- If observers wish, they can regularly monitor the nest

throughout the breeding cycle by using the guidelines of the Avian Demography Unit's Nest Record Card Scheme (NERCS) and submitting details to them after the breeding cycle has been completed. Details of NERCS can be obtained by contacting the ADU or by visiting their website at:

<http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu>

- Observers should however please take note that most raptors are quite sensitive during breeding and could quite easily abandon a nesting site if they are disturbed too often. Due caution should thus be exercised during monitoring.

Re-sighting of ringed raptors

People should always consider that a raptor they are looking at might be ringed and, in some cases, have been fitted with either colour rings or patagial tags to the wing which enables researchers to identify these birds individually. In southern Africa, there currently are colour rings or tags fitted to individuals of all vulture species, Southern Pale Chanting Goshawk and Lesser Spotted Eagles. If you do come across a ringed/tagged raptor, please record the following:

Live Birds

- Determine species
- Determine sex/age (if possible)
- Write down full ring number and other details on the ring
- Write down details of locality and coordinates, habitat, how it was found, etc.
- Release the bird as soon as possible at or near where it was found
- Send details to SAFRING, providing your full contact details

Dead birds

- Determine species
- Determine sex/age (if possible)
- Write down full ring number and other details on the ring
- Write down details of locality, habitat, how it was found, etc.
- Try and establish how the bird died
- Remove the ring from the dead bird's leg
- Press the ring flat and place it in an envelope with detailed account of the above information
- Send details to SAFRING, providing your full contact details
- Please remember that dead raptors (the whole bird, part of the bird, or skeletal material) should be deposited in a museum collection (please contact your nearest museum and/or nature conservation office for more information)

What to do when finding a colour-ringed bird

- Determine species
- Determine sex/age (if possible)
- Determine colour combination of rings on legs
- Ensure that you establish the right combinations for left and right leg (left & right as if you are the bird)
- Write down colour code from top to bottom, e.g. left leg: Blue/Red right leg: Metal/Black
- Write down details of locality, habitat, how it was found, activity if alive, etc.
- If the bird is dead, remove the plastic and metal rings
- Follow the same procedure as above and send details to SAFRING
- Please also forward all details of colour-marked birds (alive or dead) to BoPWG as well.

SAFRING address:

Dieter Oschadleus

SAFRING

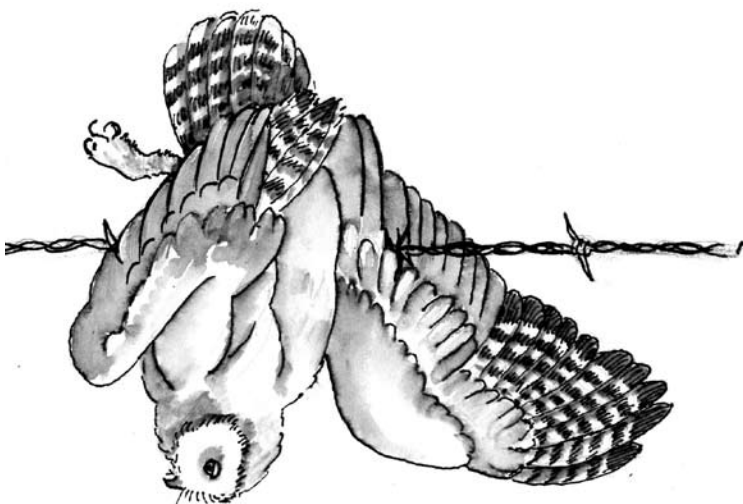
University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, 7701

E-mail: safring@adu.uct.ac.za

Tel. (021) 650-2421

Road and fence mortalities of raptors and owls

Observers are kindly requested to record details of all raptors, owls in particular, killed along the roads or on



wire fences. Details of these mortalities can be submitted via BoPWG's Road Mortalities Database page on our website at www.ewt.org.za. Recording such mortalities is important as it provides us with an idea of the extent of raptor deaths on our roads and also enables us to identify particular problem areas that require the implementation of mitigation measures.

Powerlines: collisions and electrocutions

The extensive network of powerlines across southern Africa is still a major contributor to raptor mortalities due to electrocution and collisions of birds with such structures. Due to the extensive nature of this network in rural areas, these lines are seldom patrolled and we may be unaware of such deaths occurring in some areas. Incidents like these very often also lead to an interruption in the power supply to an area. Landowners and managers are therefore encouraged to patrol such lines on a regular basis and report any mortalities to BoPWG. The BoPWG will report problem areas and incidents to the EWT-Eskom Partnership for investigation and the implementation of mitigation measures where necessary.

Poisoning

The immense impact that poisoning has on our wildlife populations has been well-documented and broadcast. Despite this, poison is still widely used throughout the region, especially the control of agricultural pests and during problem animal management programmes. Poisons are often used incorrectly or irresponsibly and this leads to the deaths of many birds, and raptors in particular. Should you become aware of a poisoning incident in your area, please report this immediately to the Poison Working Group of the Endangered Wildlife Trust via the Nashua EWT-PWG General Advice Line at 082 802 6223.

Sightings and Nesting Database

The Birds of Prey Working Group (BoPWG) is currently working on a Sightings and Nesting Database that will be accessible for the input of data by the general public. This facility should be in place by the end of 2006 and will be accessed via the BoPWG webpage on the EWT website (www.ewt.org.za)

If you require any further info, please contact the BoPWG Manager:

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