



Figure 1. Frequency distribution of elapsed time (days) from banding to latest recapture for colour banded and control groups of New Holland Honeyeaters.

6.5 years of the study. Of all recaptures during the study, 4 of 67 CB birds were recaptured with elapsed times of 2, 13, 363 and 518 days; while seven of 68 NCB birds were recaptured after 2, 2, 11, 13, 13, 21 and 43 days.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this experiment show that banding New Holland Honeyeaters with orange and blue colour bands in addition to a metal band does not affect their survival compared with individuals wearing a metal band alone.

## BOOK REVIEW

**Penguins Birds of Distinction.**

Jonathan Chester, 1996.

Penguin Books Australia Ltd., Ringwood, Victoria.

112 pp. RRP \$24.95

In the world of birds, there are penguin people and others. Jonathan Chester is clearly a penguin person. He watched penguins as a boy but, seeing them in Antarctica in 1985, he was bewitched just as were all penguinologists before him. This fascination has flowed through to his magnificent photography. Most of the photographs were taken by him. The cover is stunning, depicting two King Penguins, one leaning aggressively towards the other which appears to be reacting as if affronted. Facing Part 1 is an astonishing view of an Antarctic peak in red, gold, black and misty mauve. There are wonderful panoramic shots of the penguin's world and portraits enough to sway the most indifferent reader.

Chester is concerned and rightly so for the future of penguins and warns of the dangers posed by unregulated tourism, overfishing and degradation of the environment. It is to be hoped that readers will react positively to the warnings.

While this finding may not apply to other species (such as small sedentary passerines or migrants) it is probably safe to conclude that similar birds, such as Singing Honeyeaters, would be equally unaffected. At Helena Valley the number of avian and mammalian predators is at least equal to and probably greater than on the arid sites of Brooker *et al.* (1979) and Brooker (1989), so colour-banding can now be discounted as a likely explanation for the population turnover of Singing Honeyeaters in those studies. Perhaps the patchy distribution of their food resource in time and space has selected against a sedentary existence for such species.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Belinda Brooker assisted with netting the birds and Lesley Brooker with data analysis. Peter Cale, Robert Lambeck, Richard Major and an anonymous referee commented on the manuscript.

## REFERENCES

- Brooker, M. G., Ridpath, M. G., Estbergs, A. J., Bywater, J., Hart, D. S. and Jones, M. S. (1979). Bird observations on the north-western Nullarbor Plain and neighbouring regions, 1967-1978. *Emu* 79: 176-187.
- Brooker, M. G. (1989). Land birds at Monkey Mia, Peron Peninsula, Western Australia 1985-1987. *West. Aust. Nat.* 18: 29-34.
- Saunders, D. A. (1988). Patagial tags: do benefits outweigh risks to the animal? *Aust. Wild. Res.* 15: 565-69.

The easy-to-read text covers in a general fashion the world of penguins but presents nothing unavailable in other recent books covering all the penguins. I have a few quibbles. Penguins do not have crops; they regurgitate food to their chicks straight from their stomachs. The word 'rookery' is usually displaced by 'colony' these days; both terms are used by Chester. I was surprised to learn that 'Giant Petrels are the main predator of Emperor Penguin colonies, accounting for over 30% of chick losses.' Giant Petrels are absent from mainland Antarctica when Emperors are breeding but it may be that they prey on fledging young. Not all penguins allopreen — Gentoos do not. On page 23, were the penguins truly decimated? I know that my objection will be regarded as pedantry because the word has slipped into general use to mean a large number but how much better to adhere to its strict meaning of removing one in every ten. But my quibbles are minor and not intended to detract from the worth of this book.

This beautiful book with its high quality layout and production is a worthy adjunct to the shelves of all those who treasure books about these 'Birds of Distinction'.

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