

With a hacksaw, the mounting block is removed from a hypodermic needle of sufficient internal diameter to hold easily two thicknesses of the fishing line (Fig. 2b). The shaft of the needle approximately 1 cm from the blunt end is then squeezed closed (with a pair of pliers) until the two ends of the line can just be inserted but the internal diameter is such that the line is firmly wedged in the needle (Fig. 2c). The loaded needle can then be passed through the patagium with a minimum of effort and virtually no damage to the tissues. The resultant hole closes around the fishing line which is withdrawn from the needle and threaded through the tag. Maddock (1989) gives a description of the tag and the use of appropriate washers and knots.

More than 200 Sacred Ibis and various species of egret nestlings have been tagged with this technique over the last 18 months. Many of the Ibis have been handled daily up to fledging, and a small number were kept for or recaptured a month after fledging. No instance of damage or adverse reaction has been observed, nor has loss of tags been observed.

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## REVIEW

**Private Lives: Ages, Mates, Movements of Some Australian Birds.** P. Reilly, 1988. Kangaroo Press. 80 pp. rrp \$A12.95.

At last there is a single reference that those of us who present lectures on the subject of bird banding can consult for a basic, yet interesting, outline of the topic. Pauline Reilly has compiled a 'beaut' little book which includes virtually all of the information a lecturer would require for an interesting, informative and titillating talk on the role of banding in the unravelling of many of the mysteries in the private lives of birds.

A brief explanation of the reasons for banding birds and an outline of the history and role of the Australian Bird Banding Scheme are followed by accounts of 43 Australian species,

from different families, to demonstrate some of the more interesting results derived from banding. The information given for each species includes, as appropriate, basic comments on behaviour, social structure, breeding, feeding, movement and longevity. All 43 species are illustrated by colour photographs, and numerous black and white photographs are used to show various aspects of banding and provide additional illustrations of birds. Eighty-one references are cited.

While it will appeal to bird banders, for the purpose mentioned above, 'Private Lives' will achieve its objective of arousing curiosity in anyone with an interest in birds, and is worthy of a place on the bookshelf.

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