

Northern Scrub-robin *Drymodes superciliaris*

041-22366. Adult (2+) male banded by S. G. Lane at Iron Range National Park, Qld on 26 Nov. 88. Recaptured at banding place by W. Klau on 20 Nov. 94, over 5 years 11 months after banding.

White-faced Robin *Tregellasia leucops*

015-26752. Adult (2+) banded by S. G. Lane at Iron Range National Park on 23 Nov. 88. Recaptured at banding place by W. Klau on 19 Nov. 94, over 5 years 11 months after banding.

White-browed Babbler*Pomatostomus superciliosus*

050-82073. Adult banded by R. J. Brown at Manjimup, WA on 29 Oct. 80. Recovered dead (taken by cat) near banding site on 29 Mar. 95, 14 years 5 months after banding. (This is the oldest recorded for this species.)

Speckled Warbler *Sericornis sagittatus*

014-94041. Adult (1+) banded by D. Fields at Munghorn Gap Nature Reserve, near Mudgee, NSW on 4 Oct. 87. Recaptured at banding place six times, the last occasion by R. Jacobs on 1 Apr. 94, over 6 years 5 months after banding.

Striated Thornbill *Acanthiza lineata*

014-86137. Adult (1+) banded by G. D. Bell at Munghorn Gap Nature Reserve, near Mudgee, NSW on 25 Jan. 86. Recaptured at banding place nine times, the last occasion by R. Jacobs on 27 Jan. 95, over 9 years after banding.

Silvereye *Zosterops lateralis*

015-87937. Adult (1+) banded by K. Wood at Mangerton, NSW on 30 Mar. 89. Recaptured at banding place five times, the last occasion on 4 June 95, over 6 years 2 months after banding.

Black Butcherbird *Cracticus quoyi*

071-52098. Adult (2+) banded by S. G. Lane at Iron Range National Park, Qld on 27 Nov. 88. Recaptured at banding place by C. Rich on 23 Nov. 94, over 5 years 11 months after banding.

EDITORIAL

Two papers in this issue demonstrated the importance of colour-banding in bird study. Of 254 Pied Currawongs banded by John Farrell, many were resighted within the Blue Mountains, and 12 were subsequently seen at great distances from the banding place. This phenomenal recovery rate has made a substantial contribution to our understanding of the dispersal of Pied Currawongs. Such a high reporting rate was only possible because the birds could be identified from their colour bands.

It is clear from Mike Clarke's fascinating review of co-operative breeding, that most of the work on this subject has been dependent upon identification of individual birds. Philopatry, helping rates, and even just the number of birds attending a nest can only be determined if individuals are identified. Modern biochemical methods are required to determine paternity, but the role of colour bands is still firmly entrenched in this research field.

The need to visually identify individuals is not restricted to the study of co-operative breeding. Our understanding of the behaviour and breeding biology of most Australian birds could be vastly improved by the collection of information on subjects such as the number of broods produced by a female in a season, the number of years a female uses the same nest site, and whether birds partner the same mate year after year. This

information is only obtained by combining a banding study with systematic observations.

Unfortunately, large amounts of time are required to collect comprehensive data, more time than is usually available for the average bird-bander. However, records of the behaviour of even one pair would provide a substantial contribution for many Australian species. Some of these records might be available from banders now, perhaps the result of 'backyard banding'. With observations from several banders, a more complete picture will slowly build up.

I would like to see these records presented in *Corella*. Simple records might be included in Recovery Roundup, or if there were enough contributions, a new section could be added to the journal. Some excellent short notes resulting from observations of colour-banded birds have been published in *Corella* in the past, and readers are encouraged to refer to the papers of Joan Sandbrink and Doug Robinson in 18(3), and Kevin Wood in 19(2).

Over the last 10 years, the Australian Bird Study Association has been selling between 20 000 and 50 000 colour bands per year! It would be nice to see more of these bands revisited in the journal.

Richard Major (Hon. Editor)