

Praha Bird Ringing Centre, National Museum Praha, Czech Republic

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There were two major changes in the Praha Bird Ringing Centre in 2002. Dr. Jirí Formánek retired after many years spent at the position of the Head of the Scheme. Moreover, a new Slovak Ringing Centre was established in that year, which means the end of the use of PRAHA rings in Slovakia. Instead, Slovak ringers (or Czech ringers working in Slovakia now use rings bearing the inscription (N. MUSEUM) BRATISLAVA SLOVAKIA. The Praha Bird Ringing Centre remains a part of the National Museum, however its activities are financed partly by sponsors, ringers and grants.

Current projects

EURING Swallow project

The number of co-workers increased largely in 2002 and 2003. The Swallow was claimed a target species of our centre for 2003. Main attention is paid to collecting of nest cards. In cooperation with the Czech Society for Ornithology and Czech National Radio, mapping of Swallow roosting sites has been started. In 2004, we would like to concentrate on detailed study of the roosting sites.

White Stork – analysis of national data

Recently, all ringing and recovery data of the White Stork from the Czech Republic and Slovakia have been computerized and analysed.

CES

We are currently planning to start CES at several sites in the country.

A manual for ringers in the Czech language was prepared and a pilot project was started in this season at one ringing point in southern Bohemia.

There is good chance for cooperation with governmental Nature conservation bodies in the monitoring of NATURA 2000 sites. Moreover, CES can become a part of Integrated Monitoring of Common Bird species in the Czech Republic.

Partners

Good cooperation with Czech Society for Ornithology (almost all ringers are CSO members).

Public promotion - new website: www.nm.cz/krouzkovaci, cooperation with Czech National Radio, presentation on its website.

Ringling and law

The last year the Centre had to face problems with rigid implementation of the Act No. 246 on Animal Welfare. According to this Act, ringing of wild living birds is an experiment.

There was a risk that amateur ringers (i.e. more than 90 percent of co-workers) would not be allowed to ring birds. (par. 17: Only people graduated in biological science can handle with wild living animals).

After intensive negotiation with the Central Committee on Animal Welfare, a general licence for bird ringing in CR was obtained.

For each region of the country a co-ordinator (graduated ringer) is established, who formally manages ringing of birds (experiments on them).

Ringers

At present, the PRAHA Ringing Centre has 445 licensed ringers. People are currently interested very much in ringing (esp. young people, students). Despite the new, more difficult exams, 35 new ringers became licence-holders .

Rings

Every ringer has to contribute to cover ring costs. In addition, he/she pays an annual subscription. Ringers who participate in project are provided with rings for free.

Software for ringers

A new software for ringers has been developed, funded by a sponsor.

Two versions of the software are available for ringers - Birdring 3.1 (evidence of ringed birds only) and BIRDS 4.2. (including faunistic records, nest cards, tools for simple analysis of data etc.). A CD-ROM is available to all ringers – it includes the BIRDS 4.2 as well as a ringers manual, complete guide for determination of passerines, square grid maps etc.).

At present 60 percent of the ringing data are delivered in electronic form by the ringers (40 percent by e-mail). Computerization of the rest of the data is financed by sponsor.

Computerized data are required from all newly recruited ringers.

Computerising

A new program for central evidence (STANICE) has been developed, funded partly by National Museum and partly by sponsor.

All ringing data and recoveries are stored in central database (all ringing data since 1999, All recoveries from abroad since 1992).

So far, almost 20 000 recoveries and 540 000 ringed birds have been computerized.

Moreover volunteers among ringers computerize old data. Our final goal is to compile the Czech and Slovak Migration Atlas.

Ringing and recoveries

<i>Year</i>	<i>Ringed</i>	<i>Found</i>	<i>Grand totals</i>
2001	131 713*	1702	4 072 743
CZ/SK	112045/19668		
2002	110 038	2192	4 182 781
CZ/SK	105548/4490**		

*the highest annual number of ringed birds

**some ringers in Slovakia still used PRAHA rings in 2002

Staff

Jaroslav Cepák, Head of the scheme, full-time

Jaroslav Škopek, curator, full-time

Zdena Žáková, assistant, full-time

Tomáš Albrecht, civil service (until end of 2003)