



Ornithological Station

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Report of the Gdańsk Ringing Scheme (Poland)

Organization

The Gdańsk Bird Ringing Centre is a department of the Museum of Zoology of The Polish Academy of Sciences. The Ringing Centre is financed by the state budget.

Staff

In 2013, the staff includes three persons: head of the scheme (Tomasz Mokwa) and two assistants (Anna Zawadzka, Magdalena Nowakowska) full-time positions.

Ringers

At present, the Gdansk Ringing Centre has 393 ringers.

Annual fee

There is no fee for the ringers.

Catching permits

All ringers are licensed every year by the Ringing Centre on the base of the permission given by the General Department of Environmental Protection (protected birds) and Ministry of the Environment (hunting birds). Application procedure is extremely bureaucratic and time-consuming.

Ringing courses

The candidates for ringers have to pass theoretical and practical training session and exams. Theoretical training session in the Ringing Centre takes 4 days. Practical training session at a field station and final exam take 3-5 days. During the exam student should indicate 40-60 birds belonging to different species. Criteria evaluated are: safety of birds, the accuracy of the species, age and sex of the bird. During the exam students have access to books and other literature.

There are three grades of licenses: (1) General license – a permit for all bird species; (2) license to ring specific groups of birds (e.g. waders, birds of prey, owls etc.); (3) license to ring one or a few species.

Rings

Gdańsk metal rings are made by the Polish producer "Aranea". 22 different sizes made of two kinds of material (steel and aluminium alloys) are used. For White Storks plastic Elsa rings produced in Germany are also used. Since year 2001 ringers have to pay for the rings.

Ringling totals

<i>Year</i>	<i>ringed</i>	<i>recovered</i>
2011	150 543	28 306
2012	160 229	37 978

Colour–ringing and other marks

Many species of birds get also additional plastic rings manufactured in Poland by two producers: Tomrings and Interrex. Colour–ringing is coordinated by the ringling scheme. Since 2012 the coordination includes the purchase and distribution of colour rings. There are regular contacts with international coordinators. The colour–ring website of Dirk Reas is used regularly. Since 2013, plastic rings for Kestrels have Polish Ringling Centre code 'PLG' engraved in front of the unique number, Fig. 1. We plan to apply this solution to colour rings used on other species of birds.



Fig. 1. Plastic rings for Kestrels with engraved Polish Ringling code 'PLG'.

Ringling projects

- International Monitoring of Raptors & Owls (White-tailed Eagle, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Spotted Eagle),
- Monitoring of Waders during autumn migration (2 sites),
- SE European Network (2 sites),
- Monitoring of the White Stork, Great Egret,
- Monitoring of the breeding population of the Whooper Swan, Mediterranean Gull,
- Other species projects (Black Stork, Mute Swan, Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Black-headed Gull, Herring Gull, Yellow-legged Gull and others).

Database

All ringing data has been put into computer since 2001. Ringing details from years 1931–2000 were put into computer partially (only number of ring, species, sex, age and date). Database contains a total of 3 551 938 records.

All recoveries (since 2001 including also retraps) have been stored in a computer. Data base and the total number of recoveries contains a total of 388 477 records.

Software

In September 2012 our new software, called Polring, started to work. The most time-saving part of it is the on-line recovery form. The form can be used for reporting either polish birds recovered abroad or birds with foreign marks recovered in Poland. The on-line form can be used for reporting metal rings as well as all kinds of other marks (electronic transmitters included). Once a day, at a time set by the staff of the RC, Polring sends e-mails to the ringers and finders with information about changes on their accounts or with recoveries in a form of pdf files. In case of birds recovered abroad the system sends automatically recoveries to the Ringing Centers responsible for the area. The ringers and finders have access to their ringing and recovery data, to the history of life of birds reported by them as well as to all photographs attached to the recoveries. Our ringers can report single ringing data through on-line recovery form as well. However generally they use excel files for reporting both, ringing and recovery data. The excel files are checked by Polring. The ringers can import their files only when they are check and corrected.

The other parts of the software are connected with the maintenance of RS, such as ordering, storing and distribution of rings, creating documents, checking and verifying the data.

Polring is being developed all the time, so all remarks concerning it are welcomed.

Gdańsk, 22.09.2013