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Status Report 2009 of the Swiss Bird Ringing Centre

The screenshot shows the RingExt software interface. The main window is titled 'RingExt' and has a menu bar with 'File', 'Reports', 'Export', and 'Help'. Below the menu bar are tabs for 'Bague', 'Configurations', 'Lieux', and 'Calibres'. The 'Bague' tab is active, displaying a form for entering bird ringing data. The form includes fields for 'No projet', 'Centrale', 'Marq. spéc.', 'Moyen attr.', 'No de bague', 'Code couleurs', 'No espèce', 'No origine', 'Info bague', 'Manip.', 'Méth. capture', 'Date', 'Heure', 'Sexe', 'Age', 'Statut capt.', 'Nb. pull au nid', 'Age pull.', 'Préc. âge pull.', 'Mue RP', 'Mue corps', 'Mue GC', 'RP3', 'Aile', 'Poids', 'Score adip.', 'Score muscul.', 'Pneus', 'Filet', 'Poche', 'Lieu', 'No nid/nich.', 'No bagueur', and 'Données supplémentaires' (Type, Texte statut, Condition). There are also fields for 'Circumstances', 'Remarques', 'No bague père', 'No bague mère', and 'No nouv. bague'. At the bottom, there are fields for 'Nb. recaptures' and 'Transféré'. On the left side, there is a 'Navigation' panel with buttons for 'Nouvelle bague', 'Modifier bague', 'Sauver bague', 'Annuler', 'Effacer bague', and 'Requête'. Below these buttons is a tree view showing a hierarchy of projects and stations, including 'F 28390', 'F 58751', and 'F 58752'. At the bottom left, there is a 'Configurations' panel with a list of configurations, including 'Projekt 161 Fänglinge', 'Projekt 161 Nestlinge', 'Projekt 177 Fänglinge', 'Projekt 177 Nestlinge', 'Projekt 218 Nestlinge', 'Projekt 222 Station', 'Standard pop. captures', 'Standard pop. jeunes a...', and 'Standard stations'. At the bottom right, there is a 'Codes' panel and a status bar showing 'O:\ringexttest\pdb READONLY-Modus'.

Screen of the newly introduced software package RingExt for entering and transferring ringing data.

Swiss Ringing Scheme
Schweizerische Vogelwarte
CH-6204 Sempach
Switzerland

Phone ++41 41 462 97 00
Fax ++41 41 462 97 10
E-Mail: ring@vogelwarte.ch

1. Organization and recent developments

Catching and ringing of wild birds in Switzerland is under the “Federal Law on Hunting and on the Protection of Mammals and Birds Living in the Wild”. The Swiss Ringing Scheme is put in charge for the coordination of bird ringing by the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape SAEFL that also finances the running of the scheme. The contract for this invaluable support has been extended until 30 June 2012.

The Swiss Ringing Scheme is based at the Schweizerische Vogelwarte Sempach (Swiss Ornithological Institute; www.vogelwarte.ch). The Institute is a private foundation whose mandate is to contribute to the study and the protection of birds through excellence in avian monitoring, research, conservation, services, teaching and training. The Ringing Scheme reports to the Scientific Director, Dr Lukas Jenni.

The Bird Ringing Centre at Schweizerische Vogelwarte Sempach issues bird rings with inscription „Sempach Helvetia“ for use in Switzerland only.

The Ringing Scheme has developed and introduced a new software package for registration and online transfer of data from freshly ringed and controlled birds. The new system has been installed by the end of March 2008 and since then periodically improved, in collaboration with the ringers' community.

Furthermore, the Swiss data bank of ring recoveries has been adapted in 2008 to the EU-RING code 2000 standards.

2. Cooperation within Switzerland

A new reference book on the Birds of Switzerland was edited in a German and a French edition by November 2007 (Maumary et al. 2007). It describes all 419 species recorded in Switzerland and adjacent parts of neighbouring countries until the end of 2006 and covers all topics including distribution, population trends, migrations, habitat, behaviour, food, reproduction, threats, and conservation. For the first time, maps show the 80'000 ringing recoveries stored in our data bank.

In the same year, a pocket edition of Jenni & Winkler (1994): Moults and ageing of European Passerines was edited in German by the authors: Winkler, R., Jenni, L. (2007): Alters- und Geschlechtsbestimmung europäischer Singvögel. Schweizerische Vogelwarte Sempach.

3. Staff

The main people involved in the work at the bird ringing scheme are:

- Dr. Matthias Kestenholz (Scientist, 40 % for the ringing centre, until 31 December 2007): head of scheme, licenses, scientific, political and public issues, trapping fieldstation.
- Johann von Hirschheydt (50% for the ringing centre, from 01 January 2008): head of scheme, licenses, scientific, political and public issues, trapping fieldstation. Email address: hannes.hirschheydt@vogelwarte.ch.

- Elisabeth Wiprächtiger (Technician, 70 % for the ringing centre, until 31 January 2009): data bank manager, rings, equipment.
- Jacques Laesser (60 % for the ringing centre, from 1 February 2009): data bank manager, rings, equipment. Email address: jacques.laesser@vogelwarte.ch.
- Guido Häfliger (Engineer, 10 % for the ringing centre): data bank maintenance and support, software development. Email address: guido.haefliger@vogelwarte.ch.

An advisory board of six highly experienced ringers is assisting the Sempach scheme on a voluntary basis.

Matthias Kestenholz keeps serving as Vice-Chairman of EURING (elected in 2005).

4. Bird ringers

243 ringers (87 with a licence of category A for all species, 156 with a licence of category B (only one or a few species) or C (injured or orphaned birds) are dealing with a total of 188 projects.

1 candidate successfully passed the ringer's examination in 2007, and 3 in 2008.

5. Ringing and recovery numbers

In 2007, 75'796 birds of 158 species were ringed in Switzerland. The most common species were Chaffinch with 7'754 captures and Siskin with 7'458. Among nestlings, Great Tit was number one with 3'755 chicks ringed. In total, 1'223 ringing recoveries entered the data base.

In 2008, 88'140 birds from 173 species were ringed in Switzerland. The most common species were Chaffinch with 11'207 captures and Robin with 7'783. Among nestlings, Great Tit was number one with 2'861 chicks ringed. Only 802 ringing recoveries entered the data base, because their treatment had to be put on the back burner due to the priority efforts of 2008, the introduction of the new software package and the restructuration of the ring recovery data bank.

The full reports (Wiprächtiger et al. 2008, Laesser et al. 2009) are available at the Swiss Bird Ringing Scheme.

All Swiss ringing recovery data were transferred to the EURING data bank by September 1st 2008.

6. Projects

The following projects are directed by the Swiss Bird Ringing Scheme:

The Swiss Ringing Scheme is running the Alpine ringing station “Col de Bretolet” at 1923 m a.s.l. on the Swiss-French border.

The nation-wide Integrated Population Monitoring Programme for the Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* and the Barn Owl *Tyto alba* continued. It aims at studying (1) how population changes are reflected by population parameters and (2) how they disperse.

7. Publications

7.1. Publications by the ringing scheme

Laesser, J., Häfliger, G., von Hirschheydt, J. (2009): Numbers of birds ringed and recovered by the Sempach Ringing Centre in 2008. Typoskript, Schweizerische Vogelwarte Sempach. 8 S.

Maumary, L., Vallotton, L., Knaus, P. (2007): Die Vögel der Schweiz. Schweiz. Vogelwarte, Sempach, und Nos Oiseaux, Montmollin.

Schaub, M. (2009): Evaluation of bias, precision and accuracy of mortality cause proportion estimators from ring recovery data. In: D.L. Thomson et al. (eds.): Modelling Demographic Processes in Marked Populations, Environmental and Ecological Statistics 3. Springer Science and Business Media, pp. 1081–1097.

Winkler, R., Jenni, L. (2007): Alters- und Geschlechtsbestimmung europäischer Singvögel. Schweizerische Vogelwarte Sempach.

Wiprächtiger, E., Häfliger, G., Kestenholz, M. (2008): Numbers of birds ringed and recovered by the Sempach Ringing Centre in 2007. Typoskript, Schweizerische Vogelwarte Sempach. 8 S.

7.2. Publications reporting studies under licence of the ringing scheme

Alcaide, M., Serrano, D., Negro, J.J., Tella, J.L., Laaksonen, T., Müller, C., Gal, A., Korpimäki, E. (2009): Population fragmentation leads to isolation by distance but not genetic impoverishment in the philopatric Lesser Kestrel: a comparison with the widespread and sympatric European Kestrel. *Heredity*, 102, 190–198.

Beaud, M. (2009): Evolution de deux colonies de Martinets noirs (*Apus apus*) dans le Canton de Fribourg, un suivi de 18 ans (1989-2006). Actes du 43e colloque d'ornithologie interrégional de Fribourg du 10 et 11 mars 2007.

Bize, P., Klopfenstein, A., Jeanneret, C., Roulin, A. (2007): Intra-individual variation in body temperature and pectoral muscle size in nestling Alpine swifts *Apus melba* in response to an episode of inclement weather. *J. Ornithol.* 148: 387–393.

Brüngger, M., Estoppey, F. (2008): Exigences écologiques de la Bécasse des bois *Scolopax rusticola* dans les Préalpes de Suisse occidentale. *Nos Oiseaux* 55, 3-22.

Buner, F., Schaub, M. (2008): How do different releasing techniques affect the survival of reintroduced grey partridges *Perdix perdix*? *Wildl. Biol.* 14: 26-35.

Geiser, S., Arlettaz, R., Schaub, M. (2008): Impact of weather variation on feeding behaviour, nestling growth and brood survival in Wrynecks *Jynx torquilla*. *J. Ornithol.* 149: 597-606.

- Grüebler, M.U., Morand, M. Naef-Daenzer, B. (2008): A predictive model of the density of airborne insects in agricultural environments. *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment* 123, 75-80.
- Grüebler, M.U., Naef-Daenzer, B. (2008): Postfledging parental effort in barn swallows: evidence for a trade-off in the allocation of time between broods. *Animal Behaviour* 75, 1877-1884.
- Henrioux, J.-D., Henrioux, P. (2008): Nichée tardive de la Chevêchette d'Europe *Glaucidium passerinum* dans le Jura vaudois (Suisse). *Nos Oiseaux* 55, 163.
- Henrioux, P., Henrioux, J.-D., Baudvin, H. (2008): Ponte de huit oeufs chez la Chevêchette d'Europe *Glaucidium passerinum*. *Nos Oiseaux* 55, 161-162.
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- Perroud, C. (2008): Seconde capture d'un Pouillot à grands sourcils *Phylloscopus inornatus* à La Berra (Préalpes fribourgeoises). *Nos Oiseaux* 55, 164.
- Ravussin, P.-A., Roulin, A. (2007): Biologie de reproduction du Moineau friquet *Passer montanus* dans l'ouest de la Suisse. *Nos Oiseaux* 54: 193–204.
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27 August 2009, Johann von Hirschheydt