

Copenhagen Bird Ringing Centre, Zoological Museum

Short report for EURING GA August 2005

The Zoological Museum at the University of Copenhagen and the Ministry of Environment and Energy jointly finance the Copenhagen Bird Ringing Centre according to an agreement that runs in periods of three years. Currently, we are in the third 3-year period, which began 1 August 2004 and runs to 31 July 2007. The contract needs to be mutually renewed 9 months before expiring.

Carsten Rahbek has moved to a newly established professorship in macroecology at the nearby Biological Institute, University of Copenhagen, and is as of 1 July 2005 no longer head of the Copenhagen Ringing Centre. New head of the Centre is Dr Kasper Thorup, who has worked intensively with bird migration and analyses of ring recoveries.

All ringing with metal rings in Denmark is done with rings from Zoological Museum (i.e., Kalø metal rings are no longer used) and all recoveries of metal rings are also handled by the museum (incl. those few regarding old Kalø rings). According to our procedures, every ringed bird can be traced back to a specific project and purpose following guidelines approved by both the Museum and the Ministry of Environment and Energy.

We continue to provide financial and moral support to the ringers with regard to their work in maintaining the relatively new Danish Ringers Society. Together with the Danish Ringers Society we have introduced a new track for obtaining ringing license. This is in addition to the traditional trainee track. The new track includes a more formal education starting with courses for potential new ringers run by the Danish Ringers Society.

We are continuously working on improved media coverage of our activities at the Ringing Centre with formal collaboration on this with BirdLife Denmark and free-lance journalists.

Projects at the Ringing Centre

We are about to complete the Danish Migration Atlas, presenting the results of 100 years of Danish ringing. The Atlas will be based on all recoveries concerning birds either ringed or recovered in Denmark. In total, the Atlas will be based on approx. 170,000 recoveries of birds ringed in Denmark and about 62,000 recoveries of birds ringed abroad and recovered in Denmark. We are much obliged to all the ringing schemes that provided us with their “Danish” data. In addition to our own Danish data, we have got access to ring recoveries from all old, now terminated, Danish ringing schemes. In the Atlas work we have had much help and inspiration from our Swedish, Norwegian and British colleagues. A presentation of the project in Danish and English can be seen at <http://www.zmuc.dk/ringatlas>, including examples of two species accounts (in Danish only). The Atlas is in Danish with English summaries to species accounts and English subtitles to tables, figures and maps.

Additionally, we have several major and minor research projects of which the most important ones are:

- a) The “Background Ringing Project”. The aim of this project is to collect information through general ringing on target species (c. 170 spp.) of which we still do not have sufficient ringing material to answer even basic biological, phenological and natural history questions.
- b) Conservation project including radio tracking of Little Owls.
- c) Conservation project including radio tracking of Red Kites.
- d) Analyses of trends in timing of migration of birds ringed at the Danish Island of Christiansø in the Baltic Sea, 1976-1997.
- e) Our attempts to establish a CES operated by volunteer ringers have so far result in only one site. However, much interest is shown by the ringers, and thus, we are keen to get involved in a European network of CES.

Recently finished projects include:

- (a) A 4-year information campaign about bird ringing including several issues of an information magazine, a number of open entry bird ringing demonstrations, publishing a 12-page leaflet and five posters for loan.
- (b) An EU-funded project trying to establish a publicly accessible database on the geographical distribution of Palaearctic migratory birds in Africa to guide conservation decisions (see <http://www.zmuc.dk/CommonWeb/research/migratorybirds-africa.htm>).
- (c) "The migratory programme in birds: the ecological and evolutionary consequences" (including analyses of recovery data) (see <http://www.zmuc.dk/VerWeb/STAFF/kt3.htm>).
- (d) The EURING Swallow project.

Numbers of birds ringed and numbers of recoveries (Copenhagen Bird Ringing Centre)

2003	Denmark	Faeroe Islands	Greenland
Birds ringed	70,887	2,272	400
Bird species ringed	168	42	11
Most numerous, ringed	Robin 7,262 Great Tit 6,519 Greenfinch 5,188 Cormorant 4,036 Blue Tit 3,519	Fulmar 1,232 Puffin 298 Eur. Storm-petrel 163 Starling 146	Sanderling 112 Arctic Tern 80 Dunlin 69
New ringing species	East. Olivaceous Warbler Rock Bunting		
Received and handled recoveries of DKC metal rings	3,350	46	21
Most numerous, recovered	Cormorant 303 Sandwich Tern 288 Robin 217 Herring Gull 206 Blackbird 182	Fulmar 9 Puffin 7 L. Black-backed Gull 4	Eider 11

2004	Denmark	Faeroe Islands	Greenland
Birds ringed	59,641	6,971	554
Bird species ringed	161	46	12
Most numerous, ringed	Robin 5,356 Great Tit 4,983 Greenfinch 4,477 Barn Swallow 4,286 Cormorant 3,671	Fulmar 2,701 Eur. Storm-petrel 2,579 Arctic Tern 299 House Sparrow 265	Arctic Tern 254 Little Auk 66 Gyrfalcon 61
New ringing species	Lanceolated Warbler		
Received and handled recoveries of DKC metal rings * The figure does not incl. Mute Swan	3,421	78	12
Most numerous, recovered	Greenfinch 414 Cormorant 335 Great Tit 295 Herring Gull 213 Robin 188	Eur. Storm-petrel 16 Puffin 14 Fulmar 10	Non > 2 rec.

Remarks: The vast number of readings of rings in connection with very large colour-marking projects on Cormorant, Pink-footed Goose, Mute Swan and gulls are handled separately by project holders

Numbers of ringers, ringing groups and ringing stations

In 2004, the Copenhagen Bird Ringing Centre had 175 ringers, 9 ringing groups and 7 ringing stations. In 2005 (august) we have 179 ringers, 9 ringing groups and 7 ringing stations. Although there is a slight turnover in our ringers, the number of ringers has been relatively stable for the last 8 years.

Staff at the Copenhagen Bird Ringing Centre, Zoological Museum

Allocation of time by permanent Zoological Museum staff:

- Kasper Thorup, Dr., Head of the ringing scheme, part-time.
- Jan Bolding Kristensen, Assistant Curator, part-time.
- Berit Ree, Assistant Curator, part-time.
- Gert Christensen, Assistant Curator, full-time

Staff on external funding:

- Jesper Johannes Madsen, M.Sc., Research and Project Co-ordinator, full-time.
- Kjeld T. Pedersen, Assistant Curator (database), full-time.
- Jesper Bønløkke-Pedersen, ringing atlas, full-time (until end of 2005)

Student worker:

- Troels Eske Ortvad, part-time

Computerising

All recovery data (incl. retraps, controls, and readings of metal rings) are stored in databases, except short-term retraps at the ringing site. Ringing data are still handled manually. It is a high priority to introduce a computer programme for handling ringing and recovery data electronically within the next year.

Ringing projects

In addition to our own research projects, we have in 2005 approved 66 external ringing projects under our license. These include 12 colour ringing, 3 experimental and 12 projects involving national Red Data Book species. All these projects are external projects managed by amateur ringers or professional researchers from Denmark as well as abroad.

Use of other marks than conventional metal rings

Projects including the use of other marks than conventional metal rings are all published at the official, EURING supported web site (www.cr-birding.be). All types of marks and coding systems have to be accepted by our scheme and the actual coordinator. The administration of data is done by the project holders and finders are replied with full life histories.

23 August 2005

The Copenhagen Bird Ringing Centre