

GETTING VALUE FOR MORE MONEY

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Our editor touched on the problem of ring costs in his last editorial (*Safring News* 26:1-2) and, being an ex-accountant, I have what some people consider to be a morbid interest in these kind of figures.

Consequently, I decided to look at the position from a subjective view point. Obviously each ringer has his or her own cost variations but the format can be applied to any situation.

I ring on the Cape west coast and during the twelve months ended 30th June 1997, I ringed a total of 2 618 birds.

Analysis showed that 90,79% of the birds took rings within the range 1,8mm (W) to 3,5mm (CC) and that the greatest individual percentages were 3,5mm (CC) 29,98%, 2,3mm (AE) 27,80% and 2,8mm (F) 12,22%. In addition to ring costs, I also considered petrol (not wear and tear), and the cost of nets on the basis that I use five 12m nets which last on average about five years each.

This then, gave the following position:

Total cost of rings	! 211,77
Petrol costs	791,14
Mistnet depreciation @ 20%	229,99
	<u>R2 232,90</u>

Average cost per bird (at current prices) of 2 618 birds ringed: 85,29 cents.

This costing analysis is not an attempt to discourage ringers. I am sure that, whatever the cost, we will find some way to overcome the problem. Rather, it is an attempt to place the situation in perspective and to emphasise the need to encourage sponsorship wherever it can be found.

I, personally, am lucky in that I have been able to find two sponsors who, between them, cover 70% of my costs. Without their help, it would be virtually impossible to continue. In return, I provide one of them with a monthly working report on the avian conditions within their private reserve. The other is happy in the knowledge that their sponsorship, amongst other things, helps me to give introductory courses to students studying to become future conservators. Provided that we are prepared to offer something in return, it *is* possible to find sponsorship.

NOTICE

SAFRING Authority Cards for Ringers

Dieter Oschadleus

Ringers have been inquiring about authority cards. These should become available soon. The design currently under consideration is an identification-card format showing the ringer's name and address along with an endorsement by SAFRING.

The card will indicate the particular techniques for which the ringer is qualified. Categories likely to be listed include mistnetting, bal-

chatri trapping, penguin banding and other specialized techniques such as, for example, torching and zap-netting.

A specific frame for ringers to paste in their ID photographs will also be incorporated into the design. Ringers could then have their cards laminated if they so wished. These last two points are suggestions only, and would be undertaken at the ringer's own initiative.