

Ringing Oystercatchers

ANON.

Citation: Anon. 1976. Ringing Oystercatchers. *Wader Study Group Bull.* 18: 17.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* rings are large enough for the number to be read in the field. We have learned that there is a study in progress in Norway on this species and an attempt has been made to read all rings in the study area. Unfortunately at least two rings have been put on upside

down making them very difficult to read. We hope that all ringers ringing birds of Redshank size and above will try to put rings on the correct way up to aid anyone reading ring numbers in the future.

Rings above the 'knee'

ANON.

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Barry Spence has reminded us of a problem that may occur if waders ringed by some European schemes are retrapped. Several of these schemes commonly place rings above the 'knee', a position where it is easy to overlook them, especially if many birds are being handled. They may also be missed if small waders are held upside down for ringing (a position more frequently used for passerines), when the ring may slide out of sight into the feathers.

We do not, of course, know how often such rings go unnoticed but several people know of cases where birds have been accidentally double-ringed because of this or where, when two people examined a bird perhaps for ringing followed by measuring, one has noticed the ring and the other has not.

The message is that we should take care that these valuable data are not lost in this way.

Ringwear on Turnstones

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A check through the Morecambe Bay retrap data for Turnstone produced the following figures for ring wear, all birds being ringed with size C2 rings of the BTO (Table 1).

Over half the rings over four year old were worn, in many cases badly, and 17% of rings at this age were partly or wholly illegible. Ring wear is thus clearly a problem with this species, and the Morecambe Bay Wader Group has started (with Ringing Office approval) to ring Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* above the tarsal joint, in order to see whether this makes any difference. This does have the disadvantage that the ring is less easily noticed, and it would be helpful if ringers handling Turnstones could make a point of checking whether the bird has been ringed in this way.

Table 1. Turnstones at Morecambe Bay: retraps

Period since ringing	Ring OK: no rering needed	Ring worn: rering needed	Ring partly illegible	Total
2-3 years	67-78%	17-20%	2-2%	86
3-4 years	68-92%	6-8%	0	74
4-5 years	13-56%	8-35%	2-9%	23
5-6 years	12-47%	10-39%	4-38%	26
6-7 years	7-64%	3-27%	1-9%	11
7-8 years	2-20%	7-70%	1-10%	10
uncertain			5%	5
n	169	51	15	235

