

## CAPE VULTURE RECOVERY DATA

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During the preparation of a paper on the mortality rates of the Cape Vulture Gyps coprotheres (Piper, Mundy & Ledger in prep.), as estimated from ring recoveries, it became necessary to examine in detail all the ringing data on this species. The results are shown in this paper.

Nestlings of the Cape Vulture have been ringed annually at various colonies in southern Africa since 1948. Up to the end of 1975, a period of 28 years, we could trace records for 4396 ringed nestlings (Table 1). The task of checking the old records was an extremely difficult one, and any ringers who are contemplating similar studies on other species are warned that they will probably encounter the same problems. The early records are in a shocking state, with unknown relationships between the numbers actually ringed and those stated in annual ringing reports (as published in Ostrich). Much of the information was recorded onto the backs of cigarette boxes, with a consequent loss of some of it. The estimated loss of primary data is about 5% (C.J. Vernon in litt.), there being eleven recoveries for which no ringing data can be traced. We have had to write off this loss, and the totals in the Tables are the result of considerable cross-checking of the data from all available sources.

Most of the recoveries are of birds that died at places scattered throughout the subcontinent, and therefore from fledged birds. Many rings however, have been found at the foot of the cliffs where the nestlings were originally ringed.

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF CAPE VULTURE NESTLINGS RINGED PER YEAR AT EACH COLONY

<u>Year</u>	<u>R.F.</u>	<u>Sk.</u>	<u>Nooit.</u>	<u>Kr.</u>	<u>Mann.</u>	<u>My.</u>	<u>Pot.</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Totals</u>
1948				31					31
49									0
1950	89								89
51	76						2		78
52	62			14					76
53	119	8							127
54	97	30							127
55	77	12							89
56	109	39							148
57	161	105		10					276
58	121	34							155
59	50	80					1		131
1960	63	177					3		243
61	47	120							167
62	51	114	33						198
63	49	115	22		87				273
64	37	161			65				263
65		113					6		119
66	6	133							139
67	38	116			10				164
68		108							108
69		116							116
1970	29	153						2	184
71	30	101							131
72	40	7					14	2	63
73	105	81			2	21	14		223
74	105	128			26	18	22	5	304
75	132	136			54	14	15	23	374
<u>Totals</u>	<u>1693</u>	<u>2187</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>244</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>4396</u>
<u>%s</u>	<u>38.5</u>	<u>49.7</u>	<u>1.3</u>	<u>1.3</u>	<u>5.6</u>	<u>1.2</u>	<u>1.8</u>	<u>0.7</u>	

If the length of the wing or of a primary feather could be measured then it was possible to distinguish dead fledglings from dead nestlings. If an unattached ring was found in an unworn condition then we assumed that it came from a dead nestling (realising, of course, that an unknown proportion of such rings would have come from fledged birds).

To date, 30 November 1976, a total of 226 rings has been recovered, of which 135 came from fledged birds (Table 2) and the remaining 90 rings came from nestlings (Table 3). The median fledging date, for the purposes of calculating the year-class of a dead bird, was assumed to be 1st December of every year.

We are especially grateful to Carl Vernon (then of NUBRA) for his considerable help and interest in checking the data, and also to Jane Dowle, Clive Elliott, Patrick Morant, and various ringers, for their help and information. Mike Jarvis and Martin Johannsmeier allowed us to use totals from their former projects, and André Boshoff from his on-going project.



Key: Transvaal - R.F. Roberts' Farm; Sk. Skeerpoort;  
Nooit. Nooitgedacht; Kr. Kranzberg.

Botswana - Mann. Mannyelanong; My. Manyana.

Cape - Pot. Potberg.

Others - 1970 Transkei - Mlengana;  
1972 S.W.A. - Waterberg;  
1974 Botswana - Otse (1), Baratani (3);  
S.W.A. - Waterberg (1);  
1975 Transvaal - Manoutsa (14); Botswana -  
Otse (1); O.F.S. - Zastron (8).

TABLE 2

## RAW DATA FROM RING RECOVERIES OF FLEDGED BIRDS

Data portrayed as:- ring number (date of ringing) : recovery coordinates (date of recovery) : age at death, i.e. year - class after fledging.

Kranzberg, Transvaal (2429, 2737)

C-86 (01.08.48) : 2045, 2915 (23.10.49) : 1st  
508-1205 (31.08.57) : 3125, 2304 (06.08.60) : 3rd

Manyana, Botswana (2448, 2543)

G-10539 (28.09.74) : 2450, 2550 (16.05.75) : 1st  
G-12259 (29.09.75) : foot of cliff (26.09.76) : 1st \*  
G-12367 (26.09.75) : foot of cliff (26.09.76) : 1st \*

Mannyelanong, Botswana (2503, 2547)

509-2466 (01.09.63) : 2718, 2600 (17.03.65) : 2nd  
509-2469 (01.09.63) : 2847, 2500 (06.03.65) : 2nd  
509-2482 (01.09.63) : 2513, 2540 (15.06.65) : 2nd  
509-2521 (01.09.63) : 3118, 2703 (09.04.64) : 1st  
658-2006 (19.08.67) : 2511, 2540 (05.01.68) : 1st  
G-12236 (28.09.75) : 2506, 2546 (18.12.75) : 1st  
G-12237 (27.09.75) : 2540, 2524 ( - .02.76) : 1st  
G-12293 (28.09.75) : foot of cliff (25.09.76) : 1st \*

Skeerpoort, Transvaal (2545, 2745)

508-1170 (16.09.56) : 3100, 2527 (20.03.57) : 1st  
508-1217 (16.09.56) : 3158, 2429 (17.10.62) : 6th  
508-1232 (05.09.55) : 2739, 2808 (10.06.56) : 1st  
508-1385 (22.09.57) : 3026, 2428 (27.02.59) : 2nd  
508-1403 (21.09.58) : 1858, 3240 (15.12.60) : 3rd  
508-2323 (13.09.61) : 2856, 2449 (15.09.62) : 1st  
508-2364 (28.08.60) : 2937, 2833 (03.05.61) : 1st  
508-2408 (27.09.60) : 3025, 2506 (26.01.62) : 2nd  
508-2459 (27.09.59) : 3026, 2429 (06.04.60) : 1st  
508-2467 (28.08.60) : 2453, 2817 (12.04.61) : 1st

508-2560	(28.08.60) : 2829, 2340	(05.04.61) : 1st
508-2628	(27.09.59) : 2843, 2604	(15.06.62) : 3rd
508-2631	(27.09.59) : 2715, 2615	(20.11.63) : 4th
508-2634	(27.09.59) : 2657, 2444	(11.10.60) : 1st
508-2822	(04.08.62) : 2200, 1645	(14.10.63) : 1st
509-0041	(19.09.70) : 2138, 1634	(15.12.71) : 2nd
509-0068	(16.09.67) : 2927, 2415	(28.04.68) : 1st
509-0251	(19.09.70) : 2545, 2747	(21.08.72) : 2nd *
509-0259	(19.09.70) : 2630, 2630	(20.04.71) : 1st
509-0346	(22.09.57) : 2009, 2836	(21.01.69) : 12th *
509-2308	(20.09.64) : 'same place'	( - .11.66) : 1st *
509-2562	(20.09.64) : 2600, 2750	(23.11.64) : 1st
509-2641	(29.08.65) : 2542, 2745	(21.12.65) : 1st
509-2657	(29.08.65) : 2702, 2727	(15.12.65) : 1st
509-2688	(16.09.67) : 2817, 2610	(28.05.70) : 3rd *
509-2711	(29.08.65) : 2600, 2750	(15.05.66) : 1st
509-2723	(29.08.65) : 'next farm'	(18.11.65) : 1st
509-2762	(18.09.66) : 2538, 2747	(26.01.67) : 1st
658-0010	(18.09.66) : 3122, 2355	(15.08.67) : 1st
658-0028	(16.09.67) : 2827, 2513	(15.12.72) : 6th *
658-0055	(18.09.66) : 2803, 2227	(28.03.68) : 2nd
658-0093	(18.09.66) : 2609, 2804	(27.03.67) : 1st *
658-0094	(18.09.66) : 2558, 2752	(10.01.67) : 1st
658-0266	(18.09.67) : Skeerpoort	(20.12.67) : 1st
658-0269	(18.09.66) : 2551, 2718	(11.11.73) : 7th *
658-0295	(18.09.66) : 2600, 2750	(10.10.67) : 1st
658-0298	(18.09.66) : 1808, 3059	(05.06.67) : 1st
658-0317	(21.09.68) : 2925, 2412	(25.01.70) : 2nd
658-0347	(21.09.68) : 2824, 2539	(24.05.69) : 1st
658-0388	(21.09.68) : 2748, 2514	(16.04.69) : 1st
G-01473	(20.09.69) : 2544, 2752	(15.04.70) : 1st
G-01494	(18.09.71) : 2721, 2305	(19.03.73) : 2nd *
G-01517	(20.09.69) : 2845, 2533	(02.06.74) : 5th *
G-01541	(20.09.69) : 2716, 2829	(15.10.70) : 1st
G-07391	(21.09.74) : 2733, 2533	(10.11.75) : 1st
G-09821	(22.09.73) : 2846, 2932	(07.08.74) : 1st

G-09849	(22.09.73) : 2925, 2500	(19.06.74) : 1st
G-09926	(22.09.74) : 2545, 2747	(01.01.75) : 1st
G-10525	(07.09.75) : foot of cliff	(20.01.76) : 1st
G-10618	(21.09.74) : 2819, 2732	(15.03.75) : 1st
G-10666	(22.09.74) : foot of cliff	(16.12.74) : 1st
G-10686	(22.09.74) : foot of cliff	(06.12.75) : 1st
G-12071	(06.09.75) : 2544, 2752	(24.12.75) : 1st
G-12073	(06.09.75) : foot of cliff	(04.09.76) : 1st
G-12130	(07.09.75) : foot of cliff	(06.12.75) : 1st
G-12178	(07.09.75) : 3045, 2715	(13.03.76) : 1st
G-12195	(07.09.75) : foot of cliff	(10.06.76) : 1st
G-12212	(07.09.75) : Skeerpoort	(15.12.75) : 1st
G-12333	(07.09.75) : foot of cliff	(12.09.76) : 1st

Roberts' Farm, Transvaal (2551, 2718)

B-433	(06.08.50) : 2535, 3005	(08.02.64) : 14th *
508-0029	(05.09.54) : 2552, 2719	(03.01.55) : 1st
508-0030	(05.09.54) : 3225, 2518	(28.11.55) : 1st
508-0069	(05.09.54) : 2552, 2538	(13.10.58) : 4th *
508-0071	(05.09.54) : 3134, 2633	(11.10.55) : 1st
508-0251	(06.09.53) : 2754, 2557	(24.01.59) : 6th
508-0253	(06.09.53) : 2622, 2554	(22.11.54) : 1st
508-0266	(06.09.53) : 3202, 2646	(15.01.56) : 3rd *
508-0443	(04.09.55) : 3005, 2441	(09.08.56) : 1st
508-0532	(04.09.55) : 2645, 2642	(11.04.58) : 3rd
508-0710	(02.09.56) : 'same place'	(15.03.57) : 1st
508-1516	(01.09.57) : 2552, 2718	(22.12.57) : 1st
508-1660	(01.09.57) : 2537, 2708	(10.01.58) : 1st
508-1689	(01.09.57) : 'on farm'	(03.01.58) : 1st
508-1723	(28.08.60) : 2550, 2716	(22.12.60) : 1st
508-1788	(01.09.58) : 2550, 2716	(12.11.59) : 1st
508-2738	(27.08.61) : 3039, 2400	(02.04.62) : 1st
508-2843	(11.08.62) : 3005, 2440	(20.09.63) : 1st
508-2863	(11.08.62) : 3251, 2612	(06.01.64) : 2nd *
509-1223	(13.09.64) : 2818, 2610	(26.03.65) : 1st
509-1809	(28.08.60) : 2533, 2702	(28.01.61) : 1st

509-2957	(04.09.55) : 2705, 2716	(15.12.55) : 1st
509-2967	(04.09.55) : 2550, 2716	(11.05.56) : 1st
G-01764	(28.08.71) : foot of cliff	(17.07.73) : 2nd
G-01776	(28.08.71) : 3105, 2519	(15.01.73) : 1st *
G-01778	(28.08.71) : 2600, 2731	(17.01.72) : 1st
G-01795	(26.08.72) : foot of cliff	(17.07.73) : 1st
G-05660	(26.08.72) : foot of cliff	(17.07.73) : 1st
G-05661	(26.08.72) : foot of cliff	(17.07.73) : 1st
G-05671	(31.08.73) : foot of cliff	(13.06.74) : 1st
G-05705	(01.09.73) : on scree	(10.11.73) : 1st
G-05706	(01.09.73) : 'on farm'	(01.01.74) : 1st
G-05708	(01.09.73) : foot of cliff	(13.06.74) : 1st
G-05736	(02.09.73) : 3147, 2447	(04.02.75) : 2nd *
G-10117	(01.09.73) : foot of cliff	(13.06.74) : 1st
G-10128	(01.09.73) : foot of cliff	(13.06.74) : 1st
G-10501	(02.09.74) : 2549, 2719	(07.02.75) : 1st
G-10503	(02.09.74) : 3241, 2605	(05.02.75) : 1st
G-10551	(31.08.74) : foot of cliff	(24.01.75) : 1st
G-10556	(31.08.74) : foot of cliff	(24.11.74) : 1st
G-10557	(31.08.74) : foot of cliff	(26.05.75) : 1st
G-10578	(02.09.74) : c.2648, 2653	(22.10.75) : 1st
G-10586	(30.08.75) : foot of cliff	(05.12.75) : 1st
G-10606	(01.09.74) : 2729, 2536	(02.08.75) : 1st
G-10637	(30.08.75) : foot of cliff	(01.12.75) : 1st
G-10639	(30.08.75) : foot of cliff	(08.06.76) : 1st
G-10648	(02.09.75) : foot of cliff	(01.12.75) : 1st
G-12004	(30.08.75) : foot of cliff	(01.12.75) : 1st
G-12027	(30.08.75) : 2552, 2719	(21.01.76) : 1st
G-12029	(30.08.75) : foot of cliff	(08.06.76) : 1st
G-12030	(30.08.75) : foot of cliff	(18.01.76) : 1st
G-12038	(31.08.75) : foot of cliff	(01.12.75) : 1st
G-12046	(31.08.75) : foot of cliff	(01.12.75) : 1st
G-12049	(01.09.75) : foot of cliff	(18.01.76) : 1st
G-12059	(01.09.75) : foot of cliff	(01.12.75) : 1st
G-12060	(01.09.75) : down scree	(04.09.76) : 1st
G-12113	(31.08.75) : foot of cliff	(18.01.76) : 1st
G-12119	(31.08.75) : foot of cliff	(18.01.76) : 1st

Nooitgedacht, Transvaal (2552, 2733)

509-1104 (26.08.62) : 2555, 2738 (09.01.63) : 1st  
509-1114 (26.08.62) : 2843, 2446 (18.02.63) : 1st

Zastron, O.F.S. (3017, 2704)

G-12314 (18.09.75) : foot of cliff (01.01.76) : 1st

Potberg, Cape (3422, 2033)

G-09361 (21.09.74) : 3415, 2014 (25.01.75) : 1st  
G-09337 (14.09.75) : 3355, 2135 (13.05.76) : 1st

Note: coordinates are written as 2030, 2030 rather than  
20°30'S, 20°30'E.

\* assumed



John Ledger



TABLE 3

RINGS RECOVERED AT FOOT OF CLIFFS OF EACH COLONY  
AND FROM PRESUMED NESTLINGS

Data portrayed as:- ring number (date of ringing) : (date of recovery).

Manyana, Botswana (2448, 2543)

G-10046	(03.09.73)	:	(26.09.76)
G-10053	(03.09.73)	:	(28.09.74)
G-10540 *	(28.09.74)	:	(29.09.75)

Mannyanong, Botswana (2503, 2547)

508-2300	(22.08.64)	:	(04.11.73)
509-0906	(22.08.64)	:	(28.05.73)
509-2470	(01.09.63)	:	(28.05.73)
509-2484	(01.09.63)	:	(28.05.73)
G-10519	(29.09.74)	:	(25.09.76)
G-12222	(27.09.75)	:	(26.11.76)
G-12239	(28.09.75)	:	(17.11.75)
G-12286	(27.09.75)	:	(28.09.75)
G-12291	(28.09.75)	:	(28.02.76)

Skeerpoort, Transvaal (2545, 2745)

508-2380	(28.08.60)	:	(01.10.61)
508-2416	(28.08.60)	:	(01.10.61)
508-2482	(28.08.60)	:	(30.09.63)
508-2556	(28.08.60)	:	(06.09.75)
508-2563	(28.08.60)	:	(30.09.63)
508-2593	(28.08.60)	:	(01.10.61)
508-2609	(13.09.61)	:	(23.08.63)
508-2811	(04.08.62)	:	(-.07.63)
509-0061	(16.09.67)	:	(20.09.69)
509-0232	(19.09.70)	:	(25.06.72)
509-0234	(19.09.70)	:	(07.07.73)

509-2289	(20.09.64)	:	(15.01.70)
509-2593	(20.09.64)	:	(14.09.68)
509-2646	(16.09.67)	:	(14.09.68)
509-2662	(16.09.67)	:	(21.09.68)
509-2670	(21.09.68)	:	(13.10.68)
546-05515	(21.09.68)	:	(13.10.68)
658-0037	(18.09.66)	:	(15.04.70)
658-0057	(18.09.66)	:	(11.01.67)
658-0389	(21.09.68)	:	(20.09.69)
G-01467	(20.09.69)	:	(10.10.69)
G-09915	(14.09.74)	:	(16.12.74)
G-09946	(21.09.74)	:	(16.12.74)
G-10674	(22.09.74)	:	(06.12.75)
G-10679	(22.09.74)	:	(16.12.74)
G-12135	(07.09.75)	:	(13.12.75)
G-12150	(06.09.75)	:	(13.12.75)
G-12173	(07.09.75)	:	(06.12.75)
G-12203	(07.09.75)	:	(05.10.75)
G-12313	(07.09.75)	:	(22.02.76)

Robert's Farm, Transvaal (2551, 2718)

508-0403	(12.08.51)	:	(31.08.52)
508-0583	(12.08.51)	:	(31.08.52)
508-1589	(01.09.57)	:	(16.11.57)
508-2847	(11.08.62)	:	(12.09.74)
G-01783	(08.08.72)	:	(28.08.72)
G-05672	(31.08.73)	:	(10.11.73)
G-05674	(01.09.73)	:	(10.11.73)
G-05682	(01.09.73)	:	(10.11.73)
G-05684	(01.09.73)	:	(10.11.73)
G-05685	(01.09.73)	:	(13.11.73)
G-05711	(01.09.73)	:	(10.11.73)
G-05730	(01.09.73)	:	(10.11.73)
G-05735	(02.09.73)	:	(10.11.73)
G-05743	(02.09.73)	:	(11.11.73)
G-10064	(30.08.75)	:	(05.12.75)
G-10126	(01.09.73)	:	(12.12.73)

G-10257	(31.08.74)	:	(24.11.74)
G-10270	(01.09.74)	:	(31.08.75)
G-10282	(31.08.74)	:	(24.11.74)
G-10290	(01.09.74)	:	(24.11.74)
G-10295	(01.09.74)	:	(27.05.75)
G-10559	(31.08.74)	:	(24.01.75)
G-10570	(01.09.74)	:	(24.11.74)
G-10571	(01.09.74)	:	(12.09.74)
G-10574	(02.09.74)	:	(01.12.75)
G-10580	(01.09.74)	:	(12.09.74)
G-10581	(30.08.75)	:	(05.12.75)
G-10602	(01.09.74)	:	(12.09.74)
G-10604	(01.09.74)	:	(12.09.74)
G-10605	(01.09.74)	:	(12.09.74)
G-10608	(01.09.74)	:	(22.01.75)
G-10675	(31.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)
G-12003	(30.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)
G-12042	(30.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)
G-12047	(31.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)
G-12054	(31.08.75)	:	(05.12.75)
G-12056	(31.08.75)	:	(05.12.75)
G-12077	(31.08.75)	:	(18.01.76)
G-12081	(31.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)
G-12083	(31.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)
G-12085	(31.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)
G-12102	(31.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)
G-12112	(31.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)
G-12118	(31.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)
G-12122	(31.08.75)	:	(01.12.75)

Potberg, Cape (3422, 2033)

G-00539	(29.09.73)	:	(13.09.75)
G-09014	(14.09.75)	:	(18.04.76)
G-09343	(21.09.74)	:	(04.10.75)
G-09355	(23.09.72)	:	(12.05.73)

Note: \* presumed ring number.

