

7 Moult Information

by Howard Ginn

Many wader ringers are probably unaware of the great lack of information on moult in this group. There may be two main reasons for this. Firstly, but not necessarily most important is the fact that waders are frequently of necessity caught by mist net under poor light conditions and therefore moult studies are even more difficult than usual and secondly waders caught by cannon nets are frequently in such large numbers that time is at a premium so it is often only possible to count the old primaries. However it is hoped that as more ringers become aware of the value of their results in the field, they will make the extra effort to record moult more fully. I am therefore presenting the grand totals of moult cards (of those species for which 10 or more cards have been submitted from Britain or Ireland) which ought to act as a spur.

Oystercatcher	107	Bar-tailed Godwit	14
Lapwing	15	Green Sandpiper	23
Ringed Plover	22	Redshank	23
Golden Plover	11	Knot	25
Turnstone	83	Dunlin	149
Snipe	30	Ruff	12
Curlew	18		

May I appeal first to all those who work individually or in small groups to try and find some time to examine the birds they catch, at least for primary moult. Secondly I appeal to those working in large groups to complete cards for the less-often-caught species and to consider doing cards for representative samples of large catches, for example on all birds in one compartment of a keeping cage.

To those who are doing their own projects on moult and do not feel it concerns the B.T.O. it may be worth stressing that people in the future, long after you have lost interest, may need your moult details for some aspect other than the one you have examined. If the details are on a card at the B.T.O. they will always be available for reference; in contrast, if yours find their way eventually into an attic, they will be rather less readily available to such workers and hence in the long term your data are less valuable in total. It should perhaps be stressed that the persons collecting data have prior claim to publishing the results and therefore workers can be assured that their findings will not be published without due consultation.

Dunlin Bibliography

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