

FIRST LAPPET-FACED VULTURES TAGGED IN BOTSWANA

A BirdLife Botswana team spent several days during early November marking Lappet-faced Vulture nestlings with wing tags in order to be able to follow their dispersal and survival after fledging. The team was led by Nicky Bousfield, a qualified bird ringer with many years of experience handling birds. This is the first time Lappet-faced Vultures have been marked in Botswana, and in future years the number of tagged birds will be increased.



Retrieving the chick from the nest



Fitting aluminium ring and patagial (wing) tag

Photos: P Hancock



Measuring and weighing vulture chick

Five chicks were tagged. The tags, affixed to the patagia on both wings, are yellow and numbered from D001 to D005. Anyone sighting one of these birds should please record the date, tag number and precise locality of the bird *i.e.* GPS co-ords. This information should then be sent to Pete Hancock at the BirdLife Botswana office in Maun (PO Box 1529, Maun, e-mail:

birdlifemaun@botsnet.bw). These birds could turn up anywhere in Southern Africa (see box below).



MOVEMENTS OF LAPPET-FACED VULTURES

Over the past few years, hundreds of Lappet-faced Vultures have been ringed and/or tagged by colleagues in Namibia but, to the best of our knowledge, none have been subsequently reported from Botswana. That is, until October this year, when a bird tagged E052 died in a poisoning incident in the Xudum Concession (NG 30). It was originally tagged by Wilferd Versveld in Etosha National Park in September, 2007 (see photo below). It is quite a shame that the first Namibian-born bird apparently visiting Botswana should succumb from poisoning.

Photo: W Versfeld



For more information on Lappet-faced Vulture tagging, see article in Babbler 51.