

IBM Protocols

Ringling Scheme for Bearded Vultures in the Alps

For IBM Partners and others using IBM bearded vulture leg rings
30th April 2015

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. INTRODUCTION..... | 2 |
| Objective of the new ringing system..... | 2 |
| Goals of this manual..... | 2 |
| 2. RINGS..... | 3 |
| Specifications..... | 3 |
| Additional Information..... | 3 |
| Codes..... | 3 |
| Important preface..... | 3 |
| 3. TAGGING PROCEDURE..... | 5 |
| Preparation..... | 5 |
| Ringing..... | 5 |
| Documentation..... | 5 |
| 4. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)..... | 6 |



1. INTRODUCTION

Objective of the new ringing system

Ringling of the birds should allow their tracking and identification ideally by their observation in the field and certainly by the retrieval of the bird in case of capture or death. Different ring designs and materials exist and offer varied grades of comfort and risks for the bird, longevity and visibility. Considering the biology and morphology of bearded vultures it is difficult to meet the requirements of the last two factors, ring life and visibility. These birds, in fact, can live up to 50 years and develop a thick plumage on their legs that can cover completely or in part the rings.

In the IBM Steering Committee meeting 2014 in Barcelonnette (FRA) the matter of the visibility of the long lasting aluminium rings has therefore been raised and has been compared to the shorter lived but better readable plastic rings. Since both aspects are of equal high importance, to solve the trade-off between life and visibility it has been decided to use a new system of ring marking using one aluminium ring on the right leg and one plastic ring on the left leg.

The goal of the new ringing system with two rings is therefore that of

- increasing the identification probability of marked bearded vultures by ring reading through telescope or photography, and
- guarantee this for the longest possible timespan (ideally over 30 years).

Goals of this manual

The above-mentioned objectives can only be achieved by the use of BOTH provided rings (one plastic and one metal) AND the correct application of the rings on the bird. This manual is meant to provide you with all the necessary information needed to the correct ringing.

Please, keep in mind that the any deviation from the here described method must be reported to the IBM and documented with pictures (ibm@4vultures.org).



2. RINGS

Specifications

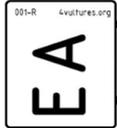
| Ring ID | Material | Side of application | Ring color | Engraving color | Orientation of engraving | Nr. of code repeats | Overview |
|---------|-----------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| xxx_R | Aluminium | Right leg | Silver | Black | Bottom up | 4 times (see Fig. 1) |  |
| xxx_L | Plastic | Left leg | Black | White | Bottom up | 4 times | |

Table 1: Ring specifications for the new rings 2015.

Additional Information

On the top of the ring for identification in case of loss of the ring.

- AlpenZOO
- www.4vultures.org
- Ring ID (see specifications above)

Codes

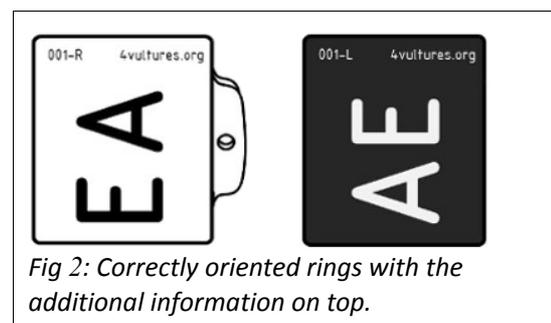
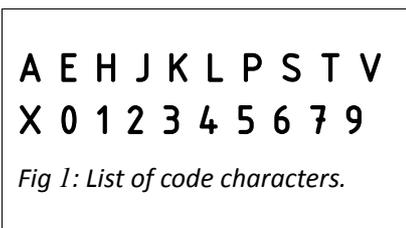
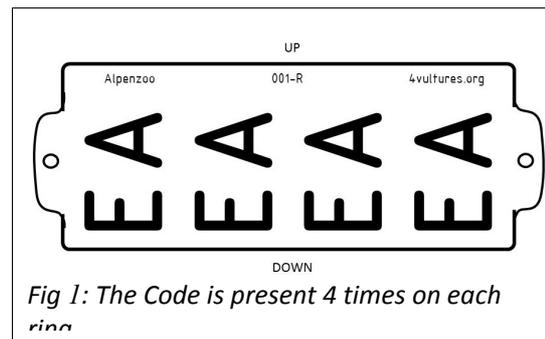
The codes are constituted by two characters out of a list of easily readable characters (Fig. 2).

The two characters do not code for any specific characteristic of the bird (year, wild-born vs. released,...). Only the combination of the two characters will reveal the identity of the bird.

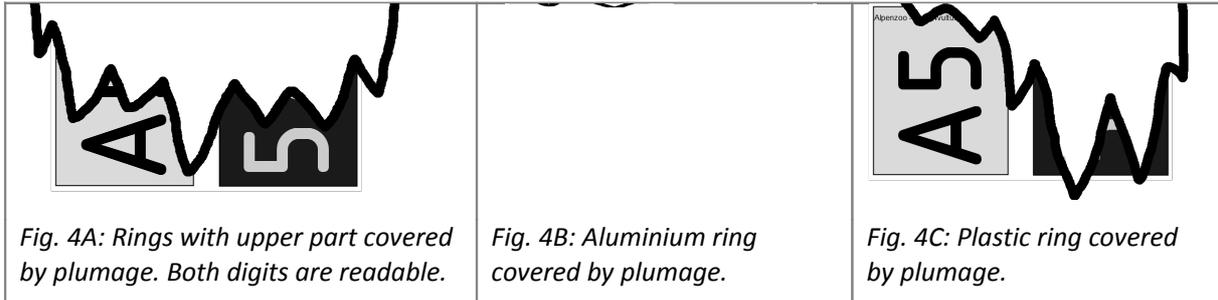
To simplify the task of the observers, codes will be, at least at a first stage, independent of the sequence and will take into consideration combinations of the characters only (A1 is equal 1A).

Important preface

You will be provided with two rings, one metal and one plastic, these are to be used conjunctly on the same bird.



The rings have an orientation and it is important to take this into consideration when mounting them on the bird. If you place both rings with the additional information on the top, so that you can read it normally, you are looking at them in their correct orientation (Fig. 3). This is also the orientation on which the rings should be mounted on the bird. You will notice that the characters of the identity code are inverted. This is made in purpose and will increase the probability of reading the whole code even in adults where the legs plumage covers the upper part of the ring (see Fig. 4A-C).



Rings also have a correct placement; the metal ring needs to be mounted on the right leg, the plastic ring on the left leg.

3. TAGGING PROCEDURE

Preparation

Prepare the place for the ringing procedure as usual, including both IBM rings, this manual and a camera. Ideally you should be three persons, one will be holding the vulture, one will be tagging and the third will overlook the proceeding, take notes to document the ringing and take pictures.

Ringing

The bird can be hold in two positions, either on a standing position or laying on its back. Be sure to apply each ring on the correct leg: the aluminium ring on the right leg of the bird and the plastic ring on the left leg (see Fig. 5). The aluminium ring must be closed with the provided small bolt.

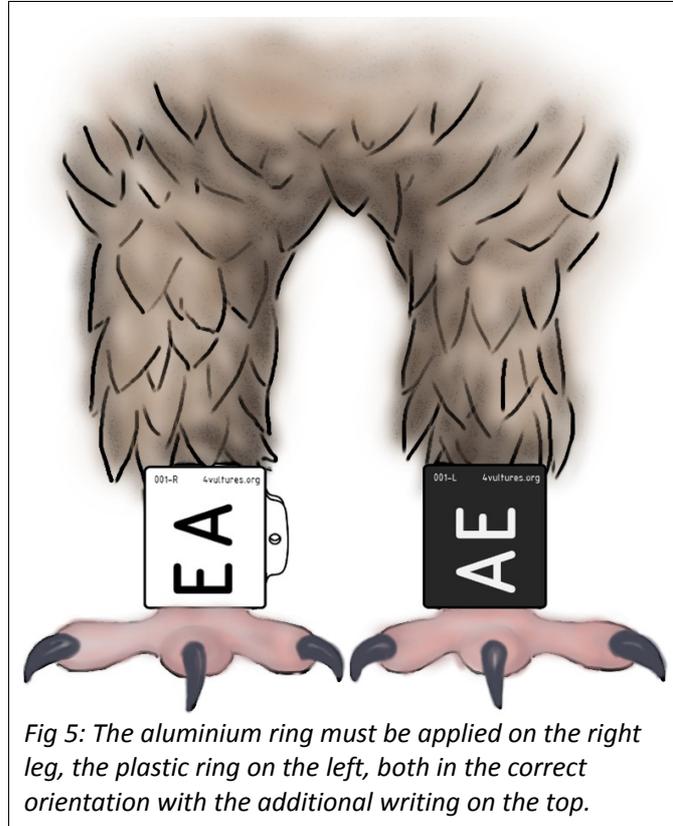


Fig 5: The aluminium ring must be applied on the right leg, the plastic ring on the left, both in the correct orientation with the additional writing on the top.

Documentation

Please document all of your tagging actions with pictures and sent these to the IBM. Make sure the ring codes are visible in the picture and label the pictures with the Partner's name, the name of the bird, the right ring code and the year (e.g. SPB_Schils_EA_2014).

Email: ibm@4vultures.org

or per mail to: Vulture Conservation Foundation
Wuhrstrasse 12
CH-8003 Zürich
Switzerland

4. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

What rings to use on wild-born chicks?

The procedure for ringing of wild-born bearded vultures is the same as described above and as used for the release birds. Both rings must be used to ensure higher chance of identification of the individuals by sight.

What to do if regulations do not allow the allocation of two rings?

Partners are encouraged to get a special permit to use both the IBM rings also on wild hatched birds. The best chance to identify the individual is only given when both rings are used. If it is not possible to use both rings, each partner will choose the ring that fits its needs the best. The second ring of the ring-pair must be sent back to the IBM:

Vulture Conservation Foundation
Wuhrstrasse 12
CH-8003 Zürich
Switzerland

What to do if the ringing has not been done as described in this manual?

All deviations from the above-mentioned protocol must be documented carefully, ideally with pictures, and reported to the IBM (ibm@4vultures.org). This is necessary for corrections to the individual's data in the IBM database and the correct identification of the bird by observers.

I am not sure about the procedure or this procedure does not apply to my particular case.

Contact the IBM team for any question regarding the rings or the ringing procedure via email or by phone:

ibm@4vultures.org

Tel.: +41 44 450 68 14

