

except for the occasional injured adult. In southern Africa post-breeding adults arrive in faded/worn plumage and are easily separated on this point.

Juveniles: The feathers of the mantle and scapulars are brownish-black with narrow, pale buff edging. The wing coverts are dark brown with a similar narrow, pale buff edging around the entire feather. The breast feathers have broad brownish centres with pale buff edging giving a rather spotted appearance.

The breast feathers are lost very rapidly to be replaced by the normal poorly and finely marked non-breeding plumage. The remaining juvenile feathering, apart from the wing coverts, is lost gradually and rarely shows after mid-November. By January only a few juvenile inner lesser and median wing coverts remain. Birds start to assume varying amounts of breeding plumage from March onwards and it is in March and early April that they are most difficult to separate from adults moulting into breeding plumage. Most adults should have left by mid-April and first year birds do not assume breeding dress on the lesser wing coverts or the breast. The amount of breeding dress assumed on the upperparts is very variable, from almost none to almost complete, but the mantle and scapular feathers never assume the richness of colouring of the adults and are usually mixed rich and pale buff.

Moult is much more rapid than that of the adult and may take only 60 to 80 days as against 90+ days in adult birds. Moult of the remiges takes place from late November onwards and some birds may still be found moulting in April with exceptional incidences later. The moult of the remiges is complete.

2nd Year: These birds may be recognised as mentioned above and usually quite well into moult, especially where the remiges are relatively un worn. However, it is not possible to be certain of ageing all members of this age group successfully as the season progresses.

Adult: Usually arrive in worn plumage and normally with few traces of breeding dress. Their moult is started in late September but some birds may not start till well into November. All adults and 2nd year birds should have completed their major moult by the end of February, a few may tail off into early March.

Both 2nd year and adult birds in full non-breeding plumage are slightly greyer on the upper-parts than first year birds and have broader pale margins to the feathers of the upper-parts. Neither have pale edging to the lesser and median wing coverts.

ADDENDUM - Kittlitz Plover

It should be noted that the weight criteria given for the Kittlitz Plover (Safring 2(2):23-25), do not apply to the Cape coastal birds. The latter are larger and heavier. It is not known what the position is in Natal.

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