

WADER AGEING GUIDE

The next BTO Field Guide (No. 17) is now at the printers and will be available at the end of December. The Guide to the Identification and Ageing of Holarctic Waders has been written jointly by Tony Prater and John Marchant of the BTO and Juhani Vuorinen from Finland. Its scope is rather more extensive than most BTO Field Guides as it covers the essential plumage identification, ageing and sexing characters of all 118 species of waders found in Eurasia (except India and S.E. Asia), N. America and N. Africa.

The Guide will be somewhat larger than previous ones, about 180 pages, and will include a selection of 32 superb photographs taken by J.B. and S. Bottomley. These show a wide range of species from Dunlin to Upland Sandpiper and will undoubtedly form one of the best collections of wader photographs ever published. The text will include many line illustrations, mainly by Kevin Baker.

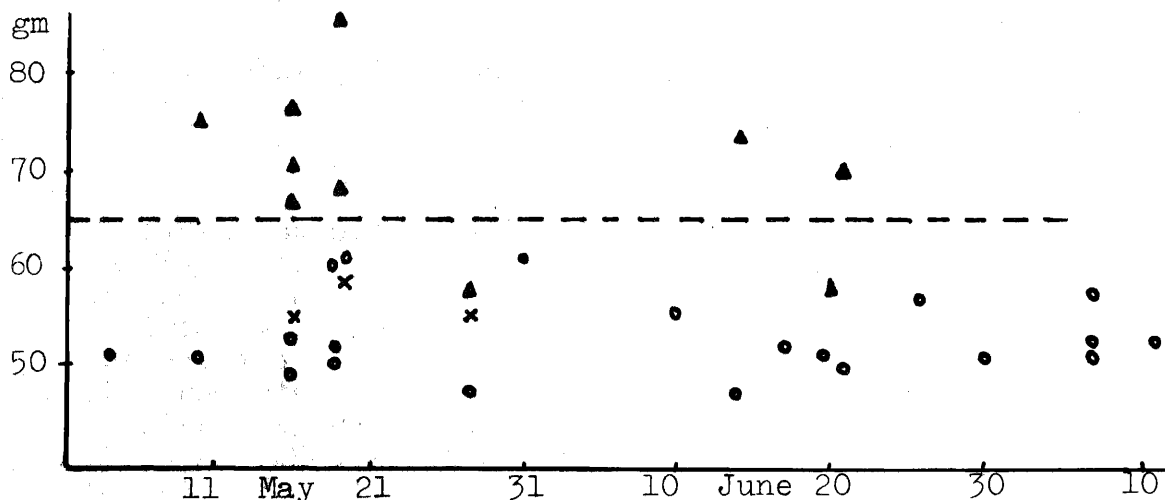
This wader guide is aimed primarily at ringers who have the opportunity to examine birds in the hand but it has also been written with the birdwatcher in mind and gives characters which are useful for identifying birds in the field. For many species it is possible to age birds accurately at moderate distances, and in some cases there are indications in the field as to the sex and the race to which the bird belongs.

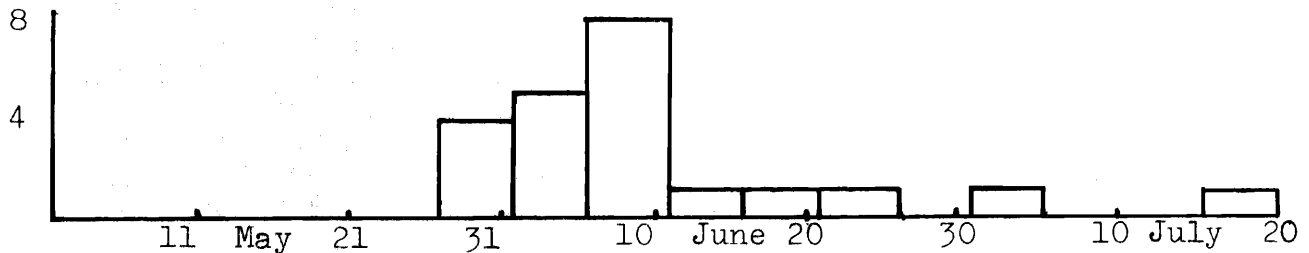
The Guide will sell for £2.50 or U.S. \$5 (incl. p & p) and can be obtained from the BTO, Beech Grove, Tring, Herts. HP23 5NR.

BRIEF NOTE ON BRITISH BREEDING COMMON SANDPIPERS

In WBS 11 (March 73) S. Brown appeals for measurements during the breeding season. This summer on breeding streams we handled 34 adults, 57 pulli and 9 juvs. The weights of adults against time are as follows:

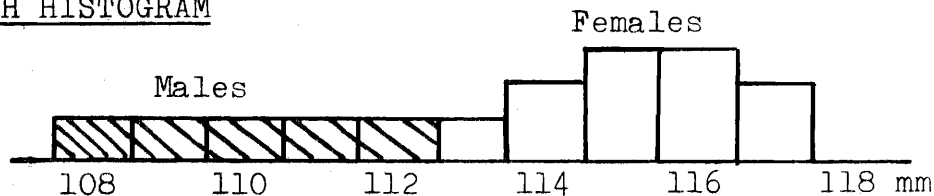
(x = males; ▲ = females)



Estimated dates of hatching of the pulli ringed

We can thus see that a Common Sandpiper with eggs will be about 20g up on normal (each egg weighs about 12g). The bird weighing 71g on 16 May was retrapped at 53g on 17 June.

We have been colour ringing these birds, so as well as the heavy females we have been able to sex some other birds on behaviour. For 11 females the average winglength is 115.3mm (SD= 1.2) and for 5 males 110.0mm. For all adults the average is 113.3mm (SD= 2.7)

WINGLENGTH HISTOGRAM

We urgently appeal for any observations of colour ringed Sandpipers. Full details of colour code are not nearly so important as the general fact of being colour-ringed, so please do not withhold a sighting because of incompleteness. A look at BTO recoveries of Sandpipers ringed on the breeding areas reveals 14 back around their breeding place (confirmed in our case with 24 caught again within the South Pennines in later seasons over the last 10 years), 2 in Africa, 6 in France and 1 in Portugal, but only 2 in Britain. However 7 ringed at likely stopping places (Abberton etc.) have been found in potential breeding areas in May and June. S. Brown suggests that they are long-hop migrants but as they appear to leave the breeding streams early we want to know where they hop from as well as to.

South Pennine Ringing Group, J.E. Robson, 1 Lawnfold, Hadfield, Hyde, Cheshire.

THE CELTIC WADER RESEARCH GROUP

What's in a name admittedly The Celtic Wader Research Group (CWRG for short, pronounced K-whirr-g) is a rather grand title for a small group of people studying waders on the shores of South Wales and around the Severn Estuary. SEWAGE, a mnemonic appropriate for a group working on the shores of an estuary adjacent to large cities, was a promising alternative which started well Severn Estuary, Wales and but it failed in the end so we were stuck with Chris Hemmings' idea - CWRG. In our early days we did have 'Celtic' aspirations and some of us had caught waders on the north, west and south coasts of Wales and even shown an interest in the Hebrides to say nothing of hopefully gazing westwards to