

CONTINUING REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION OR MATERIAL

We repeat below requests that have previously appeared in WSG Bulletin but which continue to be active.

Sightings of colour-marked birds

A list of currently registered schemes was given in Bull. 31 and is updated elsewhere in this issue.

Whole bodies of freshly dead waders

Readers of WSG Bulletin will know of the recent progress made on the analysis of body condition in waders and the development of ways of assessing this in the field. Such developments require analysis of dead birds, both those accidentally killed and those dying apparently because of adverse weather conditions.

Freshly dead whole bodies should be well wrapped in polythene bags inside strong external wrapping (to prevent leakage in the post, which contravenes Post Office regulations) and sent by first class mail to: N.C. Davidson, Department of Zoology, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE. Mark the package: "Pathological specimens - URGENT" and please include a note of details of how obtained and where, weight at time of death/capture, etc.

British Ring Size 'F'

'F's' are rather unsatisfactory rings which are used either butted or overlapped. They are generally overlapped on Oystercatchers *Haematopus ostralegus* and can cause problems if the ring is put on tightly because the fleshy leg of this species may swell (perhaps from irritation by debris getting between the leg and ring) so that the ring becomes a ligating band and injures the leg. This type of injury though rare has been reported regularly. It could probably be prevented if butted rings of correct internal diameter were used. When F's are used on Curlews *Numenius arquata* they are butted and the springy rings (supplied in C shape) are difficult to butt satisfactorily. The British Trust for Ornithology is considering supplying a new ring in modified 'V' shape (which would butt easily) with an internal diameter of around 8-9 mms designed mainly for these two wader species. To ensure 'correct' size we urgently require a series of maximum tarsus diameter measurements from both species. If anyone catches the species in the near future please take such measurements with callipers to the nearest 0.1 mm and send them to G.H. Green, Windy Ridge, Little Comberton, Pershore, Worcs., WR10 3EW, England.

Wader Study Group data forms

Various studies noted previously in the Bulletin depend on the co-operative collection of data by ringers and groups in different areas and, in many cases, it is unlikely that individual workers can alone collect adequate data. This is one reason for the Group's existence. Some relevant recent requests are analysis of cold weather weights of waders generally (Bull 25:5) and Redshank *Tringa totanus* in particular (Bull 26:4) and moult of waders (Bull 26:3). The matter is also discussed in Bulls 29 and 30 and elsewhere in this issue and there are good prospects at present for the analysis of these co-operatively gathered data. All wader ringers are urged to send data routinely to the WSG files and to make attempts to supply earlier data where this has not already been done. Forms are available from and should be returned to:- Wader Study Group, M.W. Pienkowski, Dept. of Zoology, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE, GB. If at all possible, ringers are urged to adopt the new style forms for both new data and any earlier material.

Data transcribers wanted!

The previous item requests wader ringers to rewrite their existing data on the new style WSG data forms, as part of the current WSG project on Movements of Wader Populations in Western Europe (see also elsewhere in this issue). Even if you do not have any such data, you can still take part by helping those who have too much to face the daunting task alone! If you think you may be able to help by transcribing some data, please contact Mike Pienkowski (address and phone no. on inside front cover).

Curlew Measurements

Ian P. Bainbridge (137 Denton Road, Denton Burn, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England) is analysing geographical variation in wing- and bill-lengths and weights of Curlew *Numenius arquata* in Europe and would welcome further data from anywhere in Europe. Sources of data will, of course, be acknowledged.

Redshank chicks

As part of a study of the breeding biology of the Redshank *Tringa totanus* I am looking at growth and development of chicks. I would be grateful if the following could be taken on any caught. Data on retraps is especially important: a) weight; b) tarsus length; c) bill length (tip to posterior margin of nares); d) date and place; and, on old chicks with some further growth, e) wing length. To complete the growth curves it is necessary to obtain similar data for any juveniles caught during July, August and September. To increase the chance of ringing chicks at the nest, I can provide predictive data on hatching date, based on egg volume and weight, or egg floatation. Barry J. Yates, Department of Biology, Liverpool Polytechnic, Byrom Street, Liverpool L3 3AF, England.

Woodcock Wings

The Woodcock and Snipe Research Group are collecting data from Woodcock wings to aid sex and age determination. Anyone interested in this project should write to Dr. H. Kalchreuter, D-7823 Bonndorf-Glashutte, Federal Republic of Germany. Information on these characters has been published by Clausager, I. (1973) 'Age and sex determination of the Woodcock' Danish Rev. Game Biology 8:1-18 copies of which may be available from Vildtbiologisk Station, Kalø, 8410 Rønde, Denmark.

Total head length - a request for data

In recent years bill length has been used as a criterion for identification of sex and race in some wader species. However, the measurement presents problems in some species (e.g. Oystercatchers and Redshanks), especially as the bill/feather dividing point may change position through the year especially in relation to moult. I have therefore been measuring total head length (head plus bill) as well as bill length during a study of Dunlin on the Severn Estuary, England. Unfortunately, I have only been able to catch birds between November and March, as they do not moult on my study site.

It would be very useful if wader catchers could measure head length as well as bill length, especially on species which are likely to be retrapped during a different time of year. This will enable a proper assessment of the value

of head length to be made. Preferably the measurements should be made with callipers to an accuracy of .1mm (total head length and bill). However, a reasonable degree of accuracy has been obtained using a wide rule, and measuring to .5mm or 1mm. Details of measuring devices were given by G.H. Green in WSG Bull. 29.

Nigel A. Clark, Department of Zoology, University of Edinburgh, GB.

Münster sewage farms

The work of the Biologische Station at Münster was outlined in an article in Bulletin 28 and was the subject of two requests in Bull 27:3. The workers there would welcome information on management of wetlands, particularly Typha control. Secondly, in summer, particularly August, there is the opportunity for young ornithologists to take part in activities such as recording, ringing and habitat management. Basic accommodation, including washing and cooking facilities, will be available and there is space for tents. On either aspect write to:

Biologische Station Rieselfelder Münster, Wöstebach 11, D-4400 Münster, West Germany.

CURRENT COLOUR-MARKING SCHEMES FOR WADERS

A full list of Old World schemes for which details were available was printed in Bulletin 31, which also detailed the new arrangement for registering colour marking schemes. These arrangements must be followed by anyone in the British ringing scheme who is also operating a colour-marking scheme. EURING also requests ringers in other parts of Europe to follow this registration scheme. We list below schemes notified to WSG since the last full list in Bulletin 31. If your scheme is not in one of these two lists, please contact WSG as soon as possible.

NO NEW SCHEME USING ANY FORM OF COLOUR-MARKING ON WADERS SHOULD BE STARTED WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH WADER STUDY GROUP: anyone who does so is likely to jeopardise the results of other studies as well as his/her own.

WSG will forward sightings reported by birdwatchers to the appropriate scheme if this can be identified. Scheme operators should notify WSG and the reporter of any details of the bird sighted, even if distant sightings are not of great interest to that particular project, as failure to do so discourages reporting of sightings to schemes that do depend on such co-operation.

Address for scheme registration and reporting of sightings:

Wader Study Group, M.W.Pienkowski, Dept. of Zoology, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE, GB.

SCHEMES NOTIFIED TO WSG SINCE BULLETIN 31.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

See list in Bruno Ens' article in Bulletin 31.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Somme, France (F.Sueur, 16 rue de Cubertin, 80800 Corbie, France) colour rings

R.Eider, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany (Johann-Detlef Reese, Utholm 4A, 2256 Garding, W.Germany) colour rings

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, 85 Ave de Paris, 78000 Versailles, France) colour rings

Outer Hebrides, Scotland (Dr. N. E. Buxton, Nature Conservancy Council, 42 Aird Tong, Isle of Lewis, Western Isles, GB) colour rings

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, see Ringed Plover)

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, see Ringed Plover)

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, see Ringed Plover)

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, see Ringed Plover)

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, see Ringed Plover)

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, see Ringed Plover)

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, see Ringed Plover)

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, see Ringed Plover)

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, see Ringed Plover)

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania (J.Trotignon, see Ringed Plover)

Nidingen Island, Sweden (Thomas Carlén, Nidingense Fågelstation, Box 10305, 434 01 Kungsbacka, Sweden) colour rings