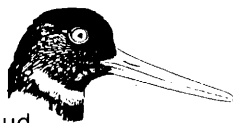


NOTES AND NEWS 6

compiled by Nick Davidson & David Stroud



SOUTH AMERICAN SHOREBIRD ATLAS

Just received from the Canadian Wildlife Service: Guy Morrison and Ken Ross' Atlas of *Nearctic shorebirds on the coast of South America*. In two volumes this presents the results of winter survey of some 28 000 km of coastline between 1982 and 1986. It documents in maps and tables, by species and by country and region, the distribution of the over 2.9 million shorebirds that were counted during the surveys. The surveys were carried out under the Canadian Wildlife Service Latin American Program, which was set up in 1980 to support projects of conservational interest dealing with groups of birds shared between Canada and Latin American countries.

A full review of the Atlas will appear in a future *Bulletin*. In the meantime we offer our congratulations to Guy Morrison and Ken Ross on the culmination of a remarkable achievement.

Copies of the Atlas are available through Canadian Wildlife Service, National Wildlife Research Centre, 100 Gamelin Boulevard, Hull PQ, Canada K1A 0H3.



Western
Hemisphere
Shorebird
Reserve
Network

WHSRN NEWS

Volume 2 no. 1 of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network News describes the dedication of three new Hemispheric Shorebird Reserves along the coast of Suriname: Wia-wia Nature Reserve, Coppename Monding Nature Reserve and Bigi Pan Multiple Use Area. These reserves are particularly important for the very large numbers of Semipalmated Sandpipers *Calidris pusilla* that they support, and have been twinned with the Bay of Fundy Hemispheric Reserves. A report of the ceremony by Guy Morrison will appear in the August 1989 *Bulletin*.

More than 3 000 waders have been banded with blue flags and colour bands in Brasil since it joined the Pan American Shorebird Program in 1986, with banding taking place mostly at three places on the Atlantic coastline. Semipalmated Sandpipers are the most frequently banded, forming 24% of of birds caught. There have now been a number of sightings of Brazilian-banded shorebirds, especially on the coasts of New Jersey and Maine. Red Knots *Calidris canutus* have been the most commonly sighted, along with Sanderlings *Calidris alba* and Semipalmated Sandpipers. The sightings indicate that birds wintering on the Brazilian coastline concentrate in Delaware Bay as their major late spring staging area.

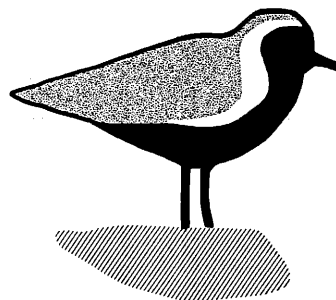
Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO) in California is planning to conduct a spring and autumn census of shorebirds in the coastal wetlands of California. The censuses aim provide

broad-based information on the numbers and distribution of shorebirds in California during migration - a first step in PRBO's programme for the management and conservation of shorebirds in California. Results of this work are already proving useful in helping to establish the need for habitat protection in the San Francisco Bay area. Anyone wishing to help with the censuses (22-23 April and 19-20 August) should contact Janet Kjølmyr, PRBO, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, California, USA.

"YELLOW" GOLDEN PLOVERS

Oscar Johnson of Moorhead State University, USA, has been conducting a long-term research programme on Pacific Golden Plovers *Pluvialis fulva* on Pacific islands, and has recently published a detailed account of the ecophysiology and behaviour of these birds on Hawaii (*Condor* 91: 156-177). As part of his continuing studies on Pacific Golden Plovers, he has been colour-banding and plumage-dyeing birds in spring on Oahu, Hawaiian islands, in an attempt to expand knowledge of migration routes and breeding ground locations, and has publicised this with the attractive poster reproduced (unfortunately only in monochrome) below.

ALERT: Watch for "Yellow" Golden-Plovers



A yellow dye has been applied to the white plumage of Pacific Golden-Plovers captured on Oahu, Hawaiian Islands, spring 1989. We seek improved knowledge of trans-Pacific migration routes and the locations of breeding grounds. The birds will be wearing one or more color-bands on the right, left, or both legs. Please record the exact combination if possible.

Sightings should be reported to Oscar Johnson, Dept. of Biology, Moorhead State University, Moorhead, Minnesota 56560 (tele. 218-236-2360) or Robert Gill, AFWRC, 1011 E. Tudor Rd., Anchorage, Alaska 99503 (tele. 907-786-3514) and to the Bird Banding Laboratory, Laurel, Maryland 20708.

DISTURBING DECLINES IN SANDERLING POPULATIONS

Pete Myers has written an intriguing account of Sanderlings and their conservation in the Western Hemisphere (*Audubon Wildlife Report 1988/1989*: 651-666). In it he reports on an alarming decline over the last 15 years in the Sanderling populations. Myers reports that the International Shorebird Survey (ISS) has

revealed widespread declines of shorebirds migrating south on the East Coast of North America in autumn. In a decade of monitoring 10 of the 12 species monitored by ISS declined in numbers, by an average of 44%. Sanderlings showed the greatest drop in numbers, declining 80% since 1972. The decline was steady and monotypic.

Few data from South American wintering sites are available to test the trend, although preliminary analyses from several sites in Peru and Chile are mostly consistent with the ISS results. Complications arising from the effects of El Niño current, however, make interpreting these trends difficult.

Data from the Pacific coast, the third winter population centre of New World Sanderlings, do not show such a consistent long-term trend. For example, numbers at Bodega Bay in California stayed steady through the late 1970s, dropped significantly in the mid-1980s and then rose again.

Myers points out that the ISS results, if true, indicate a decline of alarming proportions - perhaps the largest decline to be reported for any common widespread North American species during the middle of the 20th century. The causes of the decline can only be speculated on, but the monotypic nature of the decline suggests that it is not the result of short-term environmental variations such as El Niño, and the absence of a decline in the Californian populations indicates that it does not stem from a cumulative environmental change across the Arctic.

Two other possible factors are suggested. One is that the widespread use of pesticides on agricultural land along the Pacific coast of South America produces pesticide-laden water discharges across the beaches where Sanderling aggregate, so that pesticides accumulate in body tissues, perhaps causing sublethal effects on the birds. A second factor may be the continuing degradation and destruction of coastal habitats important for migration, and perhaps the loss of an undocumented staging site on the Texas coast.

SUGGESTED ENGLISH NAME-CHANGES FOR SOME WESTERN PALEARCTIC BIRDS

The British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee has published a list of suggested changes to the English names of a number of Western Palearctic birds, with the aim of removing ambiguities and avoiding confusion (*Ibis* 130 (Supplement); *British Birds* 81: 355-377).

Amongst the suggested name-changes are a number for waders, which we list below (see the full paper for the reasons behind the suggested changes):

Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* to become Greater Painted Snipe;
Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* to become Northern Pied Oystercatcher;
Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* to become Pied Avocet;
Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedipiciformis* to become Northern Thick-knee;
Egyptian Plover *Pluvialis aegyptius* to become Crocodile-plover;
Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* to become Killdeer Plover;
Kittlitz's Sand Plover *Charadrius pecuarius* to become Kittlitz's Plover;

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* to become Mountain Dotterel;
Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* to become European Golden Plover;
Blackhead Plover *Hoplopterus tectus* to become Black-headed Plover;
Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* to become Northern Lapwing;
Knot *Calidris canutus* to become Red Knot;
Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* to become Rufous-necked Stint;
Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* to become Common Snipe;
Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* to become Eurasian Woodcock;
Little Whimbrel *Numenius minutus* to become Little Curlew;
Curlew *Numenius arquata* to become Western Curlew;
Redshank *Tringa totanus* to become Common Redshank;
Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* to become Common Greenshank;
Grey-rumped Tattler *Heteroscelus brevipes* to become Grey-tailed Tattler;
Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* to become Ruddy Turnstone.

The Committee stress that these are merely proposals for consideration by the world's birdwatchers and ornithologists. Publication of the list is not intended to encourage immediate use of the names, but to generate discussion.

The Committee asks for constructive comment (reasons for objecting to a proposed name or proposals for improvements) to be made in writing and sent (to arrive before 1 October 1989) to: *The Secretary, Records Committee, British Ornithologists' Union, c/o British Museum (Natural History), Sub-Department of Ornithology, Tring, Herts. HP23 6AP, U.K.*

USSR WADER EXPEDITIONS

The Taymyr peninsula in northern Siberia is an area of great interest to wader-workers throughout Europe and Africa, since many of the waders using the East Atlantic and other flyways are believed to breed there. It is therefore very exciting to hear that the Soviet government has invited a team of six German ornithologists, including Peter Prokosch of WWF-Wattenmeerstelle and WSG Co-ordinator Hermann Hotker to take part in a Soviet expedition to the southern shore of Lake Taymyr on the Taymyr peninsula during July and August 1989.

The team plans to colour-dye breeding waders and to catch moulting geese, and hopes to work co-operatively with Wojciech Kania from the Gdansk Ornithological Station (Poland) who plans to be working in the same area during June and July 1989.

We look greatly forward to hearing about the work on the Taymyr peninsula later in the summer.

