

NOTES & NEWS & NEWS & NOTES NOTES & NEWS

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Robin M. Ward

SUPER-GLUE TO THE RESCUE

This spring I was applying a plastic color-band to the leg of a Wood Thrush. I accidentally nicked the blood vessel in the tarsus and this poor bird bled profusely. Nothing stopped it. I tried "Stay" (a product they sell for pet bird bleeding toenails), silver nitrite sticks, pressure, chanting mantras *etc.* The solution turned out to be a drop of Super Glue. I've heard that it is used fairly often in animal surgery, and it worked like a charm. We never relocated the bird over the summer, but this fall the bird repeated. She was fine with no sign of injury to the leg at all.

At the risk of sounding like a commercial, I now keep a bottle of Super Glue handy for life's little disasters. BTW, I have used it on minor cuts on myself, with no apparent side effects other than the general insanity with which I was already afflicted.

Julie Craves, Rouge River Bird Observatory

BUT EXTREME CAUTION....

Whilst there may be a rôle for Super Glue as described above in ornithological emergencies, I would strongly advise against *any* human application. If applied to the edges of anything other than most superficial wounds, the glue, whilst inhibiting bleeding as noted above, also permanently seals the edges of a cut thus inhibiting healing and increasing resultant scarring.

A friend has severe scars on her palm where the edges of a split dinner plate being super-glued slipped, gashing her hand. The effect of the still-wet

glue was to instantly seal the edge of the cut and thus greatly increase the long-term severity of the wound.

David A. Stroud

HAVE YOU ANY RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS?

We have received a request from S.V. Raajalinga Raja who is undertaking a study of the feeding ecology of wintering birds in the Great Verdaranyam Swamp, Tamilnadu, India. He would like to receive any reprints or abstracts of research papers which are of relevance to his study. Please send any such material to S.V. Raajalinga Raja, D-5, Staff Quarters, Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Madras - 600 048, India.

SILENT HILLS

Recent significant declines in farmland birds in Wales are documented in a RSPB report entitled *Silent Hills*. This discussion document, published in July 1995, was designed to supplement information from the British Trust for Ornithology's population monitoring programme *e.g.* Common Bird Census, since the latter - as a consequence of being dependent upon volunteer surveyors - achieves best coverage in south and east England.

Data in the report originates both from original fieldwork and discussions with farmers, landowners and birdwatchers. *Silent Hills* considers the Welsh population of breeding Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus* to have fallen from approximately 7,500 pairs in 1987 to the present day 1,500 pairs. Other breeding wader populations found to have declined dramatically included Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* by 45% over six years, Curlew *Numenius arquata* by 84% from 1970 at six sites, and Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* from 250 pairs in the 1970s to fewer than a 100 pairs now in Wales.

Changes in farming practises, notably increased drainage and increased sheep grazing, are identified as the causes of the observed declines. In

stark contrast to the breeding wader populations, the numbers of sheep grazing the Welsh hills has risen from 4 million in 1945 to over 11 million by 1992. The report is grave reading given that the declines are very recent ones.

THE SLENDER-BILLED CURLEW'S DEMISE

A paper by Jacques van Impe in *Alauda* (63: 11-114), considers that the loss of breeding grounds is a factor in the decline of the Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris*. Habitat loss and excessive hunting at migration stop-over areas and in the wintering areas have previously been suggested as the main causes of the species demise. In recent years the focus of attention in the hunt to locate the Slender-billed Curlew breeding area has been the transition area of southern taiga and forest-steppe of western Siberia. However it has also been suggested that the species' breeding haunts were to be found in the steppe and near-steppe areas of Europe and Asia. van Impe points to the last observations of Slender-billed Curlew flocks in the wintering grounds of North Africa coincided with the cultivation of huge areas of steppe Kazakhstan.

van Impe advises that future efforts in locating breeding Slender-billed Curlew should be directed to the northern Aralo-Caspian steppes. This accords with views published last year by Victor Belik (*WSG Bulletin* 75: 37-38).

SICILIAN WADER EXPEDITION

A short ringing (and counting) expedition was made by the Italian INFS team last spring to Syracuse coastal wetlands, at the southernmost end of Sicily. A total of 513 wader were ringed between 24 April and 7 May (top species: Little Stint 339, Curlew Sandpiper 135). Foreign recoveries of Curlew Sandpiper and Temminck's Stint were made (both from Poland). We may repeat the experience at the end of summer 1996: if anyone wishes to join us, just let us know!

Nicola Baccetti