

## The WSG Colour-marking Register

The WSG Colour-marking Register recently reached a milestone with the registration of the 400<sup>th</sup> colour marking scheme: a Europe-wide study of Wood Sandpipers organised by the Waterbird Research Group in Gdansk, Poland. We mention this to indicate the importance of colour-marking for wader study and the important rôle the WSG plays in co-ordinating these 400 schemes. To further improve the running of the register the permanent and temporary colour-marking schemes have now been combined and will be run by the same co-ordinators.

### THE PERMANENT COLOUR-MARKING REGISTER

Since 1991 when the first fees were set, the cost of postage and stationary and the amount of work involved in running the WSG Colour-marking Register have increased significantly. To meet these increases it has been necessary to increase the initial registration fee and the annual servicing fee. The initial registration fee will increase to £7 and will apply to all new schemes registered from 1st January 1997. The new annual servicing fees are set out below and will apply to all new schemes set up after 1 January 1997. Existing schemes will pay the current fees in 1997 and the new fees from 1998.

Number of combinations	Annual Fee (£)
1-100	7
101-250	9
251-400	11
401-550	13
551-700	15
701-850	17
851-1000	19
1001-1150	21
1151-1300	23
1301-1450	25
1450+	27

To ensure that the Colour-marking Register runs as smoothly as possible and to ensure that the information we send out is as accurate as possible we are about to start up dating the addresses of all the registered schemes. It is hoped that all addresses will be computerised so that future changes can be dealt with more efficiently. If any part of your address has been incorrect in any mailings sent out by the Register, or has recently changed, or you know that the address of any colour-ringing colleagues has changed please notify the Register Co-ordinators.

There are still several untraceable colour-ringed sightings. A list of these is given below. If you suspect that you may

be operating an unregistered scheme please notify the co-ordinators.

Each item in the list is recorded as left leg, right leg. The // indicates the birds tarsal joint (or "knee"). The colours are listed from the top to bottom. So a bird seen with red above the left knee, yellow above white below the left knee, metal above the right knee and blue below the right knee is listed as **R//Y,W M//B**. When the colour of a ring is uncertain, such as "Red/Orange" it is indicated as (R,O). When nothing is written either side of the // it means no ring was recorded either above or below the knee. If the knee (//) is not indicated the precise location of the rings is not known. ?? indicates that the observer did not see that particular part of the leg. The following abbreviations are used for the colours R=Red, O=Orange, Y=Yellow, G=Green, L=Light Green, B=Blue, P=Pale Blue, N=Black (Niger), W=White and M=Metal.

CODE	LEFT LEG	RIGHT LEG	PLACE SEEN
<b>Black-tailed Godwit</b>			
97/BW1	G//	Y//	Somerset, England
<b>Curlew</b>			
97/CU1	R//	R,Y//	Barnstable, England
97/CU2	N,L//L,M	R,L//	Co. Down, N. Ireland
97/CU3	N,B//	R,G//G,M	Lincolnshire, England
<b>Kentish Plover</b>			
97/KP1	B,M//	O,R//	France
97/KP2	P,W//	Y,R//O	Parc du Marquenterre, France
<b>Oystercatcher</b>			
97/OC1	//M,G	//Y,R,Mauve	Hampshire, England
97/OC2	//R,M	//Y,N+O	Devon, England
97/OC3	//M	//R,G,Y	Suffolk, England
<b>Purple Sandpiper</b>			
97/PS1		W,M	Kintyre, Scotland
<b>Ringed Plover</b>			
97/RP1	B//G,G	G//P,M	Delta del Ebre, Spain

## THE TEMPORARY REGISTER

The temporary marking of waders using either plumage dyes or leg flags is increasingly being used in the study of waders. To facilitate the accurate registering of schemes and reporting of sightings two new forms have been

produced. Anyone wishing to report a temporary marked wader or wish to register a new scheme should contact

the Register. If you have used a temporary scheme during 1996 please notify the co-ordinators as there are a number of untraceable sightings. To cover the costs of running the Temporary Register all new schemes will be required to pay a one-off payment of £5 for each species.

Stephen Browne & Harriet Mead

Reviews

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van der Have, T.M., van de Sant, S., Verkuil, Y. & van der Winden, J. (eds). 1994. *Waterbirds in the Sivash, Ukraine, spring 1992*. WIWO Report No. 36. WIWO, Zeist. 102 pp.

The book can be purchased by paying Dfl.20 (plus Dfl.15 - administration cost for each separate order) to postal giro account 2.666.009 or to ABN bank account 57.02.16.613 of Stichting WIWO, van Stuivenbergweg 4, 6644 AB Ewijk, The Netherlands.

The Sivash is well known as one of the largest European shallow lagoon systems, which attracts very large numbers of waterbirds, including waders, for breeding and during migration (e.g. Grimmett & Jones, 1989. *Important Bird Areas in Europe*. ICBP Technical Publ. 9). This was confirmed by the data presented in this report. According to this study, 320 000-560 000 waders of 37 species stop in the Sivash during April and May in an area of about 2 500 sq.km.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* and Dunlin *Calidris alpina* are the most numerous species. Practically the whole Mediterranean wintering population of Dunlin (100 000-200 000 individuals) and at least 30% (6 000-8 000 individuals) of the European breeding population of the Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* wintering in the Middle East migrate through the Sivash. As there is no other stopover site of similar importance known for these populations during spring migration, the Sivash thus has unique importance for the conservation of European Dunlin and Broad-billed Sandpiper populations.

It should be noted that the Sivash has been the subject of the constant attention of Ukrainian ornithologists for many years. The main research activities of the Azov-Black Sea Ornithological Station of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences are currently concentrated in this area. The large number of studies, partly listed in the Report, are devoted to waterbirds of the Sivash, especially to breeding species. A complex study of distribution patterns and bird number dynamics during migration was lacking however. This situation contrasted with the level of ornithological knowledge of the East Atlantic flyway and the Mediterranean winter grounds of waterbirds. Because Arctic breeding birds concentrate in a few key areas during migration, the ecological condition and conservation of any such area, the Sivash in particular, can determine stability of whole geographic populations of some waterbirds.

This WIWO Report is the output of an international expedition aimed on study of waterbirds on the Sivash

during 1992 spring migration. The introduction outlines the general characteristics of the Sivash as a wetland, its importance for migrating waders, the reasons of initiation of the Azov Sea Wader Project 1992 and its three objectives. These were:

- 1) to study numbers and distribution of waterbirds so as to evaluate the international importance of the Sivash area in spring and thus to stimulate the establishment of a National Park;
- 2) to establish in particular the importance of the Sivash area for the Western Palearctic population of Broad-billed Sandpiper during spring migration; and
- 3) to study the spring migration ecology of arctic waders, and the Broad-billed Sandpiper in particular.

The main part of the Report consists of five chapters. The Sivash lagoon system and study areas in the Central and East Sivash are described in detail. Results of regular waterbird counts on the main study areas and in other sites of the Sivash, as well as analysis of distribution and number dynamics of all wader species are presented in the next chapter. There is quite detailed analysis of feeding ecology and food supply for migratory waders in the Central and East Sivash, and results of ringing and biometry of captured waders in two following chapters. Apart of this, a paper about the Broad-billed Sandpiper reprinted from *Wader Study Group Bulletin* (1993; 71: 41-43) is given as a separate chapter. The international importance of the Sivash is discussed in the Conclusion, which recommends the creation of a large National Park or a