



Editorial

WSG membership is a bargain and it's getting even better!

WSG is run on a shoestring. None of the officers are paid to work on behalf of the group. We do not budget to make a surplus. Moreover the subscription (in UK pounds) has not been increased for so long that no one can remember when that last happened. In these days of ever increasing costs, this is a minor miracle! Undoubtedly much of the credit goes to the careful management of our finances by WSG treasurer, Bob Loos, as well as efforts to produce and distribute the *Bulletin* as economically as possible. All this might seem like the prelude to an announcement that subscriptions are about to increase. On the contrary, for many members subscriptions are about to decrease!

At this year's Annual Conference in Poland, Bob Loos announced that, as from 2003, the subscriptions of members living in low-income countries (according to World Bank criteria) will be half the full rate. Moreover there will be no change in the full rate either. The purpose of this change is to encourage more new members to join the WSG from the extensive areas of the world that are important for shorebird conservation, but where money is in short supply. Existing members, especially those in low-income countries, are asked to spread the news of this change and do all they can to encourage new people to join.

Although the subscription for members in high-income countries has not been reduced, at £17 or US\$27 or €27 it

surely represents extremely good value for money. Nobody wants to see it increase. The way to ensure that it does not is to enrol more new members. Not only will this keep subscriptions down, but it will also ensure the future of WSG as the leading organisation for wader researchers in the world. Let us all play our part in this.

The Agony and the Ecstasy

Let's be honest: one of the main reasons why we study waders is that we enjoy it! OK, it is true that we are contributing vital information to conservation science, but would we really be so enthusiastic if the objects of our endeavours were not so beautiful, and did not do such wonderful things, and if we did not thoroughly enjoy the cat-and-mouse game of getting to grips with their lives? I doubt it!

I have to confess that, in the careful presentation of scientific facts, this enjoyment is seldom evident in the pages of the *Bulletin*. We read about the results, but not about the fun of obtaining them. In order to go a little way towards making good this deficiency, this issue includes Chris Hassell's amiable story of *The day we caught six Painted Snipe*. There are no plans to publish a string of articles along these lines. But, just once in a while, it does no harm to remind ourselves about one of the main things that motivates us: the agony and the ecstasy!

Humphrey Sitters

