

INTERNATIONAL SHOREBIRD SURVEYS 1977

by the Canadian Wildlife Service
and the Manomet Bird Observatory

In 1974, shorebird survey schemes involving volunteer participants were initiated in eastern Canada by the Canadian Wildlife Service and in areas of the eastern U.S. by the Manomet Bird Observatory. A principal objective of these schemes has been to identify and document areas of major importance to shorebirds in eastern North America. With our estuaries continuing to come under pressure from an increasing number of development proposals, renewed concern must be expressed for this group of birds, and the future preservation of their habitat must be viewed as a matter of some importance.

It is clear that some estuaries are of critical importance in the yearly cycles of many species of shorebirds. Without the feeding and resting areas that such estuaries provide, many shorebirds would be unable to accumulate the large fat reserves required for an oversea journey to the wintering grounds. Owing to the large geographical area involved, one of the only ways of obtaining regular, coordinated information concerning shorebirds has been to request the assistance of volunteer observers, who have adopted a local area which they have surveyed for shorebirds once every two weeks during the southward autumn migration. The results of these surveys have already been most useful and are making a valuable contribution towards the conservation of a very important segment of the bird life of North America.

In 1975 and 1976, the survey scheme was extended to cover as much of the eastern coast of North America as possible, as well as the Caribbean Islands and northern South America. In 1977 we wish to extend the scheme as much as possible in all areas, and to include coverage in the winter and spring periods where appropriate. We hope that you may be willing and able to assist in this project. It would involve adopting a good shorebird location or 'study area' in which you could count or accurately estimate the numbers of shorebirds once every 10-14 days during autumn (early July until mid October) or spring migration periods, or at monthly intervals during the winter (November to March). If you are unable to visit an area regularly, occasional counts from other areas, especially during peak migration periods, would be very welcome and worthwhile, e.g. counts from shorebird areas that you might make during the course of a vacation. Areas could be covered on an individual basis or as a group project.

Thank you very much for your consideration. If you are able to assist us, or know of any other competent birders who might, we should be grateful if you could contact one of the following:

(1) for areas in Canada:

Dr. R. I. G. Morrison
Canadian Wildlife Service
2721 Highway 31
Ottawa, Ontario
CANADA K1A 0E7

(2) for areas in U.S.A., Caribbean Islands and South America:

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