

	<u>North Sea</u>	<u>Wash</u>	<u>Conway</u>	<u>Dee</u>	<u>Morecambe</u>
N.E.England	-	-	-	1	1
Humber	1	1	-	-	-
Wash	1	-	1	-	1
Essex/Suffolk	-	3	-	1	-
Kent	-	2	-	-	-
Severn	-	1	-	-	-
Dee	-	2	-	-	1
Morecambe	-	2	-	1	-

In addition one of the two Icelandic Dunlin controlled on Foulney, Morecambe Bay on 25.7.71 had been ringed at Eyjofjordar on 14.6.65. Many foreign ringed Dunlin have been controlled already and details of these will appear in later bulletins.

Sanderling

FG	7.9.59	Beadnall, Northumb.	+ Somme, France	6.9.70
Ad	18.5.69	Snettisham, Wash	+ Manche, France	27.7.71
Juv	28.9.69	Heacham, Wash	c Point of Air, Dee	24.5.71

In addition the details of the South African ringed Sanderling controlled on the Wash are now at hand.

14.3.71 Kommetjie, nr. Cape Town c Heacham 15.5.71

Ruff

Ad.M.	30.8.64	Abberton, Essex	+ Pesaro, Italy	5.3.71
Ad.M.	23.8.69	Wisbech, S.F.Cambs.	c Shotton, Dee	6.3.71

Avocet

Pull	18.7.71	Minsmere, Suffolk	x Zuid Flevoland, IJsselmeerpolder Netherlands	24.9.71
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This is the second British ringed Avocet to be recovered abroad and shows an interesting movement slightly north of east.

UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA EXPEDITION TO MOROCCO 1971

by Mike Pienkowski

5 Some time ago, it became apparent that for many species of waders, breeding and wintering in remote areas, the pattern of recoveries reflected more the distribution of literate humans than that of birds. Hence it seemed that the best way to study migration routes of the birds is to visit likely sites oneself. Counts in January 1966 showed Morocco to be a considerable wintering area and it seemed likely that the Atlantic coast could be equally or more important as a migration staging post for many species. Accordingly, an expedition to Morocco to catch and count waders on autumn migration has been in planning for the last two years and took place in August and September this year. The value of the work has been enhanced by the two complementary expeditions to Iceland which have been

organised in the intervening period.

The expedition was organised from the University of East Anglia, the team of eleven coming from there and the Wash Wader Ringing Group, together with Olivier Fournier of the French Vendee Wader research team. A project of this magnitude would not be possible without considerable financial assistance and we are grateful to the Universities of East Anglia, London and Oxford, the B.T.O. and several firms and Charitable Trusts who supplied grants. The Administration des Eaux et Forets of Morocco gave permission to work and the Institut Scientifique Cherifien supplied French rings. Our policy was to be as flexible as possible and to this end we were equipped with cannon-nets supplied by the W.W.R.G. as well as mist nets and even gonging nets.

Our journey to Morocco was made interesting by the impounding of our vehicles for a day by French customs, a petrol stove explosion and four tyres on our 5-ton cross-country truck bursting at regular intervals through France, Spain and Morocco. The initial aim was to travel south along the 1,000 miles of Atlantic coast in August to recce all major wetlands and catch on the return during September. Our first call was to the large tidal lagoon of Merja Zerga in the north. This site was large enough to keep several thousand waders on it well scattered and with no particularly promising catching site we headed south to the salt-pan area between El Jadida and Oualidia. The pans stretch intermitently for about 30 miles along the coast, the area being up to one mile wide. In two places the sea breaks through the sand dune to form long tidal lagoons winding back into salt marsh and eventually to the pans. We stayed a few days on one of these lagoons to cannon-net. Despite problems with a Lanner Falcon scaring birds away and sitting frustratingly near to the catching area, about 150 waders were caught. Most of these were Ringed Plover including one Icelandic control and many birds in suspended primary moult.

Our next stop was just south of the Atlas Mountains to view the Oued (River) Sous and Oued Massa estuaries near Agadir. While repairing a rear half-shaft of the Land Rover which had broken in soft sand (fortunately during the neap tide series) we gonged a few Dunlin and cannon-netted a small sample (5) of juvenile Knot. The migration was by this time (25th August) building up and we hurried south into the Sahara to our next site, the Oued Chebeika estuary which is a small green patch in a barren stony desert. Ten days were spent here trying to catch the flocks of waders, particularly Sanderling, Dunlin, Ringed, Kentish and Grey Plovers and Redshank which were continually arriving to moult and pass on. Unfortunately the gods were not with us and a string of bad luck prevented a big cannon-net catch. However 60 birds including one Dutch ringed juvenile Common Tern were caught with a good deal of effort. Our hopes of reaching the lagoon of Puerto Cansado further south into the desert were dashed by lack of time and the shaking apart of the Land Rover steering on a 50 mile survey of the route across trackless boulder desert.

With one high tide series left we pulled out of the Chebeika and moved rapidly back to the Oualidia salt pans, passing en route only to get a meal which did not consist of dried stew and Ryvita and to watch Eleanor's Falcons at Mogodor Island. Back at Oualidia for a week, cannon-netting was again plagued by birds of prey but mist-netting on the salt pans produced an average of well over 100 birds per night. After a week using every tide the total had increased by about 850 including numerous retraps, one Redshank control (Local),

one Danish ringed Dunlin and one Icelandic ringed juvenile Dunlin. This latter proved to be one of 8 birds ringed by James Wilson at Gardskagi, Iceland exactly 3 weeks earlier (31st August).

The Expedition was completed with a few days spent in Vendee on the West Coast of France. The combination of magnificent wader flocks, French cooking and wine and the superb hospitality of Francois Spitz and Olivier and Sylvian Fournier restored our energy sufficiently to make the first (albeit small) cannon-net catch in France. We would like to think that not the least of our achievements is the introduction of this technique to the country as a team is now being organised to obtain and operate this type of net. A total of 1,101 new birds and controls were handled in Morocco and the totals are given below. The results are currently being prepared for a full Report. The present expedition has surveyed the Atlantic Coast of Morocco for autumn wader sites - some of the southern ones never having been visited at this time of year - and it is very important to continue this level of activity: Two smaller expeditions are at present being organised for next year: one by Derek Stanyard to revisit the excellent mist-netting sites of Oualidia and one by myself to Tarfaya Province (Oued Chebeika and Puerto Cansado) where the flocks of Sanderling and Knot are particularly tempting, as is the flock of Dunlin on the Chebeika which was seen to be carrying a high density of rings.

6 Total of new birds and controls caught by the Expedition.

Night Heron	1	Ruff	9
Water Rail	1	Redshank	171
Oystercatcher	8	Greenshank	9
Ringed Plover	143	Common Sandpiper	10
Little Ringed Plover	1	Black-tailed Godwit	5
Kentish Plover	65	Bar-tailed Godwit	2
Grey Plover	13	Curlew	1
Turnstone	13	Snipe	1
Little Stint	75	Black-winged Stilt	3
Dunlin	366	Black Tern	107
Curlew Sandpiper	12	Common Tern	14
Knot	28	Little Tern	10
Sanderling	11	Assorted passerines (8 spp)	20
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		TOTAL	1101 (34 spp)
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