

NORTH AMERICAN SECTION No. 3

Editor

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Colour marking

Various members will be carrying out colour-marking studies in 1979 and observers are asked to keep a watch for birds marked during their studies as well as for birds marked during recently completed projects. Please note as many details as possible, including species, date, place, colour of dye and part of bird marked, colour, number and position of colour bands and metal band, including whether the bands were located above or below the 'knee'. Where the origin of the bird is known, a report should be sent directly to the bander, as well as to the U.S. Banding Laboratory, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Migratory Bird Management, Laurel, Maryland 20811, U.S.A.

As indicated in the previous Bulletin, some of the projects that will be operating in 1979 include:

1. James Bay, Canada. Dr. R.I.G. Morrison, Canadian Wildlife Service, 1725 Woodward Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1G 3Z7. Dye: picric acid (yellow/orange). Bands: yellow, light blue, metal, above and below 'knee'.
2. Alaska, U.S.A. R.E. Gill, Jr., U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 1011 E. Tudor Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99503, U.S.A. Dye: picric acid. Bands: various, above and below 'knee'.
3. British Columbia, Canada. G. Kaiser, Canadian Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 340, Delta, B.C., Canada V4K 3Y3. Dye and bands.
4. Other projects: Other projects which have operated in recent years include the following:  
(a) Surinam, South America. Dr. A.L. Spaans. Colour bands. (b) North Dakota, U.S.A. D. Lank. Tags and various markings. (c) Massachusetts, U.S.A. B.A. Harrington. Colour bands. Sightings of any birds possibly originating from any of these - or other projects - should be sent to the U.S. Banding Laboratory at the above address.

Shorebird Surveys

The International Shorebird Survey scheme and the Maritimes Shorebird Survey scheme will be continued in 1979, and volunteers wishing to assist by counting shorebirds in a local study area this season as outlined in the last Bulletin are asked to contact one of the following: for areas in Canada - Dr. R.I.G. Morrison, Canadian Wildlife Service, 1725 Woodward Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1G 3Z7, and for areas in the U.S., Caribbean, Central and South America - B.A. Harrington, Manomet Bird Observatory, Manomet, Massachusetts 02345, U.S.A.

PRELIMINARY PROFILE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN MEMBERSHIP

by Marshall A. Howe

The North American section of the Wader Study Group was established in 1978 to promote information exchange and coordination of efforts among wader researchers and enthusiasts in the Western Hemisphere. The International Shorebird Survey, conducted since 1974 by the Canadian Wildlife Service and the Manomet Bird Observatory, had developed a network of wader censusers over a wide area east of the Rocky Mountains, but the level and breadth of wader interest among these and other potential participants was uncertain. When the number of members in North America exceeded 100, a survey of their interests and activities appeared of interest to help determine the viability of the organisation and the directions in which it should be developing. It could also serve as a convenient stimulus for exchange of information among members. A brief questionnaire was circulated during the latter half of 1978 to ascertain the professional status of members, the extent of their banding activities, the location of their field work, and the biological disciplines and wader taxa of interest to them.

Eighty five of the 138 (62%) members responded to the questionnaire: the format is shown below, with the number of positive responses indicated for each category. Approximately one half of the members are involved in some professional capacity with wader studies. Only 30 indicated current involvement with banding, most efforts being aimed at several species during migration. Research workers cited migration and feeding ecology as the disciplines of greatest interest. Ageing-sexing characters, moult, systematics and morphology evoked the least enthusiasm. Forty eight percent of field activities are located on the east coast of Canada and the United States, with an additional 31% in interior areas. Two study areas are on Caribbean islands and four in Central and South America. The bias towards the Atlantic coast partly reflects human population distribution, but also reflects the development of the International Shorebird Survey to investigate shorebird migration on the Atlantic coast.

The request for a short narrative describing specific wader activities determined that plovers and calidridine sandpipers are the most popular subjects of investigation, perhaps reflecting the relative abundance of these groups along the Atlantic coast. But some interest in all families and subfamilies of waders was expressed.

This information has all been transferred to keysort cards to enable a rapid response to be made to requests for information from members. For example, members interested in moult of calidridine sandpipers could easily and rapidly be put in contact with each other from the keysort file. Information on colour marking