

## NOTICES

### SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

All subscriptions (except those of members outside U.K., Canada and U.S.A. who paid subscriptions for 1980 in advance) become due on 1 January 1980. The Extraordinary General Meeting on 13 October 1979 (see below) approved the increase in subscription to £5.00 per year, plus £1.50 for those members outside Europe who require airmail despatch of Bulletins. Cheques must be in U.K. currency (e.g. drafts drawn on a British Bank). The equivalent rates for those paying via the N.American Treasurer are \$12.50 by surface mail or \$16.25 by airmail. Cheques must be in Canadian (preferably) or U.S. currency. A form for renewal of subscriptions is included in this issue. Prompt renewal helps greatly, reduces work for the Officers and saves the Group money.

Also enclosed in this issue is the new version of application form for membership which can be passed on to any colleagues or friends who wish to join the Group.

### AUTUMN MEETING AND EGM

The autumn meeting of the Group, incorporating an Extraordinary General Meeting, was held in the School of Biological Sciences, University of Nottingham on Saturday 13 October 1979. Fifty-one members attended the meeting including several from Germany, Holland and South Africa. The Group is grateful to the University for its hospitality; to its catering staff for their very efficient service; to the following members who helped in the organisation of the meeting or by providing accommodation: G.F.Appleton, W.J.A.Dick, G.H.Green, P.L.Ireland, J.A.Malley, J.M.McMeeking, C.Morley and M.W.Pienkowski, and to the speakers.

### Extraordinary General Meeting

After some preliminary remarks by the Chairman including an announcement of the publication grant from the Royal Society (see elsewhere in this Bulletin), the meeting considered the two matters announced in Bulletin 26.

The meeting approved an increase in subscriptions by 84 votes (33 present plus 51 postal) to 2 (postal). The new subscription was fixed at £5.00 per year (plus £1.50 for airmail postage where chosen) rather than £4.00 by 76 votes (33 present plus 43 postal) to 10 (postal). The Treasurer noted that he hoped that it would be possible to maintain the subscriptions at this level for three years, unless of course inflation rates increased markedly.

After some discussion, mainly concerned with the latter parts of paragraph 2, the meeting approved the draft constitution by 86 votes (35 present plus 51 postal) to 1 (postal). In answer to some of the queries concerning paragraph 2, Mr. J.M. McMeeking pointed out that most other societies required such a rule. In Wader Study Group for example there might be rare cases where members or applicants were involved in activities incompatible with scientific or conservation interest in waders (illegal trapping of birds for retention in captivity being cited as an example). The Officers reassured the questioners that exclusion from the Group could only be applied on a factual basis, and not simply on differences of opinion. The Officers also requested notification in writing of any aspects of the Constitution missing from the draft or requiring amendment so that any necessary changes can be put before a future general meeting.

The Chairman announced the resignation of A.J.Prater from the post of Secretary (see elsewhere in this Bulletin). The meeting asked the Chairman to thank him for his efforts over the years since the Group's formation. Administrative matters concerning the Group will now be dealt with by the Administrative Secretary. The alteration of responsibility on various matters is indicated on the inside front cover of this Bulletin.

Later, the meeting supported the idea of future one-day meetings and different venues and recommended that the Group's Annual General Meeting be held at these rather than at the British Trust for Ornithology's Ringing and Migration Conference.

### Scientific Meeting

The EGM was followed by a programme of talks and discussions. Talks included:-

WSG spring project on migration of Siberian Knots, by William Dick.  
WSG spring project on migration of Dunlins, Sanderlings, Ringed Plovers and Turnstones through Britain, by Peter Ferns.  
Wader studies at Münster, Germany by Hermann Hotker.  
Preliminary results of winter dye-marking on the Firth of Forth, Scotland, by Michael Pienkowski and Hugh Clark.  
Inter-estuarine movements of waders, by Patrick Dugan.  
The effect of the hard winter of 1978/79 on the wader populations of the Ythan estuary, Scotland, by Stephen Baillie.  
Measuring protein reserves in Redshanks, by Nicholas Davidson.  
Common Sandpipers in the Pennines, England, by P.K.Holland.  
Origins and movements of Dunlin wintering on Belfast Lough, Northern Ireland, by Ian Forsyth.

Articles or summaries based on some of these talks appear in this issue and it is hoped to include omissions in the next issue of the Bulletin. Discussions were held on various practical problems concerned with wader-catching and resulting articles will appear in this and future Bulletins.

### FUTURE MEETINGS

The next Annual General Meeting of the WSG will be held at the autumn meeting in 1980. WSG will hold an informal meeting during the British Trust for Ornithology's Ringing and Migration Conference at Swanwick, Derbyshire, England 4-6 January 1980. We should be pleased to receive offers of short items for presentation (these do not guarantee a place at the conference allocation of which is outside the control of WSG.)

For next year's autumn meeting the Group has had an offer of accommodation at Uttoxeter, Staffordshire where overnight accommodation could be provided at very reasonable cost (approx. £7 per person for a one-day meeting plus one night and meals). Alternative locations for a one-day meeting with improvised overnight accommodation for those who require it could be provided at the University of Durham. The Officers would welcome comments - as soon as possible please - on preferred location and type of meeting.

## ROYAL SOCIETY PUBLICATION GRANT

The inevitable rise in printing costs exacerbated by the loss of very cheap printing facilities led to a difficult financial situation for WSG - we had to raise subscriptions or reduce the size of the Bulletin. As members know the officers recommended a subscription rise to £5 (now approved) but there nevertheless remained a serious gap in our resources between the date of increased costs and the new subscription becoming effective in 1980. This gap contained the production of three Bulletins; so in May 1979 in an effort to overcome the problem without cutting back the Bulletin we applied for a publications grant from the Royal Society of London, which administers UK government funds for this purpose. We are pleased to inform members that we have been given a grant of £400 and an interest free loan (repayable in three years) of £400. These monies are extremely helpful to us and we are most grateful to the Royal Society for their support. Together with the rise in subscriptions the Group should now be able to operate from a sound financial footing. Our treasurer estimates that we should be able to maintain subscriptions at the new level for at least three years without an increase, assuming that inflation does not leap to even dizzier heights than forecast and that the Bulletin remains about the same size.

## A.J. PRATER

Tony Prater became involved with the WSG near the date of its foundation in 1970. His appointment as organiser of the Birds of Estuaries Enquiry based at the British Trust for Ornithology's offices at Tring gave an admirable background and invaluable facilities and he acted as WSG organiser/secretary/editor for many years. We owe him thanks for helping to establish and maintaining the Bulletin. In recent years his increased work load led to other people becoming involved in WSG matters and the present structure evolved.

Tony has recently moved from the BTO to take up a post as SE England Regional Officer with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. On his departure from Tring he felt he could not continue as Secretary. His duties will now be covered by Graham Appleton (address inside front cover) who has already been doing much of our administrative work. People who wish to contact the Group should write to him, the Chairman or the Editors. Tony will remain on the Executive Committee where his advice, experience and expertise will be of great value to us. The WSG owes a considerable debt to Tony and we feel sure he will long be involved in its affairs. We thank him for past and future help and wish him well in his new post.

## SEWAGE FARMS OF MÜNSTER

### 1. Request for information on management of shallow freshwater habitat

The Sewage Farms of Münster (north-west Germany) form an important inland resting and moulting site for various species of waders and ducks. Up to 1975 the area was used to clarify the waste water of Münster. After the construction of a purification plant the supply of water became irregular resulting in a progressing overgrowth of the shallow ponds by plants. At the same time the numbers of waders and ducks diminished.

In 1976 a part of the former sewage farms became a reserve for birds giving rise, for the members of the "Biologische Station", to the task to reimprove the habitat - strictly speaking to recreate shallow freshwater ponds by removing the vegetation. We were not able to obtain any comprehensive information on how to remove several species of plants particularly *Typha*. In the meantime we have had a lot of opportunities of gaining our own experiences - and the numbers of birds increased again - but we think that it would be extremely valuable for us to have contacts with people with practice in this somewhat neglected line of habitat management. So if you know any types of habitat like sewage farms with significance for waders or if you have any experience with the management of shallow freshwater ponds we would be very grateful to you if you could write to the "Biologische Station", address see below.

### 2. Opportunity for collaboration

During summer - the best time in August - the "Biologische Station" of the sewage farms of Münster offers the opportunity - especially for young ornithologists - to take part in several activities of the station mainly concerning registering and ringing waders and carrying out habitat management. Basic accommodation including washing and cooking facilities will be provided; you can also bring a tent with you. If you are interested please write to:

Biologische Station Rieselfelder Münster, Wöstebach 11, D-4400 Münster, West Germany.

NB: To remove *Typha*, get your boots on, expect to get wet, get in there - and pull, pull, pull.... after a few years, repeat! Other suggestions welcome - Eds.

## YELLOW-DYED CURLEWS

Since the article in WSG Bulletin 26 the mid-Cheshire study has resulted in two further continental recoveries: one shot in Denmark on 1 August and a male breeding successfully on Texel in the Netherlands. Yellow-dyed birds were also among those returning to the mid-Cheshire site in late summer.

In September 1979 a further 61 birds were caught and dyed. Measurements, etc. have been deposited in WSG files. We hope to make further catches during the autumn and winter.

Obviously this study continues to provide considerable information and I shall be very grateful to receive full details of any yellow-dyed birds seen during the coming months. The dye will be retained until the post-breeding moult next autumn and, as these birds were caught during the autumn passage, there is a reasonably good chance that some will be seen away from the study area.

A further report on the study will appear in a future WSG Bulletin.

Dennis Elphick, 28 Coniston Drive, Holmes Chapel, Crewe CW4 7LA, England

SCOTTISH WADER RINGING GROUPS

At the Scottish Ringers' Conference held in Glasgow on 10-11 November 1979, an informal discussion between ringers working on waders in Scotland was held. It was agreed that the visiting of members of one group to help with catches of another - which had already taken place frequently - should be encouraged further. Not only would this help in providing teams and /or equipment at particular sites but also opportunities would be available for comparison of measuring techniques. Each group nominated a contact person who could be telephoned to discover forthcoming activities of that group where help would be useful and who might also be able to pass on a request for help elsewhere to other members of his group. The groups, contacts and their telephone numbers are:

Highland R.G.	Bob Swann	Drumadrochit 541
Grampian R.G.	Steve Baillie	Newburgh 631 (work); 663 (home)
Tay R.G.	Mike Nicoll	Dundee 25492 (work)
Edinburgh R.G.	Fraser Symonds	031-447-4784 (work)
Clyde R.G.	Hector Galbraith	041-887-5499 (home)

PROPOSED RECLAMATION OF NORDSTRANDER BUCHT, WEST GERMANY

At the request of "Aktionsgemeinschaft Nordseewatten", we are enclosing with this issue of the Bulletin a leaflet "Watt in Gefahr" published by this group. The leaflet gives a background to the reclamation proposals together with maps and photographs illustrating the area.

The great importance of the area to Knot Calidris canutus, particularly during spring migration is stressed in W.J.A.Dick's report on the WSG project elsewhere in this issue. In order to give an indication of other waders using the area we asked Peter Prokosch, who is involved in scientific studies on the bay, to provide a short note. This is published below - the Editors.

WADERS IN THE NORDSTRAND BAY (SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, W.GERMANY) 1979

by Peter Prokosch

In connection with reclamation plans of Nordstrand Bay in the Nordfrisian Wadden Sea in West Germany, a one-year ornithological research project is underway in this area. The project, which is being carried out by the Staatliche Vogelschutzwarte Schleswig-Holstein, has to be finished by the end of this year and will hopefully influence the planning of the reclamation. Three other ecological groups are working on the vegetation, benthic life and fish of this threatened part of the Wadden Sea. This is the first project on this scale in the German Wadden Sea.

The following table gives an impression of the species and numbers of waders the authorities responsible for the planning of dykes in Schleswig-Holstein have to deal with. The total endangered area of the Nordstrand Bay is 5700ha (4200ha mudflats and 1580ha saltings).

Peter Prokosch, Winterbeker Weg 26, D-2300 Kiel, FRG.

Totals of waders in Nordstrand Bay (given as monthly maxima, based on counts at two-weekly intervals).

<u>Species</u>	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
Oystercatcher <u>Haematopus ostralegus</u>	94	12	5187	7126	2993	3072	6115	10432	9291	11029
Lapwing <u>Vanellus vanellus</u>		64	284	103	116	1592	421	4228	3890	135
Ringed Plover <u>Charadrius hiaticula</u>			65	14	303	33	164	256	499	11
Kentish Plover <u>C.alexandrius</u>					5			8		
Grey Plover <u>Pluvialis squatarola</u>		4	1	307	3433	628	1774	6194	3425	964
Golden Plover <u>P.apricaria</u>			135	2400	5864	34	932	7038	8952	147
Snipe <u>Gallinago gallinago</u>		1		1			4	131	77	173
Turnstone <u>Arenaria interpres</u>				2	185	3	41	8	7	4
Curlew <u>Numenius arquata</u>	868	152	2202	4016	114	209	12676	12240	7476	4080
Whimbrel <u>N.phaeopus</u>					1	1	70	130	23	2
Black-tailed Godwit <u>Limosa limosa</u>				5	11	20	9	3		
Bar-tailed Godwit <u>L.lapponica</u>		12	1	11	6349	90	1886	8296	466	100
Spotted Redshank <u>Tringa erythropus</u>				11	261	488	2563	1972	1345	150
Greenshank <u>I.nebularia</u>				3	49	2	511	888	287	42
Redshank <u>I.totanus</u>	1	2	395	530	259	493	5628	3635	2160	865
Green Sandpiper <u>I.glareola</u>							11	3		
Common Sandpiper <u>Actitis hypoleucos</u>					1		65	64	29	
Knot <u>Calidris canutus</u>			3	17	9917	18	9550	8401	751	115
Dunlin <u>C.alpina</u>	53	154	16149	13928	20451	74	34050	43278	26740	27861
Curlew Sandpiper <u>C.ferruginea</u>							98	22	54	
Ruff <u>Philomachus pugnax</u>				5	8	18	27	170	95	212
Avocet <u>Recurvirostra avosetta</u>			194	560	346	613	531	109	37	10