

## NOTICES

### Subscriptions for 1980

If your subscription for 1980 had not been received at the time of despatch of this issue, a reminder will be enclosed. Please return this with your subscription as soon as possible as delayed subscriptions cause extra work for the officers and expense for the Group. If your subscription is not received before the next issue, that will not be despatched to you as the group (i.e. the paying members) cannot support those who have not paid.

### Bulletin collation: thanks and a request

Members may have noticed a change in circulation arrangements for the last issue in that most addresses were printed by computer on adhesive labels. For this reduction in work load on Graham Appleton and his team we owe thanks to Ted Miller and York University, Ontario. Obviously, some errors will have crept in during the transferring of the addresses to computer file; we are sure members will advise Graham Appleton or, for N.American members, Ted Miller of any necessary corrections.

The collation, addressing and despatch of Bulletins by a few members saves the Group a great deal of money and hence a higher subscription. Usually most of this work is done by several members living in the Birmingham area, most of the load falling on Graham Appleton who has recently acquired a fiancée to help in this work. It is probably unreasonable to expect them to collate the August 1980 issue while on honeymoon, and most of their usual team will also be unavailable at this time. If a group of members (or non-members!) somewhere in England or Wales can spare a few evenings or a weekend in mid-August 1980 for this task, please let Graham know as soon as possible. Failure to find such a team could seriously impair the Group's future collating team!

On a general point, the Officers of the Group can usually use reliable help in many of these tasks of running the Group and are always open to offers of help.

### Tim Garland Memorial

Following the tragic death of Tim Garland (Bull 26:48), Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory are setting up an annual prize to be awarded to an observatory member who makes a contribution to the work of the observatory in a field that Tim would have liked, e.g. wader studies or production of scientific papers. So far about £350 has been raised. Any contributions should be sent to: Tim Garland Fund, The Secretary, Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory, Old Downs Farm, Sandwich Bay, Kent, England.

### Redshank chicks

As part of a study of the breeding biology of the Redshank *Tringa totanus* I am looking at growth and development of chicks. I would be grateful if the following could be taken on any caught. Data on retraps is especially important:  
a) weight; b) tarsus length; c) bill length (tip to posterior margin of nares); d) date and place; and, on old chicks with some feather growth, e) wing length. To complete the growth curves it is necessary to obtain similar data for any juveniles caught during July, August and September.

To increase the chance of ringing chicks at the nest, I can provide predictive data on hatching date, based on egg volume and weight, or egg floatation.

Barry J. Yates, Department of Biology, Liverpool Polytechnic, Byrom Street, Liverpool L3 3AF, England.

### Wader study expedition to NE Greenland 1979

The expedition worked in Hurry Inlet near Scoresbysund, NE Greenland from 9 May to 9 August 1979. The purpose was to make some faunistic counts and, especially, to study the breeding biology of the three wader species *Calidris alpina arctica*, *C. canutus* and *C. alba*. We found that *C. alba* was very rare in our study area but the two other species rather common. To recognize each bird we gave the birds three colour rings below the joint on the left leg and one metal ring above the joint on the right. Any sightings of these birds will, of course, be very welcome.

Jens Muff Hansen, Trønkaervej 73, 8530 Hjørkshøj, Denmark.  
Niels Odder Jensen, Ørhagevej 54, 7700 Thisted, Denmark.

### Total head length - a request for data

In recent years bill length has been used as a criterion for sexing and racing in some wader species. However, the measurement presents problems in some species (e.g. Oystercatchers and Redshanks), especially as the bill/feather dividing point may change position through the year especially in relation to moult. I have therefore been measuring total head length (head plus bill) as well as bill length during a study of Dunlin on the Severn Estuary, England. Unfortunately, I have only been able to catch birds between November and March, as they do not moult on my study site.

It would be very useful if wader catchers could measure head length as well as bill length, especially on species which are likely to be retrapped during a different time of year. This will enable a proper assessment of the value of head length to be made. Preferably the measurements should be made with callipers to an accuracy of .1mm (total head length and bill). However, a reasonable degree of accuracy has been obtained using a wing rule, and measuring to .5mm or 1mm.

I have modified a pair of callipers to make it easier to take the measurement by widening the fixed arm of the calliper at the point where it goes behind the head. I then hold the bird's bill between thumb and forefinger, place the fixed arm of the calliper on the rear of the skull, and hold the callipers horizontally in relation to the bird's head thus obtaining the maximum measurement from

back of skull to bill tip.

Nigel A. Clark, Department of Zoology, University of Edinburgh.

(Other workers have developed special gauges for measuring head length and we hope to report on these in the next Bulletin. Eds.)

French Wader Mist Nets For Sale (This offer is effective in Great Britain and Ireland only)

I am planning to import some French mist nets on behalf of a number of wader ringers, and will be prepared to increase the order to make extra nets available (at cost price) to other mist netters who are interested. French nets will be familiar to all who have mist-netted with Wash Wader Ringing Group in recent years. They are 40 feet long and 9 feet high, with three good-sized pockets and a mesh size (stretched diagonal) of about 1½ inches. The nets have braided cord shelf strings and need to be set with a lot of tension: this, together with their 40 feet length, helps to avoid the possible problem of nets sagging at the centre when full of birds. They hold successfully all waders from dunlin to curlew, and regularly catch gulls and shelduck; they are excellent at thrush roosts, but are not really suitable for catching in daylight.

At the time of writing it is not clear what the exact price will be (exchange rates, inflation, etc) but it is likely to be around £20 per net. The more nets we can order, the lower the price will be. Will all those interested please write to me by 20th May stating the number of nets wanted, and enclosing a deposit of £5-00 per net ordered. Delivery is likely to be in June or July, and full payment will have to be made then.

Dr. David Norman, Rowswood Cottage, Ridding Lane, Sutton Weaver, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 6PF, England.

Wader Study Group Autumn Conference and Annual General Meeting

This event will be held during the weekend 1-2 November 1980 at Denstone College, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire where the headmaster, Tim Benyon, has kindly offered us accommodation. The cost will probably be around £7 per person inclusive of meals and one night's accommodation. Details have still to be decided and full information will be sent out with the August Bulletin - meanwhile make a note in your diary.

We should like to hear from anyone willing to give a short paper at the meeting. Please contact (as soon as possible please) either M.W.Pienkowski, Zoology Department, University of Durham, Durham, England or G.H.Green, Windy Ridge, Little Comberton, Pershore, Worcs., WR10 3EW, England.

IWRB Woodcock and Snipe Research Group - American symposium

This Group, which operates within IWRB, has sent us information about the 7th American Woodcock Symposium to be held 28-30 October 1980, State College, Pennsylvania, USA. It is hoped that some of the people active in Woodcock studies in Europe will be able to attend. Those interested should write to Symposium Planning Committee, c/o John Tautin, Office of Migratory Bird Management, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Laurel, Maryland 20811, USA.

Woodcock Wings

The Woodcock and Snipe Research Group are collecting data from Woodcock wings to aid sex and age determination. Anyone interested in this project should write to Dr H. Kalchreuter, D-7823 Bonndorf-Glashütte, Federal Republic of Germany. Information on these characters has been published by Clausager, I. (1973) 'Age and sex determination of the woodcock' Danish Rev. Game Biology 8:1-18 copies of which may be available from Vildtbiologisk Station, Kalø, 8410 Ronde, Denmark.

CONTINUING REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION OR MATERIAL

We repeat below requests that have previously appeared in WSG Bulletin but which continue to be active.

Sightings of colour-marked birds

A list of currently registered schemes was given in Bull.27 and is updated elsewhere in this issue.

Whole bodies of freshly dead waders

Readers of WSG Bulletin will know of the recent progress made on the analysis of body condition in waders and the development of ways of assessing this in the field. Such developments require analysis of dead birds, both those accidentally killed and those dying apparently because of adverse weather conditions.

Freshly dead whole bodies should be well wrapped in polythene bags inside strong external wrapping and sent by first class mail to: N.C.Davidson, Department of Zoology, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE. Mark the package: "Pathological specimens - URGENT" and please include a note of details of how obtained and where, weight at time of death/capture, etc.

(N.B. If such specimens leak, or are obnoxious, the Post Office can and will destroy them without comment and may prosecute the sender.)

Curlew measurements

Ian P. Bainbridge (new address: 137 Denton Road, Denton Burn, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England) is analysing geographical variation in wings and bill-lengths and weights of Curlew Numenius arquata in Europe and would welcome further data from anywhere in Europe. Sources of data will, of course, be acknowledged.