

COLOUR MARKING SCHEMES - NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR REGISTRATION

The WSG register of colour marking schemes has been making steady progress in the past few months and has managed to arrange for the avoidance or the ending of overlap between different projects on some species. Benefits in the providing of a central address for sightings have also been evident.

Waders and gulls are popular subjects for colour-marking studies and this, combined with their long movements, has for some time been causing problems for the many national and international registers. The officers of the Wader Study Group have discussed these problems with the British Ringing Office and the Secretary of Euring (the European Committee for Bird Banding which brings together the national ringing schemes in Europe) as well as with ringers in various countries. These discussions have resulted in arrangements which should simplify paperwork for both ringers and ringing schemes, minimise the chance of conflict between marking projects and aid the passing on of sightings from birdwatchers. The two changes concern (i) ringers in Britain and Ireland and (ii) ringers in any of the Euring schemes. They are also relevant to ringers outside these areas who may receive or despatch marked migrants occurring in Europe.

Formerly British ringers in the BTO ringing scheme had to register their colour ringing projects with the British Trust for Ornithology Ringing Office. They were also advised to consult WSG which has been collecting and publishing information on relevant non-BTO and non-British schemes for some time. In future, for wader colour-marking, BTO ringers need only to agree a scheme with WSG (for the moment M.W.Pienkowski will be the relevant person) and WSG will advise BTO when a scheme has been agreed.

On a wider scale Euring has been investigating a proposal that it should establish an international register of colour marking. As most of the problems about colour ringing concern waders and gulls, and WSG and the newly-formed Gull Study Group are organising registers, Euring has decided that the co-ordination and reporting for these birds would be best dealt with by these specialist study groups. Accordingly, the WSG register will fill this role for waders.

Thus, anyone proposing to start a colour-marking scheme for waders should consult MWP and agree a system compatible with other projects before starting. Anyone operating a scheme which has not been registered should contact MWP immediately. For temporary markings, such as dyeing and flagging, registration is assumed to apply for one season only and renotification should be given for any additional seasons. Please make sure WSG has full details of your marking scheme: failure to do so will jeopardise your own results as well as those of others.

Before starting a scheme workers should carefully consider the question they are asking. If permanent marking is not required, permanent colour rings should not be used. If individual recognition (rather than various groupings) is not required, fewer different marks will be needed. Restricting the combinations registered for your scheme will allow more scope for others and reduce potential overlap. Relatively few dye-marking schemes are possible at any one time and should be used only if results of the maximum value can be obtained from the method, especially if the project is in potential conflict with more urgent schemes. Please consult us at an early stage.

Reports of sightings, with as much detail as possible, should be sent to the marker if known, otherwise to M.W.Pienkowski, Wader Study Group, Dept. of Zoology, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE, England, who will make strenuous efforts to forward them to the appropriate ringer! Operators of schemes are requested to make sure that sightings are acknowledged and the observer informed of the history of the bird concerned. Even if your scheme is not particularly interested in sightings away from your own study area, please treat such observers courteously: other workers depend on their good will. If you receive a sighting from WSG either return it as soon as possible if it is not from your scheme or confirm that it is one of yours if it is: have sympathy for the futile efforts of MWP still trying to locate another and non-existent appropriate scheme!

Below we list all schemes of which we know. (For American schemes, see N.American section.) If your scheme is not here, please advise us immediately. For some schemes, we do not have full details and the ringers may receive a request for these soon: please reply promptly as delays often cause difficulties for other workers as well as for the register.

COLOUR-RINGS

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Exe Estuary, England (Dr.J.D.Goss-Custard, ITE Furzebrook Research Station, Wareham, Dorset BH20 5AS, England)
Drachten, Netherlands (Dr.J.B.Hulscher, Zoologisch Laboratorium, Kerklaan 30, Haren (Gr.), Netherlands)
Friesian coast, Netherlands (Dr. Leo Zwarts, Achterwei 23, EE (FRL), Netherlands)

Some of these studies use a combination of one or more 'conventional' colour-rings with a tall ring consisting of one colour with engraved bands of a second colour. These bands may each be wide or narrow and occur in one or more of three positions on the ring: high, middle and low.

Lancashire, England (K.B.Briggs, 26 Hazelmount Drive, Warton, Carnforth, Lancs, LA5 9HU, England) 4 'conventional' colour rings plus metal ring plus wingtag.
Aberdeenshire, Scotland (A.Anderson, Culterty Field Station, Newburgh, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB4 0AA, Scotland) various schemes using 'conventional' colour rings, metal rings and, in some cases, wing-tags.

If colour-ringed Oystercatchers are caught, please measure the weight, the bill length from the tip of the longest mandible to the feathers and from the tip to the proximal (hind) rim of the nostril, and the bill thickness at the tip (over the first 3mm length). Note if the bill is blunt, intermediate or pointed and, if possible, take a photograph of the left side of the head and bill. If observing a bird in the field, please try to make notes on the type and size of food.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Portugal (Rui Rufino, Centro de Estudos de Migracoes e Proteccao de Aves, Rua da Lapa 73, 1200 Lisboa, Portugal)

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

East Germany (Vogelwarte Hiddensee, DDR 2346 Kloster/Hiddensee, German Democratic Republic)
Camargue, S.France (Miss C.M.Lessells, EGI, Dept. of Zoology, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PS, England)
Vendee, W.France (J.M.Watier, Section Gibier d'Eau, Chauteloup, 85340 Olonne-sur-Mer, France)

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Lower Saxony, Germany (B.Riedel, 3411 Langenholtensen, Wilhelmstrasse 114, W.Germany)

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Northumberland, England (M.W.Pienkowski, Dept. of Zoology, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE, England)
Norfolk, England (G.E.Jackson, 245 Church Road, Astley, Tyldesley, Manchester M29 7ET, England)
East Germany (Vogelwarte Hiddensee - see Avocet)
Greenland (Expeditions in 1972, 73, 74)

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Portugal (Rui Rufino - see Black-winged Stilt)
Camargue, France (Miss C.M.Lessells - see Avocet)

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Scotland (? Tay RG)

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

South Cleveland R.G., England (W.Norman, 27 Roxby Avenue, Kemplah Park, Guisborough, Cleveland, England)
Kincardineshire, Scotland (Raymond Parr, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, Blackhall, Banchory, Kincardineshire, Scotland)
Cumbria, Scotland (D.E.B. Lloyd, 1 Potton End, Eltisbury, Cambridgeshire)

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Teesmouth, England (Dr. P.R.Evans, Dept. of Zoology, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE, England)

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

South Cleveland R.G. (see Golden Plover). colour rings.
North Yorkshire (F.L.Symonds, Weir House, Nidd Bank, Knaresborough, N.Yorks, England) colour rings.
Aberdeenshire (R.D.Elliott, Culterty Field Station, Newburgh, Ellon, Aberdeenshire, Scotland) colour rings plus a few cases of wingtags or dyes.
East Germany (Vogelwarte Hiddensee - see Avocet) permanent colour leg flags.
Orkney (Dr. Mildred F. Cuthbert, Vishabreck, Evie, Orkney, Scotland) colour rings.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Greenland (Expeditions in 1973, 1974 and 1979)

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Teesmouth, England (Dr. P.R.Evans - see Grey Plover)
Greenland (Expeditions in 1972, 1973, 1974 and 1979)

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

South Africa (Cape Wader Group)

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Hilbre Island, England (Hilbre B.O.; Prof. J.D.Craggs, Dept. of Electrical Engineering, The University, P.O.Box 147, Liverpool L69 3BX, England)
East coast of Scotland (Tay R.G.; N.K.Atkinson, Tadorna, 18 Cairnwell Crescent, Montrose, Angus DD10 9EY, Scotland)
Hardangervidda, Norway (Cambridge Expedition 1978)
N.Wales (SCAN R.G.; D.J.Stanyard, Groeslon, Caernarvon, Gwynedd, Wales)

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Greenland (Expeditions in 1972, 1973, 1974 and 1979)
S.Severn estuary, England (N.A.Clarke, Dept. of Zoology, University, Edinburgh, Scotland) permanent leg flags.
Devon, England (Martin Davies, RSPB, 10 Richmond Road, Exeter, Devon, England)

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Munster, W.Germany (OAG Munster, Biologische Station Rieselfelder Munster, Wostebach 11, D-4400 Munster, West Germany)
East Germany (Vogelwarte Hiddensee - see Avocet) permanent leg flags.
Lancashire, England (S.W.Lancs. R.G., c/o Dr. P.Fearon, 15 Appleby Drive, Ford, Netherton, Liverpool, Merseyside, England)

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

East Germany (Vogelwarte Hiddensee - see Avocet) permanent leg flags.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

East Germany (Vogelwarte Hiddensee - see Avocet) permanent leg flags
West Germany (OAG Munster - see Ruff)
Netherlands (Albert Brientema, Rijksinstituut voor Natuurbeheer, Broekhuizerlaan 2, postbus 46, 3956 ZR Leersum, Netherlands) PVC rings with large letters.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Teesmouth, England (Durham University - see Grey Plover)

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Teesmouth, England (Durham University - see Grey Plover)
Freisian coast, Netherlands (P.Zegers, L.Zwarts - see Oystercatcher) 'banded' colour rings
East Germany (Vogelwarte Hiddensee - see Avocet) permanent leg flags

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

West Germany (OAG Munster - see Ruff)

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Ribble Estuary, England (Dr. W.G. Hale, Liverpool Polytechnic, Dept. of Biology, Byrom Street, Liverpool, England)
Note that if any Redshanks with wingtags which wrap around the wing are caught, these tags should be removed.
East Germany (Vogelwarte Hiddensee - see Avocet) permanent leg flags
West Germany (OAG Munster - see Ruff)
Aberdeenshire, Scotland (Culterty Field Station - see Oystercatcher) colour rings, with wingtags in some cases.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

West Germany (OAG Munster - see Ruff)

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

East Germany (Vogelwarte Hiddensee - see Avocet)
West Germany (OAG Munster - see Ruff)

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

West Germany (OAG Munster - see Ruff)

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

North Pennines, England (Miss S. Jones, Dept. of Zoology, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE, England)
South Pennines, England (South Pennine R.G., J.E.Robson, 1 Lawnfold, Hadfield, Hyde, Cheshire, England)
Lower Saxony, Germany (see Little Ringed Plover)
Angus, Scotland (Tay R.G.; B.Lynch, 15 Falkland Crescent, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 1NX, Scotland)
Midlothian, Scotland (Dr. I.R.Poxton, 54 Eskhill, Pencuik, Midlothian, Scotland)

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Teesmouth (Durham University - see Grey Plover)
East coast of Scotland (Tay R.G. - see Purple Sandpiper)
Greenland (Expeditions in 1973 and 1974)

COLOUR FLAGS AND COLOUR DYES: TEMPORARY MARKS

Colour 'flags' - pieces of plastic adhesive tape attached to metal rings - were described in Bulletin 25. Essentially they provide a temporary colour ring which is suitable for some projects and which reduces the long-term overlap and confusion between projects. The method will, however, also become wasted if it is used indiscriminately, and ringers should consult WSG before embarking on such a scheme. Similarly colour-dyeing should not be used without prior consultation. A few ringers are using more permanent leg-flags but we strongly discourage this, except in a few exceptional cases, because of conflict with the wider use possible with temporary flags.

The following species will be the subject of one or more studies involving such marking in 1980-81:

Oystercatcher	Kentish Plover	Knot	Bar-tailed Godwit	Turnstone
Avocet	Grey Plover	Sanderling	Curlew	
Ringed Plover	Lapwing	Dunlin	Redshank	

The following ringers/organisations are discussing their schemes with WSG:
WSG Project on movements of wader populations in western Europe, marking at Waddensee/Wattenmeer, Wash, Teesmouth.
(co-ordinated by MWP, Durham University)

Clyde estuary, Scotland (R.W.Furness, Glasgow University)
Firth of Forth, Scotland (F.L.Symonds, NCC & Edinburgh R.G.)
Curlwings in Cheshire, England (D.Elphick, S.Manchester R.G.)
Avocets and Kentish Plovers in Camargue, France (C.M.Lessells, EGI)
Lapwings in Aberdeenshire (R.D.Elliot, Aberdeen University) & N.Pennines (S.Jones, Durham University)

IT IS VITAL THAT NO OTHER SCHEMES ARE UNDERTAKEN WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH WSG.

Observers seeing any birds marked with dye and/or flags (or other marks) should send the record with as much detail as possible to M.W.Pienkowski, Wader Study Group, Dept. of Zoology, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE, England, who will forward it to the appropriate scheme.

KNOT AND NORTH SEA OIL

During heavy snow in January 1980 Mark Tasker (now with Nature Conservancy Council project on sea-birds at sea) saw a Knot *Calidris canutus* sitting on the heli-deck of West Sole C Platform. We suspect this to be a new habitat - perhaps the Knot Project should seek further observations from North Sea oil men? Any records to William Dick, please.