

NORTH AMERICAN SECTION No. 9



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

An exhortation and explanation...

We regret the non-appearance of a North American Section in the last issue of the Bulletin, but unfortunately the material that was dispatched to the Editors in the U.K. was delayed to such an extent in the Canadian postal strike that it was not possible to include it.

In contrast to the situation in Europe, where 'the quantity of good material received by the editors continues to increase' - to such an extent that there have been problems of space in the Bulletin - we in North America continue to have problems in obtaining sufficient material for the Bulletin from one issue to the next. Considering the growing interest and activity in the field of shorebird studies in the New World, we hope this situation will change! Rather than wait for the Editors to contact you in the hope of soliciting an article, please consider writing an article and submitting it to us - we shall be looking forward to hearing from you!

Colour-marking

This summer, the Canadian Wildlife Service continued its large-scale shorebird banding project in James Bay: 6,100 shorebirds were captured, bringing the total to over 55,000 since the project was started in 1974. Anyone observing a dyed or colour-banded shorebird is urged to send in a report of their sighting. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has requested reports be sent to the U.S. Bird Banding Laboratory, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Migratory Bird Management, Laurel, Maryland 20811, U.S.A., where the person who banded the bird can be identified and the report forwarded. Where the origin of the bird can be determined by the observer, a report to the bander is most appreciated - in the case of James Bay birds sightings may be sent to Dr. R.I.G.Morrison, Canadian Wildlife Service, 1725 Woodward Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0E7.

Please contact one of the editors if you are colour-marking shorebirds and would like to have your work advertised in the Bulletin.

Shorebird Surveys

The International Shorebird Survey scheme, run jointly by the Canadian Wildlife Service and Manomet Bird Observatory, Massachusetts, is also continuing, and the value of the information continues to grow as the survey network expands and comparative year-to-year information becomes available from individual sites. Results are being used currently in assessing conservational requirements for various shorebirds on the east coast of North America, especially for the Red Knot. Anyone wishing to count shorebirds regularly during migration - or winter - periods is urged to contact Dr. R.I.G.Morrison, or Brian A. Harrington at the Manomet Bird Observatory, Manomet, Massachusetts 02345, U.S.A.

Botulism and Shorebird Mortality in the Great Salt Lake of Utah, U.S.A.

Between 9 July, 1980 and 15 September, 1980, the Division of Wildlife Resources for the State of Utah investigated a spectacular outbreak of Botulism on the Bear River National Wildlife Refuge. Spring and winter precipitation had been average but the summer was hot and rainless and a large mudflat was exposed. Occasional inundation of this mudflat under such conditions had contributed to botulism outbreaks in the past and the state biologists sought the aid of volunteers from the local rod and gun clubs in estimating the significance of the kill.

During the three months that the outbreak lasted, nearly 76,000 birds were picked up out of an estimated loss of 105,000 birds. Most of these birds were Pintail and Green-winged Teal but 3,034 (4%) were American Avocets and 753 (1%) were Black-necked Stilts, Northern Phalaropes and White-faced Ibis. Peculiarly, none of the more than 20,000 dowitchers in the area were reported lost.

The extensive nature of botulism outbreaks in the Canadian and America Prairies may play an important role in limiting the populations of large shorebirds that are already being stressed by the demands of agriculture and the industrialization of their wintering grounds.