

and myself in a railway carriage between Amsterdam Airport and Middelburg, on our way to the 1983 WSG meeting.

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Postscript: the shut-down? Inevitably, as production of this issue of the Bulletin started, one of the key computers required in setting up the system broke down. We are extremely grateful to HCCS Associates (533 Durham Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear NE9 5EY, UK) for effecting a rapid repair.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WADER STUDY GROUP, HELD AT HAAMSTEDDE, THE NETHERLANDS, 19 NOVEMBER 1983

1. On behalf of the Dutch local organisers, Dr Gerard Boere welcomed the Group to the Netherlands and, in view of the forthcoming seasonal celebrations, presented all participants with traditional gingerbread-men. The Dutch hosts had obtained funds to assist participants from several distant countries to attend. Unfortunately, it had not proved possible to complete arrangements for Dr Pavel Tomkovitch of the USSR to attend but Dr Boere, who had spoken by telephone with Dr Tomkovitch the previous day, passed on the latter's apologies and best wishes to the Group and its meeting. Dr Tomkovitch also expressed the hope that exchange of reprints of publications would continue at a high level.

2. In opening the meeting, the Chairman, G.H. Green, thanked Dr Boere, Henk Baptist and his colleagues at the Deltadienst, the WSG Co-ordinator (Theunis Piersma) and all others involved in making arrangements for a meeting in such a pleasant situation, the excellent travel facilities, and the support for visitors from distant parts.

3. Further apologies for absence were received from the Treasurer (S.J. Sutcliffe) and Committee member Hector Galbraith.

4. The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 23 October 1982 were accepted as a true record.

5. In introducing the Officers' Reports, Mr Green pointed out that the full reports had been published in Bulletin 38, and that the officers would highlight and update particular points; members could, of course, query points from the full reports, or any other matters, if they so wished.

The Chairman mentioned the many projects now being organised by the Group and announced that a new international co-operative study of wader migration during the spring of 1985 seemed likely.

The Chairman drew members' attention to his published report of the new arrangements in Britain under which a charge had to be made by WSG for registration and service of colour marking schemes. The cost to a person using a colour marking scheme was likely to be of the order of £7.50 per species per annum. Registration of colour marking schemes was to become obligatory in Britain. WSG was to be the responsible body and charges had to be made; otherwise the Group could not afford to provide the service required. The Chairman appealed to wader researchers throughout Europe to co-operate with WSG by registering their schemes and by paying a fee. In recent years the Group had started to provide a much needed service. Control of colour marking was essential to avoid researchers invalidating each other's work. The Chairman also appealed to all members in Europe to consult with WSG before embarking on a colour marking scheme.

Dr R.D. Wassenaar asked if WSG would make its colour-marking register service available more formally to European ringing schemes. The Vice-Chairman, Dr M.W. Pienkowski, explained that the WSG Register had originally started as a service to WSG members but, because of its success, Euring (the European Committee for Bird Ringing) had asked WSG to operate this on their behalf also. Several European ringing schemes routinely consulted WSG over approval for new colour-marking projects and sightings of marked birds. However, WSG had not yet circulated a formal invitation to all European schemes to make use of this service. This was for the purely practical reason that WSG did not want to offer a service until it could adequately support this. The current introduction of charges for colour-marking registration would place the expenses of the Register on a sounder financial basis, although the work still falls on voluntary skilled labour. The introduction of these charges and other changes associated with the new Wildlife and Countryside Act in Great Britain had involved a great deal of work for WSG. However, as this work-load reduces, the Group plans eventually to contact other schemes more formally. This will be done gradually, however, as time resources allow.

6. The Secretaries, N.A. & J.A. Clark, reported that, by the time of the meeting, 404 members had paid their subscription for 1983. The fact that this figure included an approximate annual turnover of 20% had provoked some discussion at the preceding Committee meeting and the Officers would be investigating this further. One problem in analysing membership totals is that the Group is very tolerant in allowing late payment of subscriptions. Some revision is planned in the reporting of totals in order to arrange for final and comparable figures to be given for each year, although this will inevitably lead to some delay. The apparent fall in North American membership had also been the subject of concern in the Committee. However, this apparent decline represents the cumulative resignations over several years: due to problems noted in previous reports, whilst records of new members had been received regularly, those of resignations and lapses in membership had not.

7. The Treasurer's report was introduced by the Chairman. The formal report concerns the year ended 31 December 1982. For the current year, 1983, the Treasurer was able to report that the Group now had about £5000 on deposit at the bank. This sum includes numerous advance subscriptions and also funds which will be paid out for the production of Bulletin 39. The stable background reported should enable the subscription rate to be held steady for some time, if inflation does not increase.

The Chairman reported on discussions which had taken place at the preceding Committee meeting concerning subscriptions by libraries and comparable institutions. There were strong arguments for increasing the subscription to

institutions where one copy of the Bulletin was read by a large number of people, and most publications charged a rate up to five times that to individual members for such subscriptions. The Committee was, however, anxious not to deter subscriptions by institutions which were interested but suffering severe financial constraints. The Meeting approved a subscription to such institutions of 2.5 times the individual rate and authorized the Officers to implement this in the most appropriate way.

8. The Editor, Dr N.C. Davidson, reported that sufficient material was now arriving to fill a Bulletin of up to 52 pages, but that it had not been necessary to hold over any items for reasons of shortage of space. Findings of the questionnaire circulated in 1982 have been acted upon, including turning the Ringing Totals listing into an annual feature, and extending its coverage to allow easier inclusion of totals from outside Europe.

The Editor expressed his regret over the delays in appearance of recent Bulletins. These were due to a combination of the gradually increasing volume of material, the availability of time of those involved in the production coupled with the need to remain topical, and delays at the circulation stage. The Officers were examining thoroughly the whole production process of the Bulletin, and were hopeful of considerable improvement in the near future.

The Editor reported on informal discussions between himself, the North American Editor (Dr J.P. Myers) and the Vice-Chairman during a recent visit to Britain by Dr Myers. Among matters raised had been the question as to whether the name of the Bulletin might be changed to encourage wider appreciation of its contents. "Wader Research" or "Shorebird Research", retaining the present title as a subtitle, were two possibilities on which

members' views were invited. The Meeting was very strongly against any such change. Reasons for this were the increasingly well-established reputation of the Bulletin under its present name and the fact that the term "wader" is better understood in many non-English-speaking countries than is "shorebird".

9. The Co-ordinator, Th. Piersma, highlighted from his report the renovation and revision of the Advisory Panel, to reflect the changes in membership of the Group in recent years. Although for practical reasons, such as the production of the Bulletin by voluntary labour, it was necessary to have several officers in one country, he wished to make sure - as did the other Officers - that the British were kept in order by a Panel with wide representation. He envisaged that the Panel would play an important part in future co-operative projects.

10. Other business. In response to further enquiries from several members, the Chairman reported that the Officers would be pursuing urgently the question of a Giro account which would ease payments by members in several European countries. The Officers apologised for the lack of progress on this matter; this had resulted partly from the lack of replies from the British National Girobank to numerous enquiries made by WSG over several years.

11. Future Meetings. Several Members from European countries confirmed the view expressed at the 1981 AGM in Munster, that it was appropriate, in view of the present composition of membership, for Annual Meetings to be held alternately in Britain and other European countries. The meeting gratefully accepted an invitation from French members to hold the 1985 AGM in Rochefort on a date to be agreed. The meeting asked the Officers to arrange a suitable venue and date in southern England in 1984.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WADER STUDY GROUP : WORCESTER, U.K., 1 SEPTEMBER 1984

The AGM of the Wader Study Group will take place during the 1984 WSG Conference to be held at Worcester College of Further Education (see elsewhere in this Bulletin).

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last AGM held on 19 November 1983 at Haamstede, Netherlands (see elsewhere in this Bulletin).
3. Chairman's Report
4. Secretary's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Editor's Report
7. Co-ordinator's Report
(Reports will be published in the August Bulletin)
8. Election of Secretaries
(Officers serve for 3 years and are eligible for re-election. The term of office of the Secretaries ends at this AGM.)

Because of the increasing work-load on the Secretaries, the Officers propose that the post be divided into (i) a Secretary and (ii) a Membership Secretary. Therefore, they propose Stephen Baillie as the Secretary and Nigel & Jacquie Clark to continue as joint Membership Secretaries, the occupants of both posts to be members of the Executive Committee.

Any other nominations should be received by the Chairman by 15 June 1984. Any such nominations should be accompanied by a statement from the nominee indicating that he or she is willing to stand for election and to serve if elected.)

9. Date and venue of next year's AGM: the Group has accepted an invitation from French members to Rochefort.

10. Any other business.

(Any member wishing to raise other items at the AGM should inform the Chairman in writing as soon as possible.)

WADER STUDY GROUP MEETING 1984 : WORCESTER , U.K., 31 AUGUST TO 2 SEPTEMBER

The WSG Annual General Meeting 1983 asked the Officers to find a location for the 1984 meeting in the south or east of Britain, to allow ease of transport by members from continental Europe. Suitable locations at low prices have proved rather difficult to find, but we have been fortunate to find accommodation at the Worcester College of Higher Education, Worcester, England. The meeting will be held from the evening of Friday 31 August until the afternoon of Sunday 2 September.

Worcester is situated in the south-western part of the English Midlands, astride Britain's largest river - the Severn. Renowned for Worcester Porcelain (now part of an international company) and Worcester Sauce (now engulfed in a national nonentity) and the manufacture of gloves, Worcester is a medium-sized cathedral city of moderate distinction! It suffers from the blight of suburban expansion, typical "high-street"