

that in future it will probably remain only a logistical problem to reach such places. A regular access to data from these formerly unreachable areas now seems to be close. This affects the work of WSG. The Co-ordinator was involved in the first expedition, and also tried to arrange contacts for other interested scientists.

Another effect of the opening of the East that we welcome very much will change the activities of WSG even more. The contacts between colleagues from the 'East' and the 'West' become more liberal and the co-operation increases. The area where the co-ordination activities of WSG may be helpful is enlarging. It has to be discussed and decided very soon if and how the structures of WSG should be changed or strengthened so as to cope with these new developments.

Keeping and developing contacts with East European colleagues were among the activities of the Co-ordinator in 1989. It was possible to involve more of these colleagues in WSG projects, such as the Inland Wader Counts and the WIWO East Mediterranean project in spring 1990. It may be hoped that the forthcoming WSG conference in Italy will see numerous participants from the 'East'.

In this time of quick developments there is also a large field of possible typical WSG research activities opening up. Several times in the history of WSG the group has organised or co-ordinated international projects whose aims could only be fulfilled by the joint operation of many field teams working in different parts of the East Atlantic flyway. Besides their scientific purposes these

projects helped to strengthen the contacts between the working groups in the different countries. At present it seems to be the right time to think about a new project of this kind.

The aims of such this new project would be to study the population fluctuation of arctic waders and their influence on migration patterns. Key species could be the Little Stint *Calidris minuta* and the Curlew Sandpiper *C. ferruginea*. The climate for organising such a joint project with good participation from the eastern part of the East Atlantic flyway seem to be very good. The next WSG conference in Italy will provide a forum for discussing this topic.

The 1989 work of the Co-ordinator also included the preparation of the WSG workshop on breeding waders on wet grasslands, which was held at the WSG conference in Ribe in September 1989. The fruitful discussions during this workshop resulted in extensive recommendations. These will be included in the proceedings of this workshop, which are in preparation at present and will be published as a *WSG Bulletin Supplement*. The aims of the proceedings include an attempt to give an overview of the situation of wet grassland and its waders for the countries of the European Community. Hence the proceedings will include some papers not presented at the workshop itself.

Further activities of the Co-ordinator include assisting in some WSG or WSG-related projects such as 'Ruffnet' (see *WSG Bulletin* 53) and the inland wader counts, as well as preparing for the the next WSG conference.

Hermann Hotker

WADER STUDY GROUP ANNUAL CONFERENCE, COMACCHIO, ITALY, 5-8 OCTOBER 1990

As announced in *Bulletin* 57, the 1990 WSG Conference and Annual General Meeting takes place at Comacchio- Lido degli Estensi, on the Adriatic Coast of Italy south of Venice between 5-8 October 1990. Full details of the arrangements for the conference were included in *Bulletin* 57, and along with Officer's Reports and the Agenda for the 1990 AGM were also mailed to all members separately.

At the time this *Bulletin* is going to press the programme for the conference is taking shape. As for all recent WSG Conferences, the programme for the meeting begins on Saturday morning (6 October 1990) with the Annual General Meeting. After that the first part of the conference will deal with a theme linked to the location of the meeting: wader migration in the Mediterranean region. The results of this years' WIWO expeditions to various sites in the East Mediterranean Sea will be a nucleus of that conference block. The Mediterranean region will also feature importantly in the informal workshop on the highly endangered Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris* to be held in the morning of Monday 8 October.

Other talks at the meeting during Saturday and Sunday morning will cover the East Atlantic Flyway from all its ends - Canada, Siberia and South Africa - with a special emphasis on studies in the arctic breeding regions. In this context we look forward to many contributions from our East European colleagues with whom some of us shared common fieldwork

this year. Besides the East Atlantic Flyway the East African Flyway will also receive special attention during this conference, and some new research programmes will be presented.

As is traditional for WSG conferences, the talk programme ends at midday on Sunday 7 October. That afternoon there will be an excursion to the nearby Comacchio lagoon, with Spotted Redshanks *Tringa erythropus* a speciality.

Monday 8 October offers opportunities for meetings of special interest groups. In addition to the Slender-billed Curlew workshop there will also be an Avocet meeting. Others will be convened as requested - please contact me if there is a topic you wish discussed.

As well as talks there will also be the opportunity to display posters, and we would especially welcome posters on topics other than those mentioned above.

The meeting is being held the Hotel "Conca del Lido" in Lido degli Estensi, Comacchio (tel. (0)533-327459).

For conference bookings and any other queries about the conference, contact Nicola Baccetti, Fernando Spina or Alberto Massi, at *Istituto Nazionale Biologia Selvaggina, Via Ca' Fornacetta 9, I-40064 Ozzano emilia BO, Italy* (tel. (0)51-798746).

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