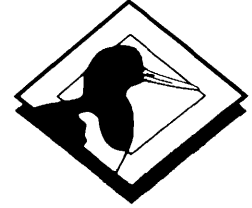

WADER STUDY GROUP



BULLETIN 59 August 1990

EDITORIAL

Back in the heady days of summer 1981 I was attempting to complete a Ph.D. thesis, the WSG project on the movements of wader populations in western Europe was in full swing, the Inland Wader Counts project was completing its first season, the Wader Study Group was just about to hold its first ever annual meeting outside Britain (in Münster in the Federal Republic of Germany) and the WSG membership was predominantly British. At that stage the Bulletin was being typed directly onto A3 sheets, before being cut, juggled and pasted into its final form. For those with very long memories, the Sanderling had only just replaced a flock of fleeing Oystercatchers on the front cover of each issue.

The mists of time now obscure precisely how, fired by enthusiasm for international co-operation in wader studies, the then editors Mike Pienkowski and Harry Green persuaded me to join them as 'Assistant Editor'. In barely more than a year I found myself promoted to Editor. Since then 23 *Bulletins* (and two major supplements) have passed through my hands, and many changes have been made to the *Bulletin*. Notable amongst these was the introduction of computer technology and the adoption of a two-column format in the April 1984 issue, and the subsequent change to a more readable typeface in the April 1987 issue. It is fitting that this issue, in which I hand over to a new editorial team, sees another major change (and we hope improvement) to the layout and style of the *Bulletin* - production and layout through desk-top publishing.

An astonishing range of contributions has passed under my editorial pen during this time, and it is clear that no wader, wherever it is or whatever it is doing, is now safe from its activities being reported through the pages of the *Bulletin*, nor indeed are the activities of members. One of the great excitements of editing an international *Bul-*

letin is never knowing from which of so many parts of the world the next contribution will arrive through the post. During the last ten years the Wader Study Group has spread its international wings greatly and this is reflected by the hugely international nature of the articles that now appear in each issue. This pattern will continue, and it is particularly good to know that there will be many new reports from the New World and from Eastern Europe and the USSR appearing in future issues.

The *Bulletin* exists for its readers, and depends on readers continuing to send in material of all kinds about waders for publication. So do please keep writing. By popular demand we have tried to ensure that the *Bulletin* continues to publish a wide range of material from papers reporting detailed research studies, through preliminary and progress reports of current work and co-operative projects, to news about members' activities - in fact anything of interest to a grallatologist. To maintain this mix depends on members providing this wide range of material for the *Bulletin*, so keep the letters and papers flowing!

To produce a *Bulletin* of this kind takes the help and enthusiasm of a great many people. I can take this opportunity to thank all those who have acted as assistant editors during the last eight years, those who have contributed by compiling regular features and listings, and those who have helped in the production or circulation of issues. It is a particular pleasure to thank David Stroud for his help as assistant editor over the last three years, especially since despite this role David has agreed to take over as Editor heading an expanded editorial team. The new structure is described further elsewhere in this *Bulletin*.

This appears to be both the first and the last Editorial I have ever written for the *Bulletin*. It is splendid to complete it at a

time when *Bulletins* are getting back on schedule again, there are two new major Supplements planned to appear in the next few months, and the *Bulletin* is taking on a whole new appearance for the 1990s. Who knows, maybe now I'll even have time to write a paper to send to the Editors...

Nick Davidson



WSG AND THE FUTURE

It will come as no surprise to WSG members that the Group has been facing a series of challenges over the last year or so. These arise essentially from the Group's success. Because WSG has proved to be effective in achieving communication between wader workers and facilitating co-operative projects, the demands have increased greatly. This has placed great strains on the officers of the Group, who work in a voluntary capacity. Over the same period, the spare time available to those in research or conservation employment has tended to decrease. The difficulty in recruiting new volunteers to increasingly demanding tasks has caused the Committee to ask individual officers to stay in post far longer than the individuals concerned wished: the Editor has suffered particularly badly here!

Throughout the past year, the members of your Executive Committee have been giving detailed consideration to the strategic options in meeting these challenges. Some of the questions we addressed include:

- *how can we ensure that members whose main interest is within one*



country are adequately catered for while the Group also takes the exceptional opportunities available at present to develop international initiatives?

- how can we ease the burden on individual officers so that new people are prepared to volunteer for tasks of reasonable magnitude?
- linked closely to this, how can we reduce the work-load on editors to allow a more regular timetable for publication?

Following our discussions and circulation of papers during the year, the Executive Committee was able at its meeting in Italy to make some decisions about solutions. I outlined these to the Annual General Meeting, and here note them for all members. Those present at the meeting were enthusiastic about future prospects, and I hope that others share this feeling.

The key to meeting these challenges will be the breaking down of the over-size jobs to several lighter tasks. The largest area of difficulty concerns the *Bulletin*, which is now a huge task. Our new Membership Secretary, Rodney West, will be using modern computer technology to take on the production and circulation side of the *Bulletin*. This will also allow many of the features we have wished to incorporate since first adopting a simple computer-based technology some years ago. The first results will be evident in this issue; others will follow progressively.

Of course, we need to ensure that we do not, in the process, overload the Membership Secretary. To avoid this, we are exploring modest buying-in of some of the work which does not require wader expertise.

The "scientific" and sub-editing aspects of Bulletin production remain major tasks. David Stroud has agreed to take on the role of responsible editor. Nick Davidson, to whom we owe a major debt for carrying the load so well for so long, will continue to advise. A small team will assist David in putting the Bulletin together, and more on this appears elsewhere. Despite the difficulties, the correct number of Bulletins has appeared in the last few years; we have simply not cleared an earlier backlog.

We have decided that, in future, Bulletin issues will appear regularly, regardless of the amount of material which is ready. This may mean that some issues contain rather fewer articles than others - but this is likely to be a more satisfactory arrangement. This *Bulletin* should be the third you have received in fairly rapid succession. We plan

to prepare another issue early in the new year, to return us to the correct schedule.

However, next year, in addition to the three regular issues, you will receive the two special supplements resulting from our 1989 conference in Denmark, and possibly a third special issue. Make space on the shelves!

Both for the Bulletin and other matters we are keen to develop strong contributions within individual countries and regions. Some regional co-ordinators and editors were enlisted at the Comacchio meeting. The editors and the Co-ordinator, Hermann Hötter, are following up this at present.

Jeff Kirby, to whom we owe a major vote of thanks for sorting the membership records, is not escaping entirely and has kindly offered to help further improve delivery of the colour-marking register. Phil Ireland is unable to continue as General Secretary, and the Committee has co-opted Petra de Goeij to take on this key co-ordinating role. We hope that Phil will continue his involvement by contributing in the regional coordination tasks noted above.

We therefore have a strong team in place, adding many new skills to the existing ones, and thereby achieving the plan of sub-dividing the tasks. There is still, however, plenty of room for more help - do not hesitate in contacting one of the Executive Committee if you think you might be able to help. Their names can be found on the inside front cover.

We hope you will see the results of all this in the *Bulletins*, provided that you continue to provide the material. Also, why not join us at the annual conference: in 1991 on Texel, the Netherlands; and in autumn 1992 in Hungary, alongside the IWRB/WSG Ecology Workshop. By popular demand at the Comacchio meeting and at the invitation of the Soviet Union, an extra conference is planned in April 1992 in Odessa, Ukraine.

Other aspects of the changes are described elsewhere in this issue of the *Bulletin*. I hope that you find the prospects as exciting as do your Committee and those members present at the Annual General Meeting.

Mike Pienkowski, Chairman



WSG 1991 CONFERENCE

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

After the highly successful 1990 WSG conference in Italy, the 1991 AGM and conference moves north - to the island of Texel in The Netherlands. The meeting will take place over the weekend of 5-6 October 1991.

The conference will be hosted by the Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ) and the Research Institute for Nature Management (RIN), and is being arranged by WSG Vice-chairman Theunis Piersma and new General Secretary Petra de Goeij. The meeting will be based at the facilities of NIOZ, with accommodation at the Panorama Youth Hostel, situated on top of the largest hill on the island and only a short bicycle ride from NIOZ.

Costs of accommodation and food are likely to be in the region of Dfl 40 per day. This means that total costs for the whole weekend will be about Dfl 120 (c. £40), so following our tradition of keeping costs of the meeting as low as possible.

As usual the main meeting will take place over the weekend. Participants are recommended to arrive on the evening of Friday 5 October, and the conference will close with the usual excursion on Sunday afternoon (6 October). There may also be an optional programme arranged for Monday 7 October - possibly focussing on recent ideas on food availability and wader populations.

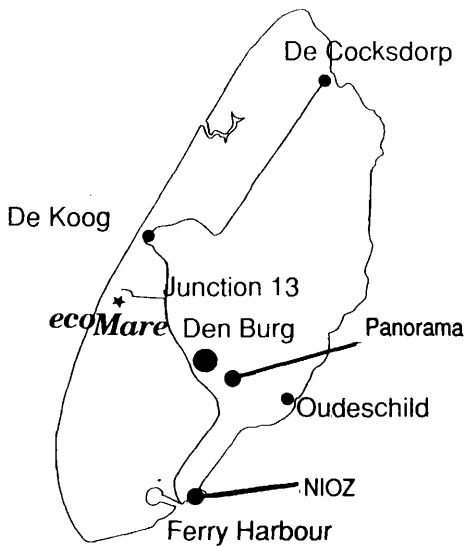
Texel is the westernmost of the Wadden Sea islands of the northern Netherlands and is beautifully located between the exiting wader areas of this unrivalled area of tidal flats to the west, and with extensive marine shores and fringing sand dunes on its North Sea coast. Long-standing WSG members will remember that the NIOZ facilities on Texel were the location for a highly enjoyable WSG/IWRB Feeding Ecology meeting in May 1981 - a meeting that formed the basis for the *Coastal waders and waterfowl in winter* book, edited by Peter Evans, John Goss-Custard and Bill Hale and published in 1984.

The island is readily reached by road or rail followed by a short ferry crossing. For British members Texel is only a couple of hours train ride from the Harwich to Hook of



Holland ferry, or even less after air travel to Amsterdam Schipol airport. We hope this advance notice and the easy accessibility of the venue will encourage a great many WSG members to attend the meeting, which will also coincide with the 21st birthday of the Wader Study Group (*WSG Bulletin* No. 1 was issued in October 1970).

Island of Texel in the Dutch Waddensee.



Further details and booking forms for the conference will be sent to all members in a future *Bulletin*, once arrangements have been finalised. For now, please mark these important dates for the meeting in your diary, and we look forward to seeing everyone on Texel on 5-6 October 1991)



CHANGES

TO WSG EDITORIAL PERSONNEL AND PROCEDURES

As announced elsewhere in this *Bulletin* there have recently been substantial changes in both the people involved in producing *WSG Bulletins* and in the produc-

tion process. These changes have in part arisen from the end of the term of office of the previous editor, Nick Davidson, and in part from the need to expand the editorial team so as to cope with the increasing amount of material being received. At the same time we have taken the opportunity to improve the appearance of the *Bulletin* by switching to a desk-top publishing system.

Our primary objective in making these changes has been to bring *Bulletins* back on schedule, and to ensure that future *Bulletins* continue to reach members on this schedule.

In practice the changes will have few direct consequences for members, except the positive advantages of *Bulletins* appearing on schedule and with a much improved readability. For members submitting material for publication in the *Bulletin* we are pleased to say that we can continue to accept material for the *Bulletin* in machine-readable form on disc in either BBC (Acorn Computers) format or MS-DOS ASCII text file.

The changes are described further below.

CHANGES IN EDITORIAL STRUCTURE

It has been clear for some time that the increased complexity and volume of material being published in the *Bulletin* is more than can be reasonably handled by one editor. Accordingly we have now split editorial responsibility into two sections. These are the 'Newsletter' items (such as the regular features of Notes & News, Recent Publications, Ringing Recoveries and Ringing Totals, and the information about conferences and the running of the Group), and the scientific papers reporting research and observations.

To ensure smooth processing of these two parts of the *Bulletin* we have arranged for their editing to be handled by different parts of the new team.

CHANGES IN PERSONNEL

David Stroud, who was formerly Assistant Editor, has agreed to take on the role of Editor-in-Chief, and was elected to the Executive Committee at the 1990 AGM. David has responsibility for overall editorial policy and processes, as well as forming part of the scientific editorial team. In the scientific editing David will be assisted by two newly appointed Assistant Editors, Nicola Crockford and Martin Nugent.

Also joining the team as Newsletter Editor is Rodney West. In addition to deal-

ing with the various newsletter items, Rodney has taken on responsibility also for *Bulletin* production and circulation.

REGIONAL EDITORS

As part of the editorial team, for some years WSG has had editors specifically covering the New World. These are currently Greg Ruiz and Peter Hicklin, who have responsibility for encouraging contributions from the New World, and dealing with authors over initial editing of material.

We are currently seeking to expand this regional editor network to cover other parts of the world, so as to encourage a wide flow of material for the *Bulletin*. We will be announcing the appointment of further regional editors in a future *Bulletin*. We would also be pleased to discuss such roles with members who would be interested and willing to act as a regional editor for their part of the world.

THE NEW WSG EDITORIAL TEAM

In summary the new WSG editorial team is:

Editor-in-Chief	David Stroud
Assistant Editors	<i>Scientific</i>
	Judy Stroud
	Nicola Crockford
	Martin Nugent
	<i>Newsletter</i>
	Rodney West
	<i>New World</i>
	Greg Ruiz
	Peter Hicklin

BULLETIN CORRESPONDENCE

The WSG Editorial address remains the same as before, and all correspondence (except in the New World) concerning material for the *WSG Bulletin* should be sent to:

David Stroud, Wader Study Group, c/o Nature Conservancy Council, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA, U.K.

New World material should be submitted initially to the New World editors, Greg Ruiz (Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, PO Box 28, Edgewater, Maryland 21037-0028, USA) or Peter Hicklin (Canadian Wildlife Service, PO Box 1590, Sackville, New Brunswick, E0A 3C0, Canada).

Nick Davidson, on behalf of the WSG Executive Committee

