

NOTES & NEWS

& NEWS & NOTES

NOTES & NEWS

YOUR NOTES AND NEWS URGENTLY WANTED!!!

Please send us *your* notes and news!

To keep this column topical in reflecting current national and international wader study activity, please help us by gathering information.

Please send contributions to Robin Ward & Lys Muirhead, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DM1 3LE, UK. All news, views and other snippets most gratefully received!

WADER CARCASSES STILL WANTED

In this English Heritage laboratory we study animal bones from archaeological sites. To help us identify archaeological specimens we are building up a reference collection of modern identified skeletons, but are still having trouble in getting some species, especially waders!

Would you be able to help us? We are especially keen to acquire specimens of the following species:

Stone Curlew *Burhinus oediconemus*
Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*
Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*
Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Any other species would also be welcome so as to establish age, sex and geographic variation, although the species above are still completely unrepresented in our comparative collection.

Their condition is not important; we are used to dealing with road-kills, incomplete carcasses and *post-mortem* material. Specimens can be sent to us by first class mail at

English Heritage, Ancient Monuments Laboratory, Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 1AB, well wrapped and clearly marked "Zoological Specimens - Urgent" so that someone will put them in the freezer if we're away. Postage will be refunded.

Simon Davis

AFRICAN-EURASIAN WATERBIRD AGREEMENT

The conservation and sustainable utilisation of African-Eurasian migratory waterbirds is the common responsibility of 117 Range States in the flyway that covers Africa, Europe and part of Asia. The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention) provides a framework within which to develop comprehensive agreements for species such as these.

Concluding and implementing an African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement will make a significant contribution to the conservation of biological diversity over a vast area from the tundra of Siberia to the wetlands of southern Africa.

The Secretariat of the Bonn Convention has announced that, in collaboration with the Government of the Netherlands, it is organising a formal Negotiating Meeting to discuss and conclude the proposal for an Agreement. This will be held from 12-17 June at The Hague. The Secretariat has invited the Ministers responsible for nature conservation and wildlife management of the respective Range States to represent the Governments of their countries at the meeting.

Inter-governmental organisations as well as international and national non-governmental organisations technically qualified in the protection, conservation and management of migratory bird species will also be given the opportunity to attend.

Given the importance of the proposed AEWA as an international framework for migratory waterbird research and conservation, we hope to be able to report on the successful conclusion of the meeting in the August *Bulletin*.

We also intend to include a fuller summary of the content and implications of the final text of the AEWA in due course.

David Stroud

PAN-AMERICAN SHOREBIRD PROGRAM

The PASP was created to act as a clearing house for shorebird color band observations and to co-ordinate color banding schemes in the Americas. However, PASP has been inactive for several years, so the Canadian Wildlife Service was asked to take over many of its duties. C.L. Gratto-Trevor will compile lists of shorebird color banding schemes in the Americas and send band sightings on to the appropriate banders. She will co-ordinate color banding schemes in Canada and can offer suggestions about co-ordination in other countries.

It would be appreciated if persons who have color marked shorebirds in recent years would send details of their color making scheme, and if people who have observed color marked shorebirds would send their sightings to Dr C.L. Gratto-Trevor, Canadian Wildlife Service, 115 Perimeter Road, Saskatoon, SK, S7N 0X4, Canada.

WADER RINGING IN SOUTHERN ITALY

During the spring migration period, 25 April to 15 May 1995, the Gruppo Inanellamento Limicoli (GIL) is again organising a ringing camp at Castelvolturno, near Naples. In 1994, with the help of ringers from Italy, Britain and Hungary, a total of 1,116 waders, including 504 Little Stint, 414 Curlew Sandpiper, 140 Ruff, 25 Wood Sandpiper with singles of Black-winged Stilt, Collared Pratincole and Marsh Sandpiper were ringed (together with 106 birds of other species).

The main catching site is a series of muddy lagoons which are used in

winter for duck shooting. In spring, when the ducks have gone, the lagoons are allowed to dry out and waders are then able to feed in the shallow water and along the muddy margins. The area is surrounded by small-scale agriculture where families grow tomatoes and other vegetables. Water Buffalo are grazed on rough grasses (they contribute milk to make the local cheese *mozzarella di bufala*), and interesting birds can be seen such as Red-legged Falcon, Spoonbill etc. The catching is mainly by mist-net set over the lagoons and is most effective in the evenings.

We expect to be staying in a house near the lagoons where food and lodging will be free. High waders, windproofs, lamps and mosquito protection will be necessary. It would be helpful to bring a sleeping bag, and anyone willing to bring some fine mist-nets (full height and single panel) and other ringing and measuring equipment for the duration of their stay would be most welcome. Members of GIL will meet visitors and take them to the camp.

For further details please contact: Dr Sergio Scabba, via Posillipo 276/2, 80123 Napoli, Italy.

UK PHONE NUMBERS HAVE CHANGED!

From 16 April all UK phone codes have changed, with the addition of an extra '1' in front of the area code (if dialling or faxing internationally). Thus + (0)XXX XXXXXX becomes +(0)1XXX XXXXXX.

If you cannot get through, now you know why!

ARCTIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Nick Davidson's paper on the different means of assessing breeding conditions for arctic waterfowl in this *Bulletin* (pp. 47-52) highlights a number of ways of improving international collaboration in data collection and developing international standard field methodologies. This

topic has been discussed recently as a key need in workshops of the IOC in August 1994, at IWRB's Anatidae 2000 Conference in December 1994 and of course during the October 1994 WSG Workshop on estimating breeding success of waders. It is also directly applicable to needs under the draft African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement of the Bonn Convention.

Initial discussions have been held with the existing Russian wader monitoring scheme (co-ordinated by Dr P.S. Tomkovitch at the Zoological Museum of Moscow University; see page 46 this *Bulletin*), Canadian Wildlife Service arctic bird monitoring (Dr R.I.G. Morrison and others, CWS Ottawa), and the IWRB Goose Research Group (Dr. J. Madsen, Danish National Environmental Research Institute) and a number of arctic biologists.

As a first step to establishing a co-ordinated pan-arctic scheme, we are including with this *Bulletin* a pilot questionnaire aimed at collecting different aspects of information about breeding conditions for waterfowl in the arctic. The form is in two parts.

The first section (included here) aims to summarise general information on environmental conditions and locations where field studies have been undertaken. The second part of the form, produced in different versions for different parts of the arctic and available on request, enables more detailed information on the breeding success of individual species to be recorded.

We would greatly appreciate feedback and completed forms from those active in arctic fieldwork so that we can assess optimal means of collecting this information.

At this stage we would be interested in completed forms not only from the 1995 field season, but also from previous years including expeditions that may already have published material elsewhere.

In the light of the response, it is probable that WSG will aim to establish a joint international venture to collect such information on an annual basis. The intention is to establish a database of returns which

will be freely accessible to all, as a research and conservation tool. We are clearly some way from this ideal but the pilot survey is a first step.

The Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) Working Group (representing the arctic nations) are currently considering co-ordinated environmental monitoring mechanisms. One of CAFF's initial exercises has been the compilation of an arctic seabird colony register, but CAFF has not yet developed similar information bases for arctic waterfowl. The long-term establishment of such international monitoring could be undertaken through CAFF and we will be exploring this with them.

Until other arrangements are made, the pilot survey is being co-ordinated by ourselves (c/o JNCC, Monkstone House, City Road, Peterborough PE1 1JY, UK), from whom further information and forms are available.

We would appreciate ideas and comment from any interested party on either the questionnaire or Nick's paper!

David Stroud
Nick Davidson

Thank you!

Many thanks to all those who have helped recently with all stages of recent *Bulletin* publication:

EDITORIAL

Andy Brown, Nick Davidson, Julianne Evans, Phil Holland, John Holmes, Henk Koffijberg, John Marchant, Lys Muirhead, Peter Reay, Greg Ruiz, Des Thompson, Roberto Tinarelli, Robin Ward and Sylvia Way.

PRODUCTION

Nick Davidson, Reg Davies, Ann Williams, Rodney West and Sylvia Way.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Jens Gregersen, Eugeny A. Koblik and Derek Yalden.