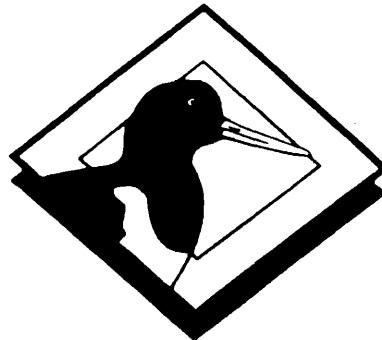


# WADER STUDY GROUP



*BULLETIN 81 December 1996*

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## **Minutes of the 1996 WSG Annual General Meeting, Belgium**

The 1996 WSG Annual General Meeting was held at 09.00-10.15 hrs on Saturday 9 November 1996 during the annual meeting in Kasterlee, Belgium.

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Jadwiga Gromadzka, Rodney West and Les Underhill.

### **2. Minutes of the previous AGM**

The minutes of the previous AGM held on 16 September 1995 in Aveiro, Portugal and published in *Bulletin 78*: 1-2 were accepted as a true record of that meeting.

### **3. Chairman's Report**

Gerard Boere presented his report of the year and noted that the Wader Study Group has had a year in which international links have been strengthened more. One of the highlights in this case was the opportunity of a meeting in Brisbane,

Australia between some of the Officers of the AWSG and the WSG. This allowed discussion as to ways in which co-operation could be further developed and strengthened between the two groups, the detailed results of which will be reported during 1997.

The report was accepted.

### **4. Treasurer's Report**

Bob Loos reported on the budget for 1995 and outlined the projected budget for 1996 and 1997. Overall, the WSG remains in a healthy situation. Bob expects an excess of income over expenditure of £500 in 1996. The total capital of the WSG is £12 500, the equivalent of about one year's membership income. It is important to maintain the Group's capital at this level since this secures the Group's functioning for the future. The auditing committee (Peter Evans & Les Underhill) have accepted the financial report for 1995, which was also endorsed by the AGM. The Treasurer thanked the auditing committee for their comments. He again stressed the importance of members paying on time which results in saving of money (and Officer's time) for the group.

The report was accepted.

### **5. Membership Secretary's Report**

Membership has increased slightly since 1994. Although the WSG has around 620 members now, it is important to seek more members which will enable the group to further develop its financial base and thus its programme of co-operative research and surveys as well as publications. To this end, all members were asked to help with finding new members.

The report was accepted.

### **6. Editor's Report**

One of the prime priorities of the Group is that *Bulletins* should appear on schedule and in the course of the last year this has again been achieved. At the same time there has been an increase in number of published pages. Rodney West's design for the new cover, introduced in 1995, and enhanced layout have been accepted positively. Looking forward, there will probably be three *International Wader Studies* volumes published in 1997. One of these will be the c. 450 page proceedings of the 1992 Odessa WSG meeting. The Editor thanked all the editorial team for their hard work. The Assistant Editor, Julianne Evans is progressively taking on more editorial tasks.

The editor requested in particular that members should continue to submit material for the reviews section and also any suitable artwork that might be used to enliven the *Bulletin*.

The report was accepted.

## 7. Co-ordinator's Report

Hermann Hötter presented the report on behalf also of Ole Thorup (Project Co-ordinator) and Jan van Gils (Survey Co-ordinator). The Breeding Waders in Europe 2000 project is starting now, co-ordinated by Ole Thorup and planning work has continued throughout the year.

The development of the Arctic Waterfowl Breeding Conditions Database has continued. Database development for this project will be undertaken at Moscow Museum with the help of funding from Wetlands International. The project will collaborate closely with the with the broader Arctic Database Project being developed by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

Aspects of the work to be carried out within the framework of Migration of Red Knots in South America 1996-2000 have meanwhile received some limited bilateral financial support. Hermann happily announced an expedition to the Banc d'Arguin in Mauritania, partly organised by the WSG and WIWO. Tom van Spanje, the expedition leader, explained briefly to the AGM the aims and timetable of this expedition.

The report was accepted.

## 8. WSG-Wetlands International Liaison Officer's Report

Nick Davidson reported that the formal link with Wetlands International (the new name of IWRB) is extremely successful. It has become more clear in the last year how WSG can feed its knowledge into Wetlands International. At the moment we are maybe the most active specialist group within Wetlands International.

Through Wetlands International WSG has the responsibility of providing guidance on species conservation

issues to the IUCN's Species Survival Commission. To this end, there is a need to develop better information about the knowledge and information held by members of the group. A possible questionnaire to develop this overview of the Group's expertise is being considered.

There is also a current need to develop new wader population estimates for the East Atlantic and other flyways since the only data remain those published by Smit & Piersma in 1989 and derived from early 1980s data. A workshop was organised for 11 November 1996 to commence the data gathering process from different European countries.

The report was accepted.

## 9. Elections to the WSG Executive Committee

The following were elected for a further term of office on the Executive Committee:

Theunis Piersma - Vice-Chairman

David Stroud - Editor

Rodney West - Membership Secretary

Nick Davidson - WSG-Wetlands International Liaison Officer

Nicola Baccetti and Mark Barter were elected for a further term as ordinary members.

Ole Thorup, Jan van Gils and Julianne Evans were elected to the Committee as ordinary members (but acting respectively as Project Co-ordinator, Survey Co-ordinator and as Assistant *Bulletin* Editor).

The Chairman noted the withdrawal from Committee work of Brigitte Hötter-Klinner and Jadwiga Gromadzka.

He thanked Brigitte for all the work she has undertaken for the Group in the period of her active involvement on the Committee. She was one of the "tough ladies" active in setting up the active OAG Münster wader group and has undertaken much research on breeding waders. Now she is putting her energy into a new type of breeding biology.

Jadwiga Gromadzka is one of the most long standing (and active) members of the Group. She has been and still is very active in the Gdansk Ornithological Station. The Chairman noted also her leading work in Dunlin research and the consequent good discussions on this topic at many WSG meetings. The Chairman thanked her for her balanced and pragmatic input to the work of the Executive Committee (where she was the first, and so far only, grandmother on the Committee!) over many years.

The meeting expressed their considerable thanks to both Brigitte and Jadwiga with acclamation.

## 10. Subscription rates for 1996

For reasons outlined in the Treasurer's Report, there will be no subscription rate increase in 1997. There will also be no changes in the membership fees in foreign currencies.

## 11. Charitable status for WSG

The Chairman noted that the current constitution of the WSG (reprinted in *Bulletin* 80) has served the Group well for many years. The Constitution, whilst ordering the internal activities of the Group, does not, however, confer on WSG any legal status.

Such a legal status is needed today. This is especially because WSG is increasingly involved in projects for and with other organisations with the consequent need to receive and pay considerable sums of money (e.g. for publications). Currently Officers can be held personally liable should there be financial problems.

The Committee have been considering a variety of options during the course of the last year, and Bob Loos and Nick Davidson with much help also from Linda Bridge, assessed a range of possibilities for legal status. The best two options are either to register the Group as a British Charity or as a Society registered in The Netherlands. The Committee has discussed all the pros and cons of the two possibilities and has concluded that becoming a Society in The Netherlands is the better option. The President