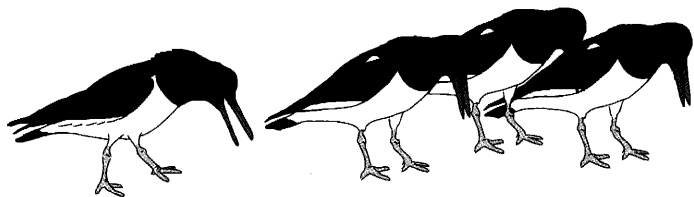


NOTES & NEWS



Limnology and Waterbirds Conference

The 4th Conference of the Working Group on Aquatic Birds of the International Society of Limnology (SIL) "Limnology and Waterbirds 2003" will be held in Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada, during 4–9 August 2003.

The Preliminary Announcement as well as the return form of Expression of Interest is to be found at <http://www.links.umoncton.ca/lw/>. The completed form should be returned in order to receive further notices.

The Proceedings will be published in the journal *Hydrobiologia* as well as a separate volume in the "Advancements in Hydrobiology" series of Kluwer Publishers [similar to that of an earlier symposium: Proceedings "Aquatic Birds in the Trophic Web of Lakes" (Dev. in Hydrobiology 1994, vol 96, 524 p. or *Hydrobiologia*, 1994, vol. 279/280)].

The Proceedings of the 2nd Conference of the SIL Aquatic Birds Working Group, held in Mérida, México, in November 1997 are available. The Table of Contents of the Proceedings and other information are listed at: http://www.ramsar.org/w.n.book_limnology.htm.

For additional information please contact: Joseph Kerekes, Environment Canada, 45 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth, N.S., B2Y 2N6, Canada, e-mail: joe.kerekes@ec.gc.ca; phone: (902) 426-6356; fax: (902) 426-4457.

Sound-recordings of Greater and Lesser Sand Plovers

The Belgian Rarities Committee is studying the possibility of (sub)specific identification of Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* and Lesser Sand Plover *C. mongolus* by voice. The preliminary results are promising, but recordings of a number of taxa are still lacking. If you go birding in an area where sand plovers occur, please make the effort to record their vocalisations. Please send any sound-recordings and/or sonagrams (specifying the type of call and the subspecies if possible) to Magnus Robb, Barentsstraat 126, 1013 NS Amsterdam, The Netherlands (e-mail: robb@chello.nl).

UK – WeBS Publication

The latest publication from the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS), *The Wetland Bird Survey 1999–2000 Wildfowl and Wader Counts*, summarises wildfowl and wader count data collected across Great Britain and Northern Ireland during 1999–2000 and includes results from other national and local waterbird monitoring schemes. It provides a single, comprehensive source of information on the current status and distribution of waterbirds in the UK for those interested in the conservation of the populations of these species and the wetland sites they use.

WeBS is the monitoring scheme for non-breeding waterfowl in the UK, that aims to provide the principal data for

conservation of their populations and wetland habitats. The data collected are used to assess the size of waterfowl populations, determine trends in numbers and distribution, and assess the importance of individual sites for waterbirds in line with the requirements of international conservation conventions and directives. A programme of research underpins and enhances these objectives.

Continuing a tradition that began in 1947, about 3,000 volunteer counters participate in synchronised monthly counts in all types of wetland habitat, mainly during the winter. WeBS is a partnership between the British Trust for Ornithology, the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Copies of the *The Wetland Bird Survey 1999–2000* publication and earlier volumes can be purchased from: WeBS Secretariat, WWT Slimbridge, Glos GL2 7BT, UK.

Slender-billed Curlew bred in 1997!

The British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee recently announced the addition to the British List of Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris*. The record refers to a first-summer bird seen at Druridge Bay, Northumberland, UK, during 4–7 May 1998. The bird's age is significant, proving that at least one pair bred successfully in 1997 – but where?

Handling chicks?

Researchers at the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in the UK are requesting wader feathers grown at known breeding locations anywhere in the world. The stable isotope ratios of the feathers will be determined, and used to examine the relationship between environmental isotope ratios and those in the feathers of waders. Ultimately, these data will be used in a project to determine the breeding grounds of Slender-billed Curlews, by using feather isotope ratios from museum specimens.

The feathers must have been grown at a known place. This primarily means feathers taken from chicks or juveniles caught at their natal site. However, where juveniles are caught at migration or wintering sites, and the natal site is known (e.g. because they were ringed or otherwise marked as chicks), then feathers that are known to have been grown at the natal site (i.e. those known to be from the juvenile plumage) can also be used. Only a few feathers are needed per bird. Of particular value are studies where more than one wader species is being caught at the same site. This will allow examination of between-species variation when environmental isotope ratios are the same. Especially valuable are feathers from Russia, Ukraine and Kazakstan. However, all feathers from known breeding sites are needed.

Those able to help are asked to contact: Dr Geoff M. Hilton, RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL,



UK (e-mail: geoff.hilton@rspb.org.uk; phone: +44 (0)1767 680551; fax +44 (0)1767 683211). Detailed sampling instructions will be provided as well as help arranging any permits required for collecting and sending feathers.

Bird banding and Charadrius Plovers in Indonesia

Mark Grantham is writing a paper on the status and identification of four Charadrius plovers in Indonesia (Kentish, Javan, Red-capped and Malaysian). He would welcome any records of these species, especially from eastern Indonesia, along with site, date and any interesting identification features noted. He is also compiling a review of all banding projects and banding results in Indonesia and would like anyone with any relevant information to get in touch with him (e-mail: mark@mons.fsnet.co.uk).

N.W. Australia Wader and Tern Expedition 2002–2003

A further expedition to study waders and terns in the Roebuck Bay, Broome and Eighty Mile Beach (Anna Plains) areas of N.W. Australia will take place between 16th November 2002 and 4th January 2003.

As on previous expeditions, international participation is welcomed. It is intended that a team of 15–20 people will spend about half the time at each location, being based either at Broome Bird Observatory or Anna Plains Station (a 4,000 km² cattle ranch).

The principal objectives are:

- to collect data on the progression of the primary moult on all species/ages of wader. At present we have negligible data in the middle November to early January period.
- to estimate the relative breeding success in the 2002 Arctic breeding season of all the main species.
- to catch samples of species which are only present in significant numbers at that time of year, especially Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*.
- to obtain weight data to further investigate a moon phase/weight relationship apparently present in many species. The expedition covers both a full moon and a new moon period.

Peak wader numbers are present in N.W. Australia in November/December with all the adults and juveniles having arrived. Close to 500,000 waders occur at Eighty Mile Beach and up to 150,000 in Roebuck Bay at Broome – of an incredible 48 species.

The team size is limited by the cost and availability of 4-wheel drives throughout. Places will be allocated on a “first come first served” basis. Past expedition participants are especially encouraged to come again.

Further details, and to register expressions of interest, or firm bookings, please contact one of the expedition leaders:

Clive Minton, 165 Dalgety Road, Beaumaris, Victoria 3193, Australia; fax/phone 61-3-9589-4901; e-mail: mintonso@ozemail.com.au

Rosalind Jessop, PO Box 97, Cowes, Phillip Island, Victoria 3922, Australia; phone/fax 61-3-5952-1857; e-mail rjessop@penguins.org.au

Peter Collins, RMB 4009, Cowes 3922, Phillip Island, Australia; fax/phone 61-3-5952-1857; e-mail moonbird@waterfront.net.au

Humphrey Sitters, Limosa, Old Ebford Lane, Ebford, Exeter, EX 3 0QR, UK; fax/phone 44-1392-873744; e-mail: hsitters@aol.com.

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