

NORTH AMERICAN SHOREBIRD STUDY GROUP FORMED

by Dr. R.I.G. Morrison, Ottawa, Ontario

We wish to announce the formation of a North American Shorebird Study Group, with the objective of promoting communication between and the dissemination of knowledge amongst persons interested in shorebirds in North America. The North American Shorebird Study Group will comprise a section of the present Wader Study Group, which was formed in Europe in 1970, and which has proven very effective in achieving the above goals in the Old World. The Wader Study Group has many members throughout Europe and Africa, and with increasing membership in North America, we feel that the formation of a partially separate subgroup would be beneficial. The advantages of remaining within the larger group are clear, in that members can be kept in touch with work in progress on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Wader Study Group publishes a Bulletin two to three times a year. We believe the Bulletin provides a very valuable outlet for articles which might not be suitable for a scientific journal but which are more substantial than those intended for a "newsletter." Material currently appearing in the Bulletin includes the following: accounts of field projects and/or expeditions, notes on methods for trapping and for aging and sexing waders, preliminary accounts of biometric and moult data for uncommon species or where work may still be in progress, lists of recent publications on waders, announcements and requests for information, banding totals and recoveries, and addresses of members.

We envisage that the Bulletin will in future have a North American section, which will be edited separately but which will be printed and distributed with the present edition from the U.K. The North American section will be edited initially by R.I.G. Morrison, who was co-opted by the Wader Study Group Committee for that purpose. Contributions on any aspect of wader biology from members or prospective members are requested and should be sent to R.I.G. Morrison, Canadian Wildlife Service, 2721 Highway 31, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1G 3Z7. It is not intended that publication in the Bulletin would prevent a later, fuller account of work in a journal, but we hope to attract articles for which the Bulletin might be the most suitable outlet.

For the initial edition of the North American section we plan to include articles on shorebird work by the Canadian Wildlife Service in James Bay by R.I.G. Morrison, an account of recent fieldwork in Tierra del Fuego for the Royal Ontario Museum by Allan Baker and Edward Miller as well as other material that may be submitted in response to this announcement. We also plan to publish a list of North American members with a brief indication of their research interests to facilitate communication between workers in various fields.

Subscription. The annual subscription will be \$2.50 (Canadian or American) and should be sent to the North American Membership Secretary, Dr. E. H. Miller, Department of Biology, York University, Faculty of Science, 4700 Keele Street, Downsview, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3. Alternatively, members may join the group by sending £1 (sterling) to A.J. Prater, British Trust for Ornithology, Beech Grove, Tring, Herts., England. Checks or money orders should be made payable to the Wader Study Group. Please include a

brief note providing your name, mailing address, and specific information regarding your research interests, including subjects, species and locations. This will enable us to compile an address list and indicate members' fields of interest in future editions of the Bulletin.

We hope very much that you will wish to become a member of the North American section of the Wader Study Group, and that the Bulletin will provide an informative and interesting outlet for news, and articles about shorebird research and for communication between persons interested in shorebirds.

CORPORATION FINES \$500 FOR VIOLATION OF MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT

The FMC Corporation, a pesticide manufacturer in Middleport, New York, was convicted on 18 counts for the deaths of 23 birds attracted to the company's 10-acre toxic waste-water pond. The corporation was fined \$100 per count, but the total fine was reduced to \$500 in light of the fact that FMC had spent \$4 million to alleviate the problem. Judge John T. Curtin of the U.S. District Court called the prosecution a public service and remarked on the importance of the case in the area of the environment and conservation.

The conviction resulted from a 3-month investigation with spot checks over a 2-year period by agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In May 1975 agents were advised that extensive bird mortalities were occurring in FMC's lagoon. Agents inspected the area and found 92 dead birds, as well as numerous other carcasses. It is estimated that during the spring migration of 1975, thousands of migratory birds, including sandpipers, Mourning Doves, Killdeer, Canada Geese, and various ducks were killed from the toxins in the waste water. In testimony at the trial it was learned that the toxin level was so high that a normal drink would probably be lethal to most birds, and that mere bathing in the pond would result in the de-oiling of feathers and absorption of poisons through the skin.

During the course of the investigation, agents worked continually with FMC on measures to alleviate the situation, including scare devices, armed guards, and netting. FMC finally eliminated the lagoon and installed a filtration system and a surface water treatment plant.

T.H.A.

NEW HAMPSHIRE BREEDING RECORD

A nest containing seven young Barn Owls was discovered on a platform inside a Hollis, New Hampshire, silo, thus possibly establishing the first confirmed breeding record for this species in that state. Since the silo was to be filled, another platform was constructed on the outside. The young birds were measured, banded, and moved to their new quarters; the adults resumed their feeding responsibilities that night.

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