

RINGING TOTALS : JULY - SEPTEMBER 1975

	WVRG	FRG	SVRG	Spurn B.C.
Cystercatcher	2217			
Lapwing	1	22	2	
Ringed Plover	23	66	17	15
Grey Plover	164			3
Golden Plover	4			
Turnstone	329			
Common Snipe			1	
Curlew	278		22	
Whimbrel	4		2	
Bar-tailed Godwit	45		7	
Common Sandpiper	9			
Redshank	1051	9	34	
Spotted Redshank	62			
Greenshank	2			
Knot	1303			4
Dunlin	5945	55	106	114
Sanderling	308			5
Ruff	2			
Little Stint				3
Curlew Sandpiper	10	1	7	

CURLEW, CRAMP, AND KEEPING CAGES by Ian Bainbridge

The increased success in recent years of catching such waders as Curlew and Godwits, both in mist nets, and in larger numbers in cannon nets, has focused attention on the problem of leg cramp which can occur in these birds.

The reason for cramp is unknown, although it seems likely to be caused by the confinement of the birds in a space too small or too low to allow them to stand upright - such as a large bird bag, sack, or even a standard sized cannon net keeping cage. Obviously if the birds are caught by mist netting on saltings, a sack has to be used to transport the birds back to the base, but the use of high keeping cages can solve the problems of keeping them for longer periods, as is necessary with larger catches.

This newly designed keeping cage, which has been in operation on the Wash this autumn, appears to eliminate or at least greatly lessen the problems of cramp in long-legged waders. It is made from a standard hopsack (72" x 36"), slit lengthways to give a piece of material 144" x 36". The ends are sewn together to form a circle of material 36" high. This forms the rectangle of the keeping cage - sides 48", ends 24". A 12" cut is made down to the mid point of each end of the cage and the top 12" of each side is then folded over, as shown in Fig.1. This forms the roof, which is stitched down at the sides, and in the middle if necessary, to give either one or two slit entrances of the standard keeping cage type (Fig.2). The cage is held up by four 30" poles, one at each corner, which may need to be guyed.

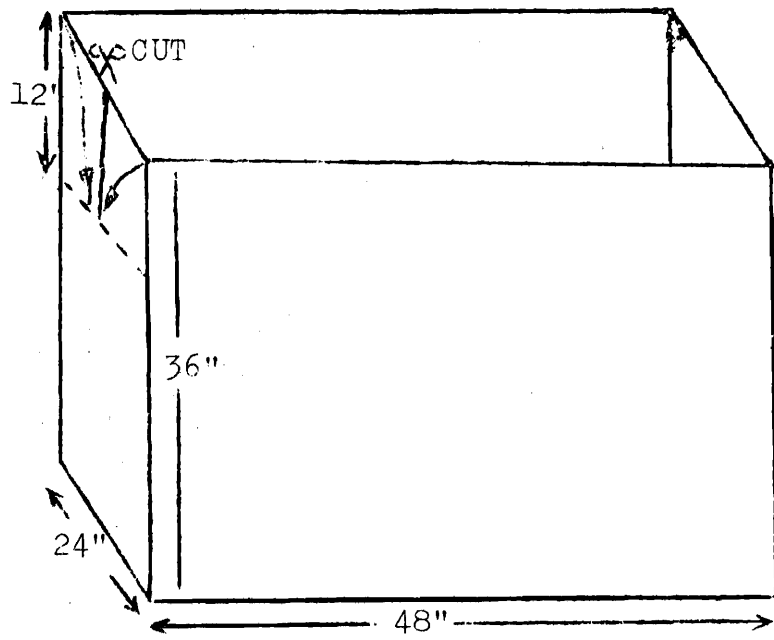


Fig. 1.

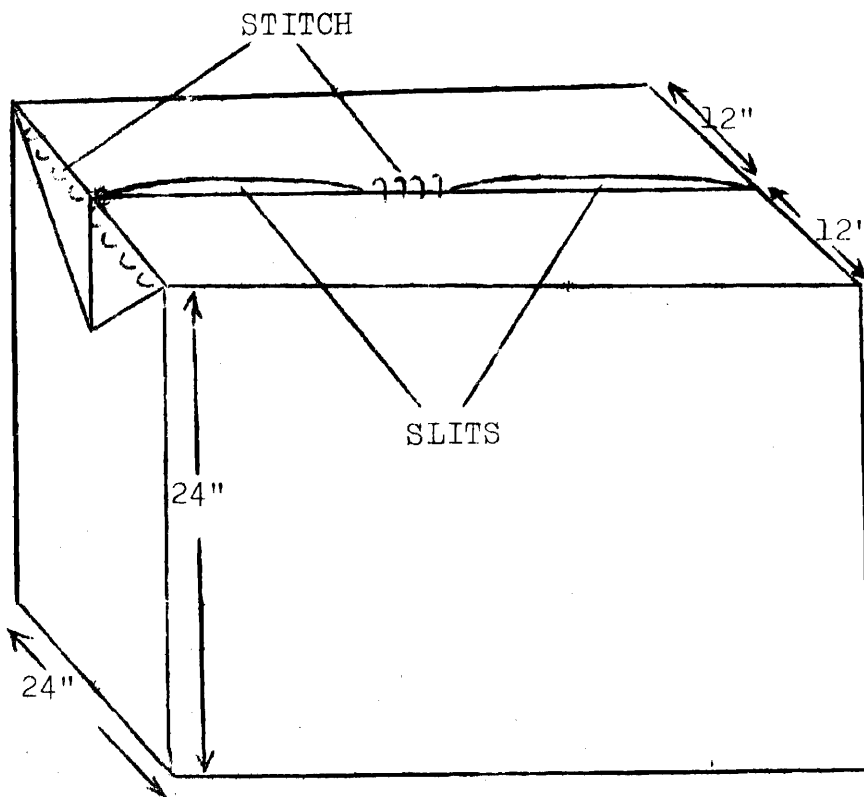


Fig. 2.

If preferred one or two partitions may be sewn into the cage, although for Curlew this is thought to be unnecessary as they do not fight. Up to 25 can be held safely in a keeping cage.

At the Wader Study Group A.G.M. it was recommended that anyone likely to catch Curlew in any numbers should be properly equipped with these higher cages, in order to avoid the cramp problems that have caused concern to Curlew ringers for so long.

MUD INSIDE RINGS

Recently a German ringer submitted to the Ringing Office a photograph of a British ringed Turnstone in which the ring, although of the correct size and correctly fitted, had caused a significant narrowing of the bird's tarsus. He suggested that this had come about as a result of mud caking hard on the inside of the ring, thereby reducing its diameter. Not long afterwards members of the WWRG caught a German ringed Dunlin and reported "inside the ring was packed with what appeared to be hard dried mud and the ring would not move at all. When the ring was removed the leg was found to be deeply indented."

Presumably this is a problem which is of rare occurrence, but it would be much appreciated if all such cases could be reported to Bob Spencer at the Ringing Office.

NORWAY EXPEDITION

There are still places available for wader ringers who wish to go on the expedition to the Lyngen Peninsula, just north of Tromsø in northwest Norway, as announced in the last bulletin. The expedition is due to leave on 6 July 1976 and will return in two groups in early and mid August. If anyone is interested would they please contact Chris Loynes, 1 Recreation Road, Colchester, Essex.

CLOUR DYED WADERS

Two schemes will be operating during this winter and spring. They have been designed so as not to clash.

DEE: A study of roosting and feeding grounds is being made as part of the Dee Barrage Feasibility Study. Dyeing of the principal species of waders will be carried out during the winter.

SOUTH AFRICA: Numbers of Sanderling, Knot and Curlew Sandpipers will be colour dyed in the late winter/early spring, before they leave for breeding grounds, by the Western Cape Wader Study Group.

Could all sightings of birds away from ringing areas be reported to Tony Prater at the B.T.O. including details on where and when seen, species and which colour (s) were involved. He will pass on the records to the appropriate persons. For local sightings please send details to Dee:- N. Buxton, Dee & Clwyd River Authority, 2 Vicars Lane, Chester and for South Africa:- Dr. R. Summers, Percy Fitzpatrick Institute, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch 7700, South Africa.