

Bulletin is definitely not intended to preclude later publication of work in a more formal fashion in a journal.

Over 100 new members have joined the North American section of the Wader Study Group. Initially, it is envisaged that the group will be relatively informal and that the Bulletin will provide the main means of communication between members. In Britain, the W.S.G. holds an annual meeting at the British Trust for Ornithology Ringing and Migration Conference, but geographical and funding considerations indicate that an annual meeting of members in North America could be problematical! However, we plan to investigate the possibility of organising a shorebird conference at some stage in the future and would welcome the views of members as to how active they feel the group could be in various areas such as conservation, coordination of banding or colour-marking projects etc. We shall address these topics in future issues of the Bulletin.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Colour-marking Studies

In recent years, colour-marking studies have contributed much to our knowledge of shorebird migration and biology. Members are reminded of the following points:

- (1) Anyone contemplating colour-marking studies must receive prior authorisation from the Banding Office for his or her scheme.
- (2) Anyone observing a colour-marked bird is encouraged to communicate directly with the person marking the bird, where there is no doubt as to the bird's origin, e.g. with the dyed birds in the announcements below. The Banding Office would appreciate a copy of the report. In cases where the origin of the bird is not known or is uncertain, the report should go to the Banding Office.

The address of the Banding Office is: Bird Banding Laboratory, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Migratory Bird Management, Laurel, Maryland 20811, U.S.A.

Shorebird Colour-marking: James Bay R.I.G. Morrison, Canadian Wildlife Service

In 1978, the Canadian Wildlife Service will be continuing an extensive program of banding and colour-marking shorebirds in James Bay, with the objective of defining migration routes used by shorebirds on their journeys between arctic breeding grounds and wintering areas. During the past three years, over 30,000 shorebirds have been captured in southern James Bay, and have resulted in more than 1,200 'bird days' of sightings of dyed birds, in areas ranging from eastern Canada

to South America. Much new information is being obtained on migration routes and strategies, and your assistance in looking out for and reporting colour-marked birds would be very much appreciated and would contribute substantially to the success of the program.

Feather dyes (yellow/orange) and coloured leg bands (yellow or light blue) will be used to mark the birds according to age and date and place of capture. If you see a marked shorebird, please record details of: species, place, date, colour-marks and, if possible, numbers of other shorebirds present. For colour-dyed birds, please record the colour and area of the bird that was dyed (e.g. entire breast, upper breast only, belly from legs to tail only etc.). For colour bands and standard metal leg bands please record which leg the bands were on, the colours involved, and the relative position of the bands if more than one was on a leg (e.g. right leg, blue over metal etc.). A note should also be made whether the bands were below or above the 'knee' of the bird.

All reports will be fully acknowledged and should be sent to: Dr. R.I.G. Morrison, Canadian Wildlife Service, 2721 Highway 31, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1G 3Z7.

Shorebird Colour-marking: North Dakota
D. Lank, Cornell University

From early July through October 1978, migrant Semipalmated Sandpipers will be breast-dyed green or blue at Grand Forks, North Dakota, as part of a migration and orientation study being carried out by D. Lank of Cornell University. Mr. Lank would appreciate reports of sightings of birds dyed blue or green, with details of date, time and place.

Some birds will also carry unique wing tags. Anyone observing such a bird is asked to note the following details: (1) Wing tagged - left or right; (2) Tag colour - white, yellow, orange, dark red, bright red, bright green, dark blue, brown, black; (3) Character type - the tag may bear a character consisting of one of the following - letters (capitals or lower case), numerals, or a symbol (e.g. circle, square, star, \$ sign etc.); (4) Character colour - white, yellow, red, green, black.

Please send reports of dyed or tagged birds with as much information as it was possible to obtain to: Shorebird Survey - David Lank, Langmuir Laboratory, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853, U.S.A.

Shorebird Banding: Surinam
A. Spaans, Surinam Forestry Service

During the past several years, Arie Spaans has captured and colour-banded large numbers of Semipalmated Sandpipers along the coast of Surinam, South America. Surinam birds are marked

with bright orange colour bands placed on the upper part of the leg in various combinations with the metal band to denote year and season of marking, as well as the age of the bird.

The program has been very successful, with sightings of Surinam birds in many parts of eastern North America, and 11 records in James Bay in 1977. Although Dr. Spaans has now returned to Holland, orange-banded Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers should still be in circulation, and reports of any sightings would be very much appreciated.

Observers are asked to report details of species, location, date, and band arrangements (position and number of colour bands and metal band). Arie Spaans' present address is: Research Institute for Nature Management, Kemperbergerweg 67, Arnhem, Holland.

ARTICLES

SHOREBIRD BANDING AND COLOUR-MARKING STUDIES IN JAMES BAY, 1977

R.I.G. Morrison

Introduction

Shorebird banding studies in James Bay were started by the Canadian Wildlife Service in 1974, and a narrative account of studies up to 1976 appeared in the Wader Study Group Bulletin in that year (Morrison, 1976c). In 1977, the Canadian Wildlife Service carried out the third year of the large scale program. The west coast of James Bay is a major migration pathway for many species of shorebirds migrating between their arctic and subarctic breeding areas and wintering areas in South America. A basic objective of the work is to obtain information on migration routes and strategies of shorebirds using the James Bay coastline, and from associated biometric and moult studies, to identify the populations involved and the purposes for which they are using the coast. Canadian Wildlife Service studies have shown that the James Bay marshes and mudflats are of great international importance for both common species, such as the Semipalmated Sandpiper, as well as for less common species, such as the Red Knot and Hudsonian Godwit. In 1976, a sight record of two Eskimo Curlews was made (Hagar and Anderson, 1977).

Colour-marking is a valuable technique for migration studies, since a marked bird needs only to be observed and reported, and not captured, for a record to be established. The dye used in the James Bay studies, picric acid, lasts throughout the southward migration and into the winter months, but is lost through moult of the feathers during the spring before the birds return north.