

## EDITORIAL

The Wader Study Group is undergoing a phase of change and reorganisation, so inevitably there are numerous important administrative announcements. This issue contains a great many of these, most being of considerable importance to every individual WSG member because they affect your subscription and the way in which you wish to see the Group run. Because of the worldwide distribution of our members, only a few will be able to participate in person at the next Annual General Meeting at the BTO Ringing & Migration Conference on 6 January 1979. Therefore, this Bulletin contains recommendations from the Officers to the AGM and also the Agenda for the meeting. If you cannot attend the AGM and you wish to comment, please write to the Secretary as soon as possible.

Besides administrative details this Bulletin contains announcements of two important wader study projects. Both require international co-operation to succeed and they are the Group's first attempt at co-ordinating wader studies. We hope many European and African members will participate in these projects, and also suggest future ones.

Another innovation in the present issue is the first of a series of articles on elementary statistics written by Jeremy Greenwood at our invitation following numerous requests from members for something on these lines.

Finally, in printing this Bulletin we have used photo-reduction which, although giving smaller print that is perhaps more difficult to read, saves a great deal of money in the cost of paper and postage (especially overseas). The alternatives are either an even larger increase in subscriptions than the Officers suggest in this issue or a sharp reduction in Bulletin size and quality.

## SHOWDOWN AT WINDY RIDGE

The officers of the Group met at the Acting Chairman's house on 12 November 1978 to discuss the state of the Group and to prepare recommendations for the Annual General Meeting to be held at the BTO Ringing & Migration Conference at Swanwick on 6 January 1979. The various matters arising are detailed below.

## FINANCES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Treasurer will, of course, be reporting on the financial state of the Group at the AGM, and a statement of accounts will also appear in the report of that meeting in the April issue of the Bulletin.

The main use of the subscription funds remains the production and circulation of the Bulletin. Many members are probably aware that for some time we have been paying considerably less than the real costs of production. This has been due to the generosity of various people and organisations, principally the BTO, in making facilities and materials available. With the change in character of the Group to a more international body it is no longer reasonable to expect a contribution from the BTO. Also the increased size and circulation of the Bulletin and the need to produce issues with reasonable frequency and regularity make it impossible to rely on a network of voluntary facilities for which we do not pay. Thus, with the notable exception of printing costs, we are now having to pay fully for Bulletin production.

When the group was established in 1970, the subscription was set at £0.50 and the Bulletin consisted of about 10 cyclostyled pages per issue. Recent issues have included about 30 printed pages per issue and number 23 had 72 pages. The current issue will probably have about 40 pages which, because of photo-reduction, will have about the same number of words as 80 of the previous style. On the basis of inflation in costs and the size of bulletins, the £0.50 subscription of 1970 would be equivalent to about £4 to £5 in 1978. However, the Officers believe that they can at least maintain the present services to members on rather less than this, and will propose to the AGM that the subscription for 1979 be raised to £2.50. This would apply to members in Britain and Europe.

In the past we have avoided different rates for members further afield but, because of the high postage costs, we shall have to ask members outside Europe to contribute £0.50 towards these by paying a subscription of £3.00 per year. Alternatively they may opt for the standard rate of £2.50 and receive their bulletins rather more slowly by surface mail.

We hope to be able to keep to these rates for at least two and hopefully more years, but this, of course, depends on factors beyond our control.

The increase in subscription is, of course, for the AGM to approve or reject. The next Bulletin (April) cannot, however, be produced and circulated without the income from the 1979 subscriptions because of the problems already outlined in this and the previous issues of the Bulletin. Accordingly, we have no choice but to send out with this issue a request and form for subscription renewals at the increased rate. We hope that members will be prepared to send their payments before any change is confirmed by the AGM. Should the AGM reject or amend the Officer's recommendations as to subscriptions, allowance will be made for any extra paid. Several members have already paid £1 for the 1979 subscription and we ask these to send the balance at some time.

We must stress that, unless at least some members are prepared to pay the proposed subscription before it can be confirmed, we shall not be able to produce the next issue. We are, however, pleased to confirm that after the receipt of 1979 subscriptions, the Group should once again be in a satisfactory financial state.

#### Payments

All cheques should be payable to "Wader Study Group" and not to any individual.

#### Currency of payments and subscriptions in advance

Except for members paying subscriptions in U.S. or Canadian dollars to the N. American Secretary/Treasurer, payments can only be accepted in British currency (sterling). Members outside Britain and Ireland must arrange for drafts to be sent in sterling and not in their own currency.

We recognise that, with a low subscription such as ours, the cost of obtaining a sterling draft may amount to almost as much as the subscription itself. At the suggestion of some of these members, therefore, we are making the following arrangement. The subscription for 1979, 1980 and 1981 may all be paid now at the 1979 rate of £2.50 per year (or £3.00 for airmail outside Europe) regardless of any later changes in subscription or postal rates between now and 1981. Members wishing to make use of this arrangement should send £7.50 (or £9.00) - in sterling only - with the enclosed renewal form. This offer does not apply in U.K., Ireland, Canada or U.S.A.

#### OFFICERS

As described by the Acting Chairman in Bull.23, there have been considerable changes amongst the Officers in the last year, due to departures, other commitments, reorganisation of the Group, etc. All Officers will be making themselves available for re-election or replacement at the AGM. If any alternative candidates wish to be considered by the meeting, nominations should be sent to the Secretary by 1 Jan. 1979. The current posts and the people who fill them are:-

Chairman Apart from presiding at meetings of the Group or its Officers, the Chairman is the senior officer responsible for the running of the Group and for relations with other organisations. The post had been occupied by Dr. Clive Minton until shortly before his move to Australia. Shortly before then, with the full approval of all the other Officers, he invited Harry Green to take over in an acting capacity until ratification (or otherwise) was possible by an AGM.

Secretary Tony Prater was re-elected to this post by the last AGM. Since then, many aspects of the previous very heavy load on the Secretary have been devolved onto other Officers.

Administrative Secretary now carries the burden of dealing with general correspondence, circulation of the Bulletin, membership applications, subscription renewals, changes of address, the keeping of minutes of meetings, storing completed WSG data forms, etc. This is a new post which the other Officers persuaded Graham Appleton to take up.

Treasurer is responsible for financial matters, budgeting and the keeping of accounts. Bryan Murray was newly-elected to this post by the last AGM.

Co-ordinator of the Advisory Panel The Advisory Panel on Group policy was established at the last AGM (see below) and the Officers were authorised by that meeting to appoint a Co-ordinator. William Dick accepted this role.

Editors are responsible for the soliciting of articles for the Bulletin, editing and producing the Bulletin. Mike Pienkowski and Tony Prater were re-elected by the last AGM. Since then other commitments have caused Tony Prater to discontinue his editorship and Harry Green was invited to join Mike Pienkowski as the editorial team.