

## Secretary's Report

The Secretary, A.J.Prater, expressed thanks to all those who had removed responsibility from his shoulders. He went on to outline the international rôle of the WSG especially the potential for participation in national and international studies in co-operation with bodies such as the B.T.O. within Britain and the International Waterfowl Research Bureau overseas.

## Elections

The whole executive committee, being available for election or re-election as appropriate (see Bull. 24), was elected unanimously after a proposal from J.M.McMeeking, seconded by I.Forsyth. Those officers, including the Chairman, previously co-opted were thus confirmed in their posts.

## Other business

There was some discussion about the venue of the AGM, occurring as it does within the Ringing and Migration Conference of the BTO. W.T.Thrower and others criticized the timing of the meeting (22.00) to which the Chairman replied that there was a possibility of holding the AGM at the proposed October meeting. Nottingham was mentioned as the venue for this meeting, this engendering several comments from further-flung British WSG members including J.Rochford, P.W.J.Findlay and J.Hardy.

The Officers pointed out that, if autumn meetings continued, there was no need to continue to use Nottingham and a varying location might be preferred. Nottingham had been suggested as the first location because it would be possible to keep the cost very low here, an important aspect as the numbers of people attending was difficult to predict and the state of Group funds would not allow the meeting to be subsidised from general revenue. The meeting decided that the Officers should continue to plan a meeting and test support for such a gathering as a regular feature.

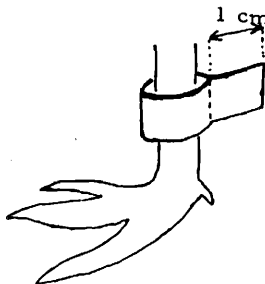
The Chairman reported on a meeting of the WSG Officers with the Director of the British Trust for Ornithology, Dr. Raymond O'Connor. It seems likely that good liaison with the BTO on analysis of British wader data will be developed. The first job to be tackled is an analysis of wader moult. An appeal was made for those groups and individuals who have not submitted data to the Group on WSG data forms to do so as soon as possible - including the backlog. A number of possible wader projects in which the BTO could play a useful part were outlined to Dr. O'Connor by the WSG Officers.

The AGM ended at 23.25 and was followed by short talks by W.J.A.Dick and G.H.Green on the spring migration projects.

## LEG 'FLAGS': TEMPORARY COLOUR RINGS

by L.R. Goodyer, F.Symonds and P.R. Evans

During recent feeding studies on Dunlins Calidris alpina on the Tees estuary, north-east England, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) tape was attached as a leg flag around the metal ring, to enable us to identify adults and juveniles in the field.



The tape is available in several colours from any hardware shop. It was cut into strips the width of the ring and applied as shown in the diagram. Flags were easily visible in the field even when the birds were feeding in very soft substrate and did not appear to hinder feeding. On average the flags lasted about 8 weeks but we know from retraps that some were lost in a shorter time. However, one individual was observed with its flag as long as 12 weeks after marking.

We have found this to be a very useful and successful method of colour marking birds. It appears to be an ideal technique for short term studies where the use of more permanent markings is both undesirable and unnecessary. It must be stressed, however, that in common with other colour-marking methods, this technique should not be used indiscriminately or results of all projects may be jeopardized. Prospective users should contact the Editors of WSG Bulletin and their national ringing schemes before embarking on a project using this method.

Although, as noted above, the main purpose of this marking at Teesmouth concerns the detailed studies there, we would, of course, welcome any sightings of these birds elsewhere. The method has been used, to date, on Dunlins and Knots Calidris canutus.