

# WADER STUDY GROUP

BULLETIN No. 38

AUGUST 1983

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WADER STUDY GROUP : HAAMSTEDE, THE NETHERLANDS, 19 NOVEMBER 1983

### Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last AGM held 23 October 1982 at Durham, UK. (WSG Bulletin 37:1)
3. Chairman's Report
4. Secretary's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Editor's Report
7. Co-ordinator's Report
8. Any other business
9. Date and venue of next year's AGM.

Members wishing to raise other items at the AGM should inform the Chairman in writing as soon as possible.

The texts of the officers' reports follow.

### Chairman's Report

From the Chairman's viewpoint the last AGM 23 October 1982 was an event of considerable importance. The agenda included a proposal for a big subscription rise to £10 per annum. Thankfully this was agreed and the sharp improvement in our financial state is already reflected in the Treasurer's report. It is a relief to know that we shall remain solvent for a few years and that we can maintain (even perhaps improve) the quality of the Bulletin. Incidentally the apparent 'profit' at the Durham meeting has arisen in two ways: first, the bar did remarkably well and second, the expected charges were not as great as planned. The money will be ploughed back into the Group's activities and perhaps used to subsidise future meetings. Perhaps WSG bars could be used to found a research fund!

Another important decision last AGM was to create a working post of Vice-chairman. This has proved to be very useful in the division of labour in dealing with 'official' work.

1982 was a year of continuing projects: the assessment of waders on Scottish Agricultural Land (in conjunction with the Scottish Ornithologists' Club and organised by H. Galbraith and R. Furness), participation in the BTO/RSPB/WSG survey of waders breeding in wet meadows (organiser K. Smith), study of the effects of cold winter weather on waders (organisers N. Davidson and N. Clark), movements of wader populations in Western Europe (based at Durham, funded by NCC and EEC, run by M. & A. Pienkowski), inland wader counts throughout Europe (OAG Munster). Winter 1982-83 saw the revival of the British Birds of Estuaries Enquiry (funded by RSPB, BTO and NCC, run by M. Moser). WSG sits on the steering committee which guides this enquiry and will be closely involved in two forthcoming associated enquiries: a new study of spring passage in western Britain and an attempt to count winter waders on non-estuarine shores in Britain - a long overdue project. In the Americas a Pan-American shorebird programme is planned to follow wader migrations between N and S America and the North American section of WSG are tackling the problems of uncontrolled colour marking.

In Britain the national control of colour marking is now operated by WSG. The British section of WSG now has official status delegated from BTO and NCC which means that use of colour marks is now controlled. British ringers and others cannot embark on schemes without prior approval. This important and essential step will solve a lot of the problems of confusion between schemes. The colour marking register (published regularly in the Bulletin and now operated by D. Townshend at Durham University) aims to deal with any colour marking scheme affecting waders which occur in Europe. Many of our European colleagues co-operate on a voluntary basis to the great benefit of us all and we hope this will continue. WSG cannot afford to administer the colour marking register from its own funds. Those using the scheme in Britain are obliged to pay under the NCC/BTO ruling. Details are published in the Bulletin.

An important new development during the last year has been WSG involvement in studying the numbers and distribution of breeding waders in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland, as endorsed by the last AGM. The preliminary results of the June 1983 survey are published in this Bulletin and show the area to be of great importance for breeding European waders. The work is of great intrinsic ecological interest and valuable in a conservation context in relation to EEC funding of the Integrated Development Programme.

Mainly because of the historical origins of WSG much of our work seems to originate in the British Isles at present. This is a source of concern to your officers because our membership contains many people from European countries, N. America and elsewhere. The election of H. Hotker as a member of the committee and Th. Piersma as Co-ordinator and the existence of the N. American section are designed to modify the British bias. The office of Co-ordinator was originally created to collect ideas and to seek opinions from an international panel of wader experts by postal communication. We hope that wader researchers will use this system to inject new ideas into WSG and to create future international projects. The use of the independent WSG name is often politically useful. Regular reports of any project are quickly published in the Bulletin - indeed any project bearing 'WSG' is obliged to report regularly in the Bulletin! Proposals should be sent to Theunis Piersma or to the Chairman or Vice-chairman.

Lately, WSG members seem to be taking a greater interest in breeding waders (arctic, meadow birds, wetland and agricultural land, Hebrides etc) following many years of intensive ringing or counting based studies of coastal and estuarine migrants. In Europe the latter sphere still contains interesting problems - where do Greenland Dunlin go in winter? who understands Sanderling migration? how many winter waders use non-estuarine coasts? Projects for the future?

G.H. Green

#### Secretaries' Report

There was again little change in the membership over the year (see table), but the number of members who had not yet paid their subscription by mid 1983 was somewhat higher than at the same date in 1982, presumably reflecting the present economic situation.

Members will have noted that we have extended the methods available for payment of subscriptions to include bank giro transfer for members in continental Europe and bankers' orders for members in the U.K.; both these payment methods have proved popular. (10% of members in continental Europe have paid by giro transfer; 25% of U.K. members by bankers order.) A facility for paying for three years was also introduced and 11.5% of members (primarily North Americans) have used this. As well as being simpler for members these changes help to make our task easier.

A further new development this year is direct payment to us by individual North American members, which is now easier because WSG has opened U.S. and Canadian dollar accounts in the U.K. Thanks are due to the North American membership secretary Ted Miller who previously had the job of collecting these subscriptions. Ted has also transferred the computerized address list to us as we now have facilities to produce address labels in the U.K. We would like to thank Ted very much for all his work in maintaining the list and producing address labels in the past without which we would have spent a lot of time writing addresses.

	<u>U.K. &amp; Ireland</u>	<u>Rest of Europe</u>	<u>North America</u>	<u>Elsewhere</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Existing members paid 1983	145	84	46	14	289
New members 1983	17	12	12	8	49
Existing members unpaid 1983	71	44	31	7	153
TOTAL	233(236)	140(143)	89(120)	29(29)	491(528)

N.A. & J.A. Clark

#### Treasurer's Report

The accounts show a very much better result than that anticipated. A sum of £280 was received from America late in the year and has been treated as 1982 subscription income and the autumn meeting made an unexpected profit. The Group was able to contain bulletin production costs at an economic level and therefore ended the year reasonably solvent.

It is already apparent that the new subscription level will, in 1983, enable a reasonable surplus to be made so that a period of stability of several years can now be anticipated.

#### Receipts & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December 1982

		<u>1982</u>	<u>1981</u>
<u>Receipts</u> - Subscriptions Received		2556	2053
Interest Received		85	119
	(A)	<u>2641</u>	<u>2172</u>
<u>Deduct</u> - Bulletin costs - Printing		( 1533 )	( 1458 )
Envelopes, Paper, etc		( 128 )	( 106 )
Typing		( 225 )	( 175 )
Postage		( 352 )	( 595 )
Editorial Exp.		( 83 )	( 97 )
Secretaries Exp. & Sundries		( 96 )	( 1 )
	(B)	<u>( 2417 )</u>	<u>( 2432 )</u>
<u>Add</u> - Income on Sale of Back Issues		99	210
Profit on Autumn Meeting		320	-
	(C)	<u>419</u>	<u>210</u>
Excess of income over expenditure ( A + C - B )		<u>£ 643</u>	<u>£(50)</u>

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 1982

	<u>1982</u>	<u>1981</u>
<u>Accumulated Fund</u>		
Balance at 01.01.82	186	236
Excess of income over expenditure for the year	643	( 50 )
	<u>£ 829</u>	<u>£ 186</u>
<u>Represented by :-</u>		
Cash at Bank in Hand and on Deposit	727	864
Car Stickers in stock - cost value less sale	107	-
Debtors	470	-
	<u>1304</u>	<u>864</u>
<u>Deduct liabilities - Creditors</u>	( 445 )	( 478 )
Subscriptions paid in advance	( 30 )	-
Royal Society Loan	-	( 200 )
	<u>£ 829</u>	<u>£ 186</u>

S.J. Sutcliffe

Editor's Report

In the last year, the three issues of the Bulletin have comprised 40, 32 and 52 pages. Sufficient material continues to arrive to fill a Bulletin of this size, and it has not been necessary to hold over any material for lack of space. We have taken note of the results of the questionnaire circulated last year, and reported in Bulletin 37. One change already made has been to turn the Recent Ringing Totals into an annual feature, and to make it easier for American and Australasian members to contribute their totals.

We hope that the problems of circulation that were experienced last year, especially in America, have now been solved by our revised record-keeping measures, and that all members are receiving their Bulletins. Some problems have again arisen in the late distribution of Bulletins - we are taking action to speed up all parts of the process, especially the delivery of Bulletins from our printer, and their subsequent mailing.

You are now reading the third issue since Mike Pienkowski retired to even higher office. Editorial policy remains the same, and an enlarged set of instructions for preparing material for the Bulletin can be found on the inside cover of each issue. I hope that by now I have encountered most of the unforeseen (and foreseen) problems of Bulletin production, although this is almost certainly wishful thinking. Finally, I would like to thank both Mike Pienkowski and Harry Green for their help in guiding me in my first steps through the editorial jungle.

N.C. Davidson.

Co-ordinator's Report

The last few years, the Co-ordinator's original role as 'gatherer of ideas for the future development of the Group' has become progressively smaller as WSG has grown up. The fact that the numerous co-operative projects in which the WSG is currently involved are proceeding so well is also the reason why WSG's "think-tank" or Advisory Panel has not been consulted for a long time. The Advisory Panel was set up in 1978 as a channel for WSG-members to put forward their ideas for co-operative studies and generally to act as personal contact points between the WSG in abstract and the active people in the area where Panel members lived. As such the Advisory Panel may prove to continue as an invaluable source of help in the future. With this in mind we are now 'updating' the composition of the Panel so as to reflect more effectively the current (e.g. geographical) range in activities and interests within the WSG. The reviewed composition of the Advisory Panel will be presented at the AGM. Any suggestions or comments on the composition and functioning of the panel or on other co-operative affairs are most welcome.

Theunis Piersma.