



Table 1. Seasonal variation in the numbers of waders found dead during tideline searches in 1982/83.

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Total
No./100 km coastline							
Britain *	0	0	0	3.5	7.1	2.4	13.0
Somme, France	260	80	20	33	60	0	453
No./100 km/ 1000 birds							
Somme, France	26.5	8.7	1.3	3.1	5.8	0	45.4

\* Excluding waders known to have been killed by predators.

Table 2 lists the number of each wader species reported so far during the survey. Note that small "inconspicuous" species such as Dunlin and Knot, as well as more noticeable species such as Oystercatcher, have been found. It is also interesting to note that most of the waders found dead in Britain, that had not been killed by predators, were Redshanks and Oystercatchers. These two species often suffer the heaviest mortality during severe weather (Clark 1982, Davidson and Evans 1982). It is interesting to speculate that Redshanks and Oystercatchers may also suffer higher mortality than other species during mild winters. This possibility can be tested once sample sizes have increased from surveys in future winters.

Table 2. Waders found during tideline searches.

		Somme, France	U.K.	Total
			Killed by predators	other causes of death
Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	8		5
Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	1		
Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>			1
Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	5		
Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	2	2	
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	4	7	
Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	2		
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	1		1
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>		32	3
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>		10	1
Total		23	51	11

Full analysis of the body condition of corpses will be done once larger samples have accumulated. Whilst, as mentioned above, the small number of corpses found during mild winters is valuable information, it does present problems in collecting a large enough sample for statistical analyses. Continued effort during future mild winters is needed to collect this information.

One practical point has emerged from the first winter of the survey: it is very important to weigh any intact or nearly intact corpse as soon as possible after it has been found. Even if the corpse is missing some parts such as the head (seemingly a fairly common occurrence) or wings, a weight is valuable since we can correct for the missing bits during analysis. Note should be made on the carcass data form of the state of the corpse. Also, we would like to examine all wader material found during tideline searches, even if the corpse consists of, for example, a skeleton or wings. We can measure age and body size from a wing, and make various measures of body size from a skeleton.

The 1982/83 winter was generally very mild. No statutory ban on wildfowling was introduced, and the British Trust for Ornithology did not call a ban on catching birds. The exemptions from bans on wader catching, negotiated by WSG in consultation with the Nature Conservancy Council and the BTO, were for the 1982/83 winter only. WSG will renegotiate exemptions for future winters for groups studying waders and who are participating in the project on the effects of severe weather. WSG will be contacting directly the groups involved.

Finally, our thanks to all those who participated in the first winter of the project. We look forward to another successful winter in 1983/84.

#### References

- Clark, N.A. 1982. The effects of the severe weather in December 1981 and January 1982 on waders in Britain. *Wader Study Group Bull.* 34: 5-7.
- Davidson, N.C. and Evans, P.R. 1982. Mortality of Redshanks and Oystercatchers from starvation during severe weather. *Bird Study* 29: 183-188.
- Stowe, T.J. 1982. Beached bird surveys and surveillance of cliff-nesting seabirds. Report to the Nature Conservancy Council and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

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