

Spring Migration 1985: WSG co-ordination of studies from Africa to the Arctic

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See announcement elsewhere in this *Bulletin*.

WSG International survey of Black-winged Stilts

Phillippe Dubois, LPO, B.P. 263, La Corderie Royale, 17305 Rochefort Cedex, France

See announcement elsewhere in this *Bulletin*.

WSG/BOEE winter shorebird count in Britain 1984/85

Mike Moser, BTO, Beech Grove, Tring, Herts. HP23 5NR, U.K.

See announcement in *WSG Bulletin* 41:7.

The use of salinas by waders in the Algarve (Portugal)

Rui Rufino and Antonio Araujo, CEMPA, Rua Filipe Folque 46,5º, 1000 Lisbon, Portugal.

See elsewhere in this *Bulletin*.

Control of *Spartina* on sand and mudflat

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In 1963, the Nature Conservancy acquired the large inter-tidal area of sand, mudflats and all of the sand dunes and meadows of the Island of Lindisfarne (55°41'N 01°47'W) off the north-east coast of England. In 1964 it was established as a National Nature Reserve of 3240 ha. Later it was identified as a 'site of international importance' and a RAMSAR site. One major problem was the extensive and well-established stand of *Spartina* along the mainland edge of the mudflats.

The *Spartina* was introduced in 1929, as a method of erosion control, when 180 kg of material were planted by a local farmer. Aerial photographs taken in 1946 show that the *Spartina* was then spreading slowly along the margins of the mudflats. However, there is evidence to suggest that the construction of a causeway linking the Island to the mainland interfered with the tidal flow. The absence of the regular tidal flush appears to have increased siltation and encouraged the more rapid spread of *Spartina* across invertebrate-rich sands, mudflats and extensive *Zostera* beds.

In 1975 c.170 ha of *Spartina* were recorded at Lindisfarne. Between 1970 and 1975 efforts were made to control the emerging *Spartina* by digging and hand-pulling. Whilst this was successful, there remained a very large area producing viable seed. In 1977 permission was obtained to undertake chemical control trials. Plots were marked out and these were treated with two herbicides during the August neap tide period, using a hand held ultra-low volume sprayer. Adjacent plots were sprayed with Dalapon at 62.5 kg·ha⁻¹ (diluted in 1125 l of fresh water) and Roundup (Glyphosate) 5 l·ha⁻¹. Dalapon was more effective, producing a kill of 90-100%, whilst the best result from Roundup was 50% control. The trials continued in 1978, and produced similar results. In 1979 permission was obtained to treat 8 ha. Because of the difficult terrain, a helicopter was contracted to carry out the spraying operation. The result was unsuccessful. It was then decided that all future operations should be controlled by NCC staff rather than using commercial spraying companies.

In 1980 further extended trials were carried out using a low ground pressure 8 wheel drive vehicle (Agrocat) with a sprayer mounted in the payload area. The Agrocat was able to treat 0.2 ha per load. During the neap tide period in August 1980, 6 ha were sprayed.

Where the surface was soft and there was a danger of loosing the machine, light weight tracks were fitted over its wheels. This enabled the vehicle to operate in all areas with success. The control success rate, when using 'commercial' methods of application dropped from 90% to 75-80% kill.

The aerial parts of the plants can show browning after 7 days, but where the *Spartina* is bruised by the wheels or body of the Agrocat, browning occurs after only 3 days.

The sprayed and unsprayed areas are being monitored; and recent work by Durham University suggests that the invertebrate numbers in the areas cleared of *Spartina* are greater than in the untreated areas. Observations also indicated that more waders forage in these cleared areas.

Population sizes of wader species breeding in Europe: a WSG enquiry

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Published and unpublished material on breeding waders in northern Europe has been collected together on behalf of the WSG, and a summary of current knowledge of the breeding numbers of each species has been prepared. WSG intends to publish this extensive bibliography and summary in the near future.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Colour-ringed Barnacle Geese and Pink-footed Geese

As part of a long term study of the population dynamics of Greenland Barnacle Geese, 644 moulting and non-breeding geese were ringed in July 1984 at Orsted Dal, Jameson Land, East Greenland (71°50'N 23°30'W). In addition, 8 Pink-footed Geese were ringed. Each bird was ringed on the left tarsus with a tall plastic (darvic) ring carrying a three letter code in black to be read from the base upwards, e.g. ABA, ABB, ABC, etc. A metal ring was put on the right tarsus. Adults were given a single plain-coloured ring above the lettered one. Thirty-five yearling Barnacle Geese (hatched 1983) have a thin verticle stripe on their lettered rings and colour-rings above the metal

ring on the right tarsus. In addition to the above birds, a further 469 Barnacle Geese have been individually marked with lettered and plain colour-rings on the Inishkea Islands, County Mayo (54°08'N 10°11'W) in the period 1968-1984.

Any observations of these ringed geese, with details of date, location, flock size, number of geese critically examined, rings observed with data on distance from geese, visibility and estimated accuracy of ring reading (1-100%) and size of any accompanying broods should be sent to:

Dr. David Cabot, An Foras Farbartha, St Martin's House, Waterloo Road, Dublin 4, Eire.