

Remarkably high densities of waders are present throughout the machair and associated habitats, from the southern end of South Uist to the islands in the Sound of Harris. High densities are sustained over large areas of land and this makes the Outer Hebrides unique in a British (and wider) context. The entire west coast complex of habitats must be recognised as an exceptionally important breeding ground for waders.

Further work is in progress during spring and summer 1985, and will be reported in *WSG Bulletin* in due course.

#### REFERENCES

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#### REVIEW

Kersten M., Piersma T., Smit C. and P. Zegers. 1983. Wader Migration along the Atlantic Coast of Morocco, March 1981. Report of the Netherlands Morocco Expedition 1981. Report No. 83/20 of the Research Institute for Nature Management, Texel, Netherlands. Pp 220; numerous figures, tables and illustrations; text in English; summaries in Dutch, French and Arabic (only!).

Copies can be obtained by submitting Dfl 22.00 to Postal Giro Account 949402 of Research Institute for Nature Management, Kemperbergerweg 67, 6816 RM Arnhem, Netherlands.

This is a report of one of the continuing series of Dutch expeditions to study coastal wetlands in west Africa. This particular one covers a 5-week expedition to study the spring migration of waders at two sites on the Atlantic coast of Morocco - the salt pans at Sidi Moussa and the Merja Zerga. Most of the work was carried out at the former site between 28 February and 29 March 1981, although two short visits were also made to the second site, in the middle and at the end of the expedition. The waders of the salt pans around Sidi Moussa had already been the subject of earlier British expeditions, largely during the autumn migration period. However, this and a subsequent expedition in April 1982 (by the same team) have provided new information on the migration patterns of palearctic waders in spring, as well as making the first quantitative measurements of the macrobenthos in the area.

The authors are to be congratulated on writing a lively and informative report, and thanked for writing it in English! Much can be learned from this report of the hazards, costs and logistical headaches to be encountered when planning an expedition. However, the meat of

the report which will be of most interest to WSG readers, comes in two main sections covering studies of the benthic macrofauna and studies of the wader populations.

The invertebrate studies are the first to have been undertaken in this area and will provide an important baseline for future work. Complete species lists of the macrobenthos are given for both study areas - and include an isopod species new to science! The size-frequency distributions of the main species are also given, with some first estimates of densities and biomass. The information on wader migration comes from an integration of counts and ringing studies, giving some important results on population structure and turnover. A total of 652 waders of 15 species were caught. Each species is considered separately under headings of numbers and migration, biometrics, body composition, food and foraging. There is a tremendous amount of information in this section, of wide interest to wader enthusiasts. Of personal interest is the unexpectedly high number of Dunlin and Redshank retraps from the Durham University expedition to Sidi Moussa in September 1980, which clearly suggest a fairly stable overwintering population of these two species. The wader sections finish with some interesting observations of the foraging behaviour of Grey Plovers, with some findings not far removed from those of another well-known study (at Teesmouth) of this species.

This is another excellent report from this team, to be recommended to all interested in wader migration. I look forward greatly to seeing the results of their 1985 visit to Mauritania, and to the appearance of a synthesis of their studies of the spring migration of waders in west Africa.

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