

Most dabbling ducks reach peak numbers in November, when there are 22 000 Shelducks *Tadorna tadorna* and 16 000 Mallards *Anas platyrhynchos*. Mallards are numerous also in spring, with 14 000 birds. Teal *Anas crecca* are most numerous in autumn (10 000 birds), with 40 000 Wigeon *Anas penelope* in October.

Amongst diving ducks 2 species dominate: Eider *Somateria mollissima* and Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*. Most Eiders are present in January and February (35 000 birds) and in August and September (16 000 birds). About 8000 birds moult during June and July. Common Scoters peak in June with 30 000 birds.

The Brent Goose *Branta bernicla* is the most abundant goose, with peaks of 13 000 in May and October. 2000 Pink-footed Geese *Anser fabalis brachyrhynchus* occur in February.

Most Herring Gulls *Larus argentatus* occur in September (18 000 birds), but there are also large numbers in March (15 000 birds). The Common Gull *L. canus* is most common in September (18 000 birds), the same time of year as the peak of 12 000 Black-headed Gulls *L. ridibundus*.

PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE 7th 7TH INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON THE ECOLOGY OF SHOREBIRDS, SWEDEN, MAY 1986

by Yaa Ntiamoa-Baidu

I was very uneasy about going to Sweden in view of the news about the nuclear accident in Russia and the levels of radioactive material and possible health hazards in Scandinavia. I arrived at the FBU Conference Centre, Hollviken at 12 midnight on Sunday 11 May, having left home at 7.30 am. The place was dark and very quiet, as expected, and it took us (the taxi driver and myself) some time to find the right block, where Per Andell was still awake and ready to receive late arrivals. He welcomed me warmly to Hollviken.

The workshop started around 9.30 am on Monday 12 May. The attendance was restricted, mainly to people from western Europe, the only outsiders being one person from each of Canada, Israel and Ghana. I expected a more worldwide participation. The first day was rather disappointing, since most of the invited speakers were unable to attend and a number of the papers presented lacked substance. The second and third day sessions were much more interesting, with some very good talks and useful discussions. Outside the formal sessions, participants showed keen interest in each other and were eager to exchange ideas about their work.

The excursion was certainly a long day; we left FBU at 5.40 am and did not get back until after 1 am the following morning, but the experience was worthwhile. For me it was very exciting because it was my first opportunity to see waders on their breeding grounds. I was particularly impressed by the displaying Ruffs. I will always remember the 1 km walk through the Vako bogs to see a single displaying Wood Sandpiper. I am still thrown into giggles when I picture the group standing in the wet fields all with their heads up, looking at a single black dot in the air; and afterwards the two Englishmen sitting on the rock wringing-out their socks. The 1.5 hours solemn wait in very cold winds beside Lake Horssjön for the Jack Snipe was another memorable experience. Any outsider encountering the group would have thought: "what a crazy lot!" At 10 pm, when it started to drizzle, four people (me included -

I was freezing!), gave up and went back to the bus. The others stayed, and soon afterwards, did hear the Jack Snipe. These two events certainly illustrate the characteristics of the group and bird enthusiasts in general: determination, perseverance and an amazing degree of enthusiasm which is not found in any other group of professionals. Keep it up!

To conclude, I will sum up my impressions as follows:

1. *The Swedish people* - very friendly and willing to help: from the people on the hovercraft on which I travelled from Copenhagen to Malmo (one lady even offered to take me home for the night because it was so late); to the taxi driver who would not leave me until he was sure that I had a place to stay; and the conference organisers, Per Andell and Paul Jonsson who made every effort to ensure that I enjoyed my stay in Hollviken.
2. *Sweden* - very neat, plenty of open spaces and well-kept gardens.
3. *FBU Conference Centre* - the accommodation and meals, although of "student boarding-house" type, were quite acceptable.
4. *The Workshop* - both very useful and educational, and offered an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas with people of similar interests. It is indeed the sort of meeting that all shorebird ecologists/biologists should make every effort to attend.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the WSG/IWRB and all the individuals who organised the workshop, and to express my sincere thanks to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) for providing the funds and the opportunity for me to attend the meeting as representative of the Ghana Government/RSPB/ICBP Save the Seashore Birds Project - Ghana.

Yaa Ntiamoa-Baidu, Zoology Dept., University of Ghana, Legon, Accra.