

## NORWAY

1. WILSON James

## GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

1. BRENNING Ulrich
2. LAMBERT Kurt
3. LIEDEL Klaus
4. MULLER Hartmut
5. NIEHLS Hans-Wolfgang
6. SCHEUFLER Horst
7. SEEGER J. Joachim
8. STIEFEL Arnd

## PORTUGAL

1. RUFINO Rui

## FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

1. HOTKER Hermann
2. KAISER Hartmut
3. KLINNER Brigitte
4. KOLSCH Thomas
5. MELTER Johannes

6. MLODY Bernd
7. NEHLS Georg
8. NIKOLAUS Gerhard
9. NIKOLAUS Marlies
10. PETERSEN Walther
11. PROKOSCH Peter
12. ROSNER Hans-Ulrich
13. SCHULZ Rainer
14. STRUWE Bernd

## SWEDEN

1. GUDMUNDSSON Gudmundur
2. HOLMGREN Noel
3. JONSSON Paul-Eric
4. LINDBLAND Thomas

## ITALY

1. BACCETTI Nicola

## USSR

1. TOMKOVICH Pavel S.
2. GORBAN Igor

## POLAND

1. ANTCZAK Jacek
2. BEDNORZ Jan
3. BOGUCKI Zdzislaw
4. CHOJNACKI Ireneusz
5. CHYLARECKI Przemyslaw
6. DYRCZ Andrzej
7. GRABINSKI Wojciech
8. GROMADZKA Jadwiga
9. GROMADZKI Maciej
10. GUZIAK Roman
11. KANIA Wojciech
12. KUPCZYK Michal
13. LONTKOWSKI Jan
14. NAWROCKI Przemyslaw
15. STAWARCZYK Tadeusz
16. TOMIALOJC Ludwik
17. WIATR Bogdan
18. WIELOCH Maria
19. WITKOWSKI Jozef
20. ZYSKA Przemyslaw
21. PISARSKI Bohdan
22. BAGINSKI Wieslaw
23. ZARZYCKI Jacek

## THE 1987 WSG ANNUAL CONFERENCE - A PERSONAL VIEW

Robert Prys-Jones

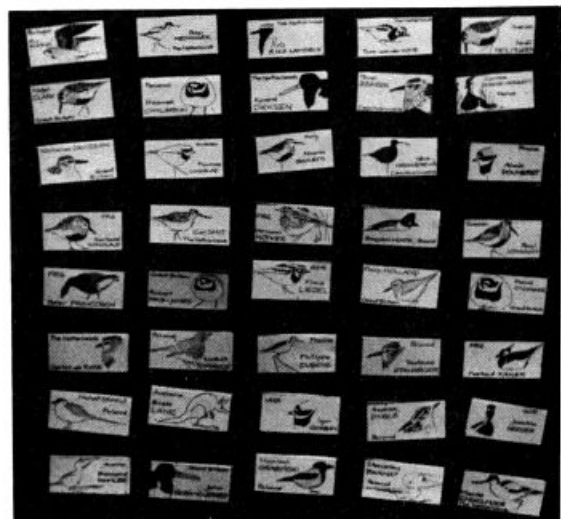
On the morning of 24 September, 11 of the 16 British participants met up on the ferry for the crossing to Hook of Holland. Arriving there in a thunderstorm, we quickly found the WSG bus and eventually the drivers also. Travelling through a very wet evening, we picked up Dutch and West German contingents and then experienced the apparently endless formalities of two East German border crossings during the night and early morning. Throughout the subsequent day we cruised through the Polish countryside, somehow acquiring two speeding fines in the process, before arriving after dark at the Baltic Youth Centre, near Gdansk, where the conference was to be held. The bird most in evidence en route had been the domestic goose, happily still an integral component of most Polish farms.

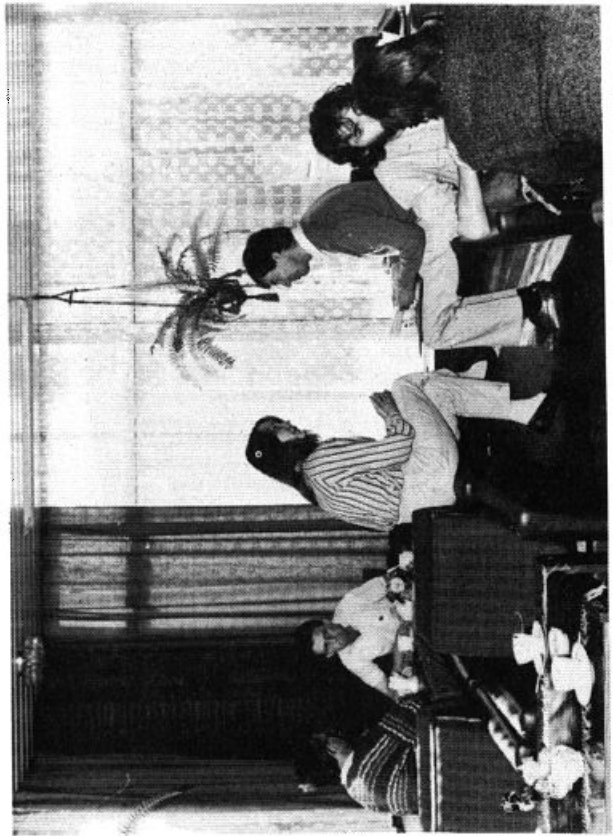
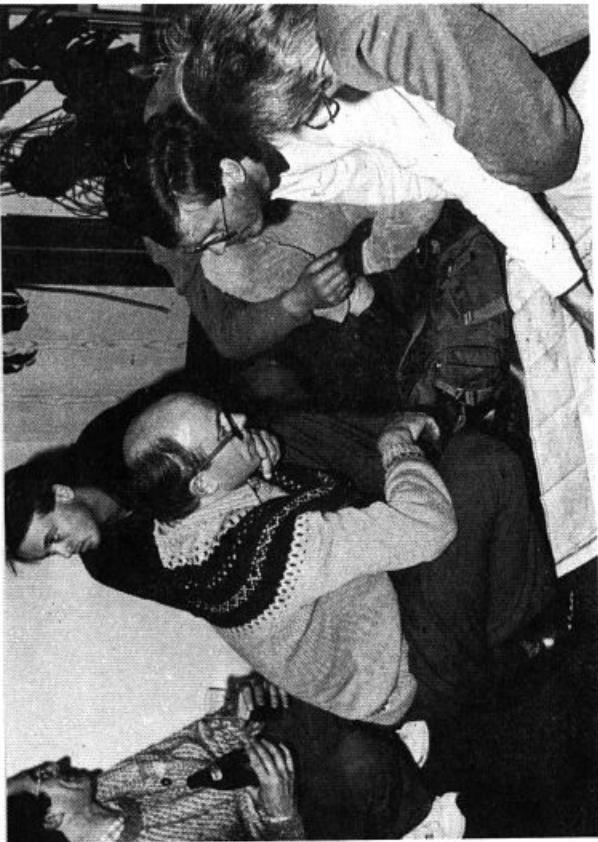
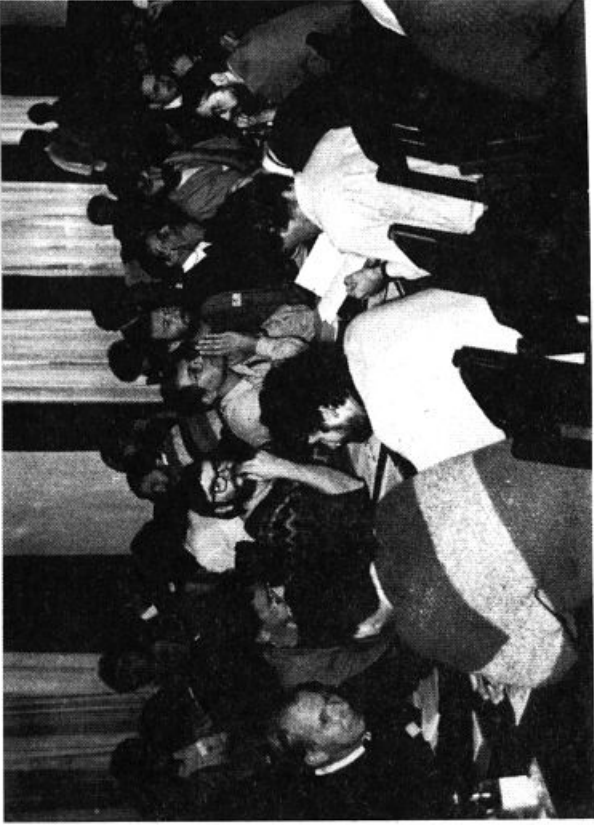
The conference was opened by the Director of the Institute of Zoology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. 103 people from 18 countries attended, all European (including 2 from the USSR) except for the welcome antipodean presence of Brett Lane, author of the recent *Shorebirds in Australia*. Western and Eastern European wader enthusiasts were present in the ratio of ca. 2:1, allowing good scope for interactions between them. This theme was developed in the opening address of Maciej Gromadzki, manager of the Gdansk Ornithological Station, who looked forward to increasing possibilities of linking studies on migrating and wintering waders with research on their Siberian breeding grounds. Mike Pienkowski deserved full marks for delivering another introductory address partly in Polish, although his name belies his fluency in the language!

Among the talks, what high spots stick in the mind? Above all, without doubt, was Pavel Tomkovich's illustrated evening overview of the breeding distribution of Palearctic *Calidris* sandpipers, his third talk in a busy day. His slides spanned the length and breadth of Siberia and the full range of species likely to

be encountered. A shot of a Spoon-billed Sandpiper with two young drew spontaneous applause, and others of an Ivory Gull colony in Franz Josef Land stick particularly in my mind. The Taimyr Peninsula has been heard much of in recent wader literature, and now we had a chance to see it; maybe the possibility of actually visiting the Soviet arctic is closer than one might think? Ludwik Tomialojc's historical analysis of trends in the status of breeding waders in Poland was also absorbing, as well as particularly appropriate for the illustration it provided of Polish wader habitats.

The entire first morning was devoted to Dunlin, with the perplexing diversity of findings from studies in different countries leading to general agreement that the time is right for increased cross-border co-operation among





dunlinologists! Switching to Knot, Peter Prokosch told us how to locate breeding birds in north-west Greenland, including a doubtfully relevant slide of a pram and stressing the importance of concave south-facing slopes, and Nick Davidson and Theunis Piersma provided their familiar double-act on migration. Ken Smith presented unusual insight into the night-time habits of Green Sandpipers; Rob Lambeck gave a compelling documented account of how an estuarine barrage can affect wintering Oystercatchers; and Cor Smit explained how eating mussels in winter contributes to breeding success in the same species. On the same day, notable double talks were given by Arnd Stiefel and Horst Scheufler on habitat management for breeding waders on Kirr Island, northern GDR, and by Peter Meininger and Tom van der Have on spring migration in Greece and Turkey respectively. The Greek winter had been the coldest on record, and a picture of flamingos in the snow was decidedly incongruous.

The conference was a marvellous and happy success, very largely because of the enormous trouble about things both large and small taken by our Polish hosts. To all concerned, dziękuję barczo! Jadwiga Gromadzka, in particular, was a tireless mother-hen, endlessly organizing everything and much troubled by "problems with the bar". Ireneusz Chojnacki provided a display of brilliant black-and-white photographs of wader behaviour; his work deserves to become widely known outside Poland. Przemyslaw Chylarecki and Michal Skakuj contributed apt and amusing cartoons and provided everyone with personalised name badges, each with an appropriate avian emblem. A very chubby Ringed Plover captured the likeness of a well-known



worker on the species (and most senior WSG Officer) with particular acuity.

I had spent the summer of 1968 working and travelling in Poland, and promised myself then that I would return. Four brief days in 1987 were enough only to make me renew that promise. See you again soon!

Robert Prys-Jones, British Trust for Ornithology, Tring, Herts. HP23 5NR, U.K.

## ABSTRACTS OF TALKS AND POSTERS AT THE WSG ANNUAL MEETING, GDANSK, POLAND, 24-28 SEPTEMBER 1987

Many of the talks and posters in the extensive programme at the meeting presented new and interesting material about waders in both eastern and western Europe. We feel that the reports of this research deserve a wider audience than just those who were lucky enough to attend the meeting. Hence we have asked authors to provide us, where appropriate, with a more expanded paper than the abstract published here, for publication in *WSG Bulletin*. Some of these papers are published elsewhere in this *Bulletin*; for these we print just the title and authors identity in this section. We hope to publish expanded papers from many of the other talks and posters, in the next few *Bulletins*.

### Some peculiarities of wader migration at the Gulf of Gdansk, Poland

J. Gromadzka, Ornithological Station, 80-680 Gdansk 40, Poland

Autumn migration of waders is easy to observe on the Polish Baltic coast. Most favourable habitats for waders at that time are coastal meadows and sandy mudflats. There are few such places on the coast. One area is the Vistula mouth, where waders have been regularly trapped and ringed for over 20 years.

Birds are trapped every two hours during 2.5-3

months of permanent trapping each year. This work, carried out over many years and supported by visual observations, has resulted in much information about many wader species. This allows various comparisons between different years and species and within the same species.

The area holds only small numbers of waders (rarely some hundreds, usually tens) but it is visited by birds during the whole of the period of autumn migration, i.e. from July to November. Thus timing of migration of different species and age categories were easy to estimate. Sometimes it is also possible to say if it has been a good or bad breeding season for given wader species. Waders stop for only a short time in the area - most often for a few hours only. The duration of stopping is longer later in the season, and in juveniles. The number of birds present at the mouth of the Vistula depends much on weather conditions and on the size of the area of flats attracting the birds. Daily totals of trapped birds give good estimation of changes of wader numbers.



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