

WADER STUDY GROUP

BULLETIN 53

AUGUST 1988

WADER STUDY GROUP ANNUAL MEETING, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK, U.K. 2-4 SEPTEMBER 1988

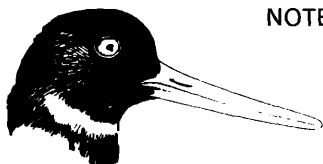
At the time of writing (early August), preparations for the Wader Study Group's annual get-together are well advanced, and we anticipate that the meeting will be well attended. Full details of the meeting were included in the April 1988 Bulletin, and there will be comprehensive reports, including abstracts of all the talks and posters presented at the meeting, in Bulletin 54 (December 1988).

So far just over 70 bookings have been made. Most are from Britain, but there is also good representation from other European countries. We are delighted that Jaga Gromadzka, who played such a key role in organising and hosting last year's highly successful meeting in Gdansk, Poland, will be able to attend the Ipswich meeting. Perhaps travelling furthest to reach Ipswich will be K. Sampath from India.

The programme looks widely varied and interesting. There will be a particular emphasis on conservation-related issues, with sessions on the effects of habitat modification, and estuarine research and conservation in Britain. Topics include also wader migration, foraging studies and breeding ecology.

In addition to the talks there will be field excursions to two nearby estuarine sites. A variety of posters, displays, a bookshop and a bar, plus ample time for informal discussion will add further interest to the meeting. Never mind: if you could not join us this year, why not come to the next one?

Jeff Kirby



NOTES AND NEWS 4

Venezuelan Wetland Threatened

We have recently received the following notice from *Sociedad Conservacionista Audubon de Venezuela*:

"During May 1988 the Venezuelan Environmental Ministry is studying the applications for the installation of three industrial shrimp farms in the coastal lagoons of Piritu and Unare in eastern Venezuela. In fact, one of these companies, without final Ministerial approval, has already started the construction of various shrimp tanks of one hectare each, but, worse yet, they have completely closed and blocked the freshwater streams feeding the lagoons, cut down mangroves and have even laid out plans to build within the Piritu Lagoon itself. If drastic and immediate measures are not taken to stop this destruction, both lagoons will be destroyed within a period of approximately five years. From an economic point of view, these lagoons are vital to the livelihood of approximately 7,000 local fisherman as one of the marshes feeding the lagoons is the most important area for the reproduction of both fish and native shrimps, and the shrimp company is working precisely in the area of this marsh or estuary. Further, this region is an extremely important feeding area on the Venezuelan coast for migratory birds such as ducks, sandpipers, plovers, phalarope,

whimbrels, willets, etc. as well as Venezuelan wading birds, including both the Scarlet Ibis and the southern Caribbean population of the Greater Flamingo.

"Venezuelan conservationists are not objecting to the project *per se*, but we do oppose the installation of these tanks in an estuary when there are other areas in the vicinity that could be used for the same purpose without causing irreparable damage to both the lagoons and the estuary albeit the construction costs would be greater for the companies.

"We request that international conservationists write to the following individuals as soon as possible denouncing and protesting this project, and we would greatly appreciate receiving a copy of your correspondence to enable us to keep track of the actions taken:

Senor Ministro, Ing. Guillermo Colmenares Finol, Ministerio del Ambiente y de los Recursos Naturales Renovables, Piso 25, Torre Sur, Centro Simon Bolivar, Caracas, Venezuela.

Diputado, Adan Anez Baptista, Presidente, Comision Permanente del Ambiente y Ordenamiento Territorial, Camara de Diputados, Piso 3, Palacio de Justicia, Esquina Pajaritos, Caracas, Venezuela.

Sr. Miguel H. Otero, Director Ejecutivo, C.A. Editora El Nacional, Apartado No. 209, Caracas 1010-A, Venezuela.

Sr. Gilberto Carreno, El Universal, Edificio "El Universal", Avenida Urdaneta, Caracas 1010, Venezuela.

Sr. Oswaldo Acosta Sanabria, El Diario de Caracas, Apartado No. 76478, Caracas 1070-A, Venezuela."