

NOTES & NEWS
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Please send any information about the sighting of marked birds either via the WSG colour ringing register, or direct to:

*B.A. Gamash, Azov-Black Sea
 Ornithological Station, 332339
 Melitopol, 20 Lenin Street, Ukraine.*

African/Eurasian Waterfowl Agreement. The Agreement, initially drafted by WSG Chairman Gerard Boere, has been subject to considerable development and discussion over the past seven years (during much of which time it has been known as the Western Palearctic Waterfowl Agreement).

NOTES AND NEWS WANTED!!!

Please send us *your* notes and news!

To keep this column topical in reflecting current national and international wader study activity, please help us by gathering information.

Please send contributions to Robin Ward & Lys Muirhead, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DM1 3LE, UK. All news, views and other snippets most gratefully received!

**COLLARED PRATINCOLE
 GLAREOLA PRATINCOLA
 MARKING IN SOUTHERN
 UKRAINE**

In June 1993 the colour ringing of Collared Pratincoles was started in southern Ukraine. Birds were ringed as indicated below:

Natural breeding habitat		Arable breeding habitat	
<i>right</i>	<i>left</i>	<i>right</i>	<i>left</i>
	yellow	yellow	
red	metal	red	metal

Next year it is planned to change this system for individual marking. The birds will carry two rings on each leg, in a combination of the following colours: white, green, yellow, red, black, metal.

<i>right</i>	<i>left</i>
colour	colour
colour	metal

WADER CARCASSES WANTED

In this English Heritage laboratory we study animal bones from archaeological sites. To help us identify archaeological specimens we are building up a reference collection of modern identified skeletons, but are having trouble in getting some species, especially waders!

Would you be able to help us? We are especially keen to acquire specimens of the following species:

Stone Curlew
 Grey Plover
 Ruff
 Black-tailed Godwit
 Bar-tailed Godwit
 Spotted Greenshank
 Greenshank

Any other waders would also be a help but the above are the species still completely unrepresented in our comparative collection.

Their condition is not important; we are used to dealing with road-kills, incomplete carcasses and *post-mortem* material. Specimens can be sent to me at English Heritage, Ancient Monuments Laboratory, Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 1AB, well wrapped and clearly marked "Zoological Specimens" by first-class mail. Postage will be refunded.

Simon Davis

**AFRICAN/EURASIAN
 WATERBIRD AGREEMENT
 NEARS FINALISATION**

Following the recent Bonn Convention triennial meeting held from 7-11 June in Nairobi, a four day formal meeting was held to discuss the proposed

However the end is in sight! With the commencement of formal inter-governmental discussions and a highly successful meeting in Nairobi, it is hoped to conclude the Agreement within the next nine months. It will then be open for governmental signature, requiring ratification by a requisite number of parties before it comes into force.

The Agreement will set an international framework of 'common standards' and joint activity for conservation of migratory species of waterbirds such as waders. It lays particular emphasis on the needs for research at national and international levels in order to underpin the conservation of waterbird populations throughout their international range.

A parallel Agreement is under active discussion for the Asian/Australasian region. Further details of both Agreements and their implications will be given in a future *Bulletin*.

David Stroud

**TUNISIAN WADER PROJECT
 1994 -
 A WIWO/INFS CATCHING
 EXPEDITION TO KNEISS, GULF
 OF GABÈS, TUNISIA**

Last February, a truly international team of wader enthusiasts, including three WIWO-Dutch (Tom van der Have, Guido Keijl and Paul Ruiters), eight Italians (INFS: Nicola Baccetti, Giuseppe Cherubini, Lorenzo Serra, Marco Zenatello, Anonimi Limicoli, Marco Basso, Adriano de Faveri, Ariele Magnani and Adriano Talamelli), one Pole (Jadwiga Gromadzka) and two Ukrainians (Iosif and Raissa Chernichko), carried out a short but efficient trapping expedition

in the Kneiss area, Gulf of Gabès, Tunisia.

The focus of the project was the largest wintering concentration of Dunlin in the Mediterranean. It has long since been suspected that Tunisian Dunlin migrate in autumn through the Baltic and back in spring through the Black Sea, but the important ringing stations in Gdansk, Poland and the Sivash, Ukraine, lacked recent recoveries from this region.

Available information was based mainly on the long-term past ringing studies near Tunis, but not yet fully corroborated by recoveries from the important Kneiss area, despite some catching effort in recent years by WIWO teams. Furthermore, hunting pressure is low (surprisingly for the Mediterranean), winters mild and, consequently, the chance of recoveries rather low. The Dutch finally found a suitable mistnet catching site in Kneiss (after many days and nights of crawling in breast-deep mud during former expeditions) and found other Dunlin addicts, with similar plans for Tunisia, to join them.

In ten nights, 1,062 waders were caught out of a total of 1,075 waterbirds (including the ultimate wader, a Spanish-ringed Flamingo!). The catch of 713 Dunlin contained 14 ringed birds from ringing sites in central and eastern Europe. Preliminary biometrical analysis of the Dunlin data showed a clear male-biased sex ratio, very few *C. a. schinzii*, but many birds (about 40%) showing characters of *C. a. centralis* (large size, some with adult buff coverts). One exceptionally small bird (relative to the other 712 Dunlin) proved to be ringed as a nestling in Finland.

A waterbird count on 10 February showed some dramatic differences compared to the count of February 1984. While most waders were present in similar numbers (except for a much smaller number of Curlew), most terns, gulls and herons were greatly reduced in number due to as yet unknown factors.

Encouraging was the fact that Kneiss now receives some form of protection, being a nature reserve since 31 December 1993 and on the way to becoming Tunisia's second Ramsar site. This milestone was celebrated with many officials and local authorities during an informal but stylish couscous lunch offered by the Ministry of Agriculture in a large Berber tent with views over the Kneiss mudflats.

One of the more direct results of this meeting was that one local authority could be directly convinced that Flamingos do not eat olives!

Tom van der Have (WIWO, The Netherlands)

Nicola Baccetti (INFS, Italy)

NATURE CONSERVATION AND ESTUARIES IN GREAT BRITAIN

SPECIAL OFFER TO WSG MEMBERS

The UK Joint Nature Conservation Committee is seeking to reduce its stocks of *Nature conservation and estuaries in Great Britain* (Davidson *et al.* 1991). This 'report' - in fact the size of a provincial telephone directory - is a synoptic review of British estuaries and is packed with information. Unsurprisingly given the authorship, nearly 100 of the 422 pages are devoted to detailed descriptions of British estuarine bird populations (breeding migrant and wintering). Waders feature prominently.

Copies - normally £30 - are available free (one per WSG member), subject to payment of £3 postage to UK addresses and £6 postage to non-UK addresses. Orders should be sent to the Natural History Book Service Ltd., 2-3 Wills Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5XN, UK. Payment should be made to "NHBS Ltd."

Please quote this offer when ordering.

Hurry while stocks last!

SPONSOR A SPECIES FOR THE EUROPEAN BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

Fieldworkers from every European country have recorded breeding bird distribution across the whole of Europe. Maps have now been prepared on a 50 x 50 km grid and a database of population figures and trends established. These materials are the basis for the first pan-European Bird Atlas - a collaborative project by ornithologists from all over Europe.

The project has been managed by the European Ornithological Atlas Working Group of the European Bird Census Council. The database has been set up jointly with BirdLife International so that the information can readily be used for conservation purposes. The well-known British publishers T. & A.D. Poyser have agreed to publish the Atlas. More than 250 specialists from 22 countries are writing the texts.

Funding is required to finish the extensive task of editing the Atlas and preparing the material for publication. Organisations or individuals can help by sponsoring one or more species. The name (or logo) will be given at the end of each species account.

The minimum rate for sponsorship is £250 or DM 675 per species (for individual sponsors) and £500 or DM 1350 (for organisations).

Most European bird clubs and societies in Europe have a bird species as their logo. Surely they will wish to sponsor their species in the first bird atlas for Europe? Since there are about 450 bird species within Europe there should be enough left over for individual sponsorship.

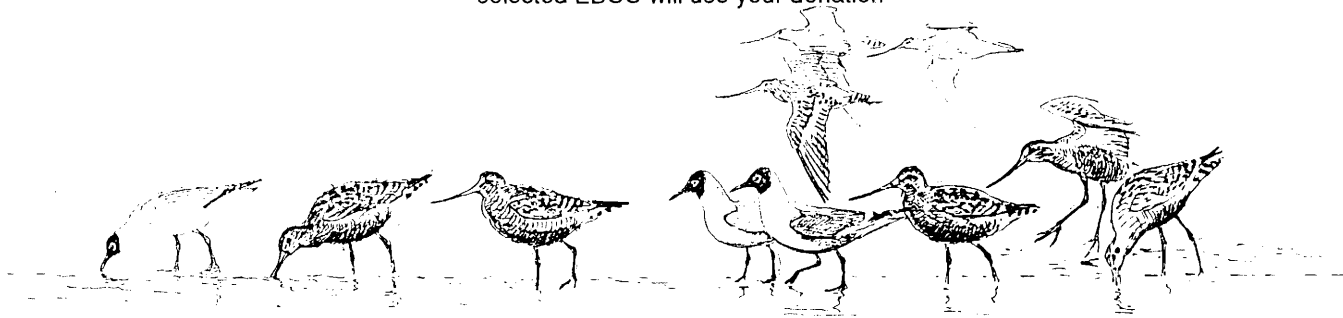
What should you do to support EBCC in its task of publishing the Breeding Bird Atlas? Choose a species from the 450 European breeding species and send your donation on the account of EOAWG, 5128 08-503 Postbank Köln (BLZ 37010050) with the address of the EOAWG Chairman

Dr Goetz Rheinwald, Adenauerallee
160, 53113 Bonn, Germany.

If your preferred species has already
been chosen by someone else, please
indicate second and third choices. If
all of your choices have already been
selected EBCC will use your donation

for an unsponsored species unless
you instruct us otherwise.

Goetz Rheinwald



REVIEWS REVIEWS
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awareness and contributed to a far
better recognition of both the value of
estuaries and the complex web of
shared responsibility that exists for
their well-being. As a result we have
seen an upsurge in CZM - coastal
zone management - a management
planning process aimed at resolving
more effectively the conflicts between
human demands and the natural
estuary resource. Such processes
have all identified the needs for a
detailed site-by-site assessment and
the identification of the estuarine
resource based on the 163 sites
identified by the Estuaries Review.

plus a sobering map showing the
location of these activities within the
site boundaries.

We live in exciting times and there is
no doubt that planners are coming to
acknowledge concepts such as "wise
use" and "sustainability" - it is there-
fore vital that nature conservation is
eloquent in developing these concepts
and presenting feasible strategies for
their implementation based on sound
information. These volumes provide
such an information base and do it
well, in a simple and effective summ-
arisation and presentation of a vast
assimilation of site-based data. They
are absolutely essential for all those
involved with nature conservation on
estuaries and coastal zone manage-
ment. As Peter Evans so rightly
states in his impressive introduction,
this "...is an authoritative base-line
from which to prepare for the 21st
century."

Buck, A.L. 1993. *An inventory of UK
estuaries. Vol. 2, South-west Britain.*
JNCC, Peterborough. 180 pp.
£25.00. ISBN 1 873701 37 3.

I refuse to start with the standard
waffle about how productive/
important/valuable estuarine habitats
are. That goes without saying. It
strikes me more simply that I never
sensed their vitality as much as when
we lived on the Dyfi estuary in west
Wales, where the rhythms of the tide
and season embued such a sense of
life. Now in an age where nature
conservation has won its spurs to sit
at the high table of the planners, there
has never been a better opportunity to
influence their future.

The results of this work are being
published by the Joint Nature
Conservation Committee in a series of
six regional volumes covering 20-30
sites each, together with an
introductory volume to set the scene.

Volume 2 covers the 32 estuaries of
south-west England and throughout
Wales, presenting each in the form of
a dossier, summarising key elements
of the nature conservation interest
and an information trail back to
original sources. Each site has a
clearly annotated map, description
and basic statistics relating the
physical characteristics and size of
each site. Standard format graphics
then clearly summarise the major and
minor habitat types present and their
extent, the ornithological interest,
estuarine communities and the
conservation status of each estuary.
A hefty table summarises in
depressing clarity the extent and
nature of all human activities
impinging on the site, along with
summary statistics and discussion,

The pressures on our estuaries will
not diminish in the foreseeable future,
and I only hope that these impressive
documents can make a real change to
the planning process and to estuary
conservation, and will not turn out to
be a historical record of what once
was - yet another epitaph to a
mismanaged and squandered
resource against which to measure
our continued folly in the future!

Tony Fox

Man has so mistreated estuaries in
the UK, squeezing the rich mid-
channel of wildlife habitat between the
confining sea-walls of development,
pollution and recreation. It is now
crunch time. The Nature
Conservancy Council's Estuary
Review produced the monumental
*Nature conservation and estuaries in
Great Britain* (Davidson *et al.* 1991)
[see special offer in *Notes & News*
above] which assessed the remaining
estuarine resources in a national and
international context. The RSPB's
Turning the Tide campaign raised