



# WADER STUDY GROUP BULLETIN

## 85

### **1998 WADER STUDY GROUP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, KESZTHELY, HUNGARY**

**BirdLife Hungary/Hungarian Wetland Foundation warmly invite all the WSG members to the 1998 AGM which will take place from Friday 16 October to Sunday 18 October, with an extra workshop day on Monday 19 October following up the Population Estimates workshop held in Denmark last year (see below for details).**

The meeting will be held at the Hotel Helikon, in the lovely town of Keszthely, at the very edge of Lake Balaton, West Hungary. Both the conference and the accommodation will be in this hotel. Participants are recommended to arrive during Friday afternoon or early evening for dinner. Dinner will be served from 18.00 to 22.00, but late arrivals can have cold food, served in their rooms.

The Annual General Meeting will start at 09.00 on Saturday 17 October and will be followed by talks until dinner, with breaks for coffee and lunch. Further talks will take place on Sunday

morning. On Saturday night, we guarantee that the surprise event will mean you never forget the Hungarians and their excellent wines. An excursion is also planned to the Kis (Little) Balaton, a huge wetland some distance from Lake Balaton. The excursion will begin after lunch on Sunday. On Monday, a workshop will be held, which will follow on from the Population Estimates workshop held in Belgium in 1996.

The easiest ways to reach Keszthely, Hungary are as follows:

#### *By plane*

You can reach Budapest by plane from every country of the world. Keszthely is 200 km to the west of Budapest and very easy to get to by train, bus or car. From Ferihegy, one or two airport minibuses wait for air passengers to transport them to the city. From the city you have to find the red underground (metro) line number 2 to Deli-palyaudvar (Southern Railway Station).

#### *By train*

From Deli-palyaudvar, Budapest it is very easy to get to Keszthely on train line number 30. The timetable will change in May, but an up-to-date

timetable will be supplied at the time of booking. Participants of the Conference are recommended to leave Budapest by train rather than by bus (it is too long a journey)!

#### *By car*

From Budapest the best way to reach Keszthely is using the M7 motorway which runs along the southern side of Lake Balaton. The motorway changes into main road from Zamardi (number 70). Driving on this road it is easy to reach Keszthely. It is also easy to reach the conference town from Hegyeshalom (the Austrian/Hungarian border) driving on the Motorway M1 via Gyor, Papa, Celldomolk, and Tapolca.

An updated timetable for trains, maps, and a full programme of the Conference will be sent to those planning to attend on receipt of a completed booking form. Please return your booking forms to Gyorgy Szimuly, H-2890 TATA, Vertesszolosi ut 7, Hungary. To book via E-mail, contact Gyorgy at the following address: [andika@elender.hu](mailto:andika@elender.hu), and he will supply a booking form as a Word 6.0 \*.doc file. Any further information on the Conference is available from Gyorgy Szimuly.



### Proposed wader populations workshop for 1998 WSG Conference

One of WSG's responsibilities in acting as a Specialist Group for Wetlands International is to provide expert guidance on wader population sizes and trends. These are included in a three-yearly update of global waterfowl populations used in implementing the Ramsar Convention and Bonn Convention African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement. New estimates are due by the end of 1998.

WSG made an excellent start in preparing some new population estimates at its 1996 workshop in Belgium. Completion of these was deferred pending the restructuring of the Wetlands International Wader Counts Database and the possible development of a wader flyway atlas, within which population updates would be included. Full implementation of the wader atlas project is now delayed, but the planned workshop will contribute to the atlas process.

We now hope to hold a follow-up workshop to the 1996 workshop, on Monday 19 October 1998 at the WSG annual conference in Keszethely, Hungary. Details of the workshop are now being planned, but the workshop would aim to:

- test the capacity of the restructured Wader Database to produce population size and trend estimates;
- update and confirm new size and trend estimates for European East Atlantic Flyway populations, from both the 'national totals' approach used in the 1996 workshop and indexing outputs from the wader database;
- compile new estimates for African East Atlantic Flyway populations, drawing on recent surveys of major coastal wetlands;
- assess to what extent, and when, population estimates for Black Sea/Mediterranean/E. Africa populations, and inland populations might be attempted.

We intend that the workshop would involve the national wader count co-ordinators network, wader species experts, wader database managers and those with wader survey data for African coastal wetlands, and will be open to all participants in the WSG conference.

We will be contacting the key potential participants shortly with more information. Full details of the workshop will be included in the August *WSG Bulletin*, and will be sent to all those registering for the WSG conference.

*Nick Davidson & David Stroud*

### 1997 WSG MEETING: ABSTRACTS OF TALKS

#### Drafting of European Commission Management Action Plans for Redshank, Curlew, Black-tailed Godwit and Jack Snipe

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In 1996, the European Commission (DGXI) initiated a review of the status, distribution and abundance of migratory birds species of unfavourable conservation status which are presently listed on Annex II of the Council Directive 79/409/EEC (and are therefore huntable in EU Member States). The review exercise included an assessment of hunting pressure and conservation actions and, as a result, the ORNIS Committee (which includes representatives from all Member States) selected nine key species which were recognised as requiring management plans as a matter of urgency because of the inconsistency between their unfavourable conservation status and

their continued status as legal quarry under EU law. Such management action plans would directly assess the scientific information available on these species, particularly in relation to hunting and conservation management. The plans will primarily identify priority measures for conservation action to restore these particular species to favourable conservation status.

At a meeting held at the European Commission in February 1997, it was decided that the process would be taken forward by two Member States, namely the National Environmental Research Institute (NERI), Denmark and the Office National de la Chasse (ONC), France. NERI proposes to develop plans for Pintail *Anas acuta*, Jack Snipe *Limnocyptes minimus*, Curlew *Numenius arquata*, Redshank *Tringa totanus* and Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*, whilst ONC will develop plans for Garganey *Anas quequedula*, Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*, Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* and Skylark *Alauda arvensis*.

The management action plans for each species will follow the format already

agreed by the ORNIS Committee Scientific Working Group in November 1996. However, the plans themselves will need to be based upon the collective wisdom of the wader research community, and will depend very heavily on extensive consultation with the Wader Study Group and networks of expert contacts with a sound working knowledge of each of the species concerned from throughout the Member States. Information from the existing review will form the basis for the analysis, but extensive literature reviews and consultation with NGOs, government agencies and experts throughout the flyways will be necessary to draft the final management plans. The first step will be to focus particular emphasis upon these four wader species at the *Breeding Waders in Europe 2000* workshop simply to establish the latest information on population estimates, national and population trends, habitat use and site networks for these species. A more detailed workshop to provide technical input to the development of the plans will probably be held towards the end of the year.

