



1998 WSG ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1998 Wader Study Group Annual General Meeting will be held at 0900 h on Saturday 17 October 1998, during the annual conference in Hungary.

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last AGM, held on 9 August 1997 (*Bulletin* 84: 1-2)
3. Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Membership Secretary's Report
6. Editor's Report
7. Project Co-ordinator's Report
8. WSG-Wetlands International Liaison Officer's Report
9. Election of officers and members of the Executive Committee

The terms of the Chairman (Gerard Boere), Vice-Chairman (Nick Davidson) and Treasurer (Bob Loos) end this year. Each has indicated his willingness to stand for a further term. The role of Conference Co-ordinator has been undertaken informally for the last two years by Petra de Goeij and she has

indicated her willingness to stand formally for this role, but will step down as General Secretary. Nick Davidson has been co-opted to the role of General Secretary and has indicated his willingness to stand for election to this post. The Executive Committee therefore nominates the following Officers for election:

- Chairman: Gerard Boere**
Vice-Chairman: Nick Davidson
Conference Co-ordinator: Petra de Goeij
General Secretary: Nick Davidson

The terms of three ordinary Executive Committee members (Elena Lebedeva, Pavel Tomkovich and Alexander Yurlov) end this year. Pavel Tomkovich and Elena Lebedeva have indicated their willingness to stand for a further term, and the Executive Committee nominates the following for election as ordinary Executive Committee members:

- Elena Lebedeva**
Pavel Tomkovich
 Alternative nominations for the posts of Officers and Executive Committee

members listed above may be made by any members of the Wader Study Group. Nominations must be signed by a proposer and seconder and must include a signed statement by the candidate indicating that he or she is willing to stand. All these people must be paid up members of the Wader Study Group. Nominations should be sent to the General Secretary, Nick Davidson, to arrive by 4 October 1998.

10. Subscription rates for 1998
11. Registration as a Dutch Society
12. Future conferences
13. Any other business

Nick Davidson, General Secretary

OFFICER'S REPORTS FOR 1997

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

The total membership of the Wader Study Group at 31 December 1997 was



632 showing a slight increase on 1996. Three good quality *Bulletins* and a further IWS publication on 'Conservation and Management of shorebirds in the Western Great Basin of North America', were published during the year and this surely helped to keep the Group's profile high in people's minds.

During 1998, a revised and up-dated membership form will be printed and circulated for use by all members. We hope all of you will use this to encourage friends and colleagues to join the Group and enjoy the huge benefits of membership! During summer 1998, the Group's WWW site (<http://www.thenet.co.uk/~rodwest/>) will also be upgraded with many extras and should be working by the autumn of the year. This should also raise the profile of the Group and encourage membership.

I hope that during 1998 we are able to continue to build on our current membership numbers. If you can help promote the Group, and you require membership forms, copies of logos or any other promotional material please contact the Membership Secretary.

Rodney West

TREASURER'S REPORT

As predicted last year, the Group's accounts for 1997 show a distinct improvement over the previous year, although again there have been some unforeseen factors, both positive and negative, influencing the results.

A major negative factor was again the strength of the British Pound against the Dutch Guilder, German Deutschmark and Danish Kroner - over the year the Pound increased by 13% against these currencies, although the US and Canadian Dollar increased at the same rate as the Pound. Approximately one third of the Group's subscriptions are paid in foreign currency, so these increases reduced the total income by GBP 500 compared with the previous year, although our membership numbers

have remained more or less constant. Because a part of our outstanding claims against the bank are in the Netherlands, we had to incorporate a exchange loss of GBP 983.

On the plus side, the Ribe Conference was very successful in every respect, including financially. A profit of GBP 1,711 was recorded. As a result the Conference Fund increased substantially. Some east European delegates attending the conference received a contribution to their travel expenses (GBP 666): this was chargeable to the Conference Fund.

We were delighted to receive GBP 7,500 during the year towards the publication of the Odessa Proceedings. This was made up of a generous British Ornithologists Union grant of GBP 2,000, and a Wetlands International interim payment of GBP 5,500. To date, GBP 4,850 has been spent on the first part of translations, copy editing, artwork and page layout, leaving a balance of GBP 2,650.

In 1995 we made a reservation of GBP 470 towards the Arctic Waterfowl Monitoring scheme, but we have now found external funding for this project. The Executive Committee therefore decided that this spare money will also be used towards the Odessa Proceedings production. You will therefore identify on the Balance Sheet a reserve of GBP 2,650 + 470 = 3,120 still to be spent on this *magnum opus* that will be published during 1998.

During the year the *Bulletin's* printing costs were lower than anticipated, due mainly to a lower number of pages being produced. The secretarial costs shown also incorporate the re-editing, translating and printing of our new Constitution and also the subsequent ballot. Now that the Colour Marking Scheme is back on line the expenditure more or less matches the income.

Balance

Our entire computer equipment has, from an accountant's point of view, depreciated to zero over the past four years, however everything is still operating well!

The GBP 340 entry under Debtors refers to advance prepayment towards the organisation of the 1998 Conference in Hungary.

A sum of GBP 500 has been taken from the General Fund (Capital) to create a new Hebrides Project (see balance sheet). This money has lain dormant in the Capital for a number of years: it is the residue of an early 1980s Hebridean Project financed by, amongst others, the Wader Study Group.

Deducting the external contributions and the Conference profit from the Receipts and the International Wader Studies expenses from Expenditure, the excess of expenditure over income for 1997 is GBP 778. This is a small deficit in comparison with our capital, though it would have been larger if the 1997 *Bulletins* had been as large as those in 1996.

With changes in exchange rates over the last year, those members not paying in GBP or US\$ have already had an effective subscription rate increase. With this in mind, coupled with the introduction of the Euro in 2000, we will try to hold the basic subscription rate until that time, and then move to a basic subscription rate in Euro. Rates will be reviewed at that time.

Bob Loos



RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
RECEIPTS (GBP)

	1996	1997
Subscriptions	10,388.72	9,381.75
Subscriptions from past year	33.05	204.85
Interest received	625.51	747.96
Colour Marking Register	389.42	244.68
Sale of back <i>Bulletins</i> and other Publications	270.55	466.07
External contributions to publications	750.00	7,500.00
Conference	-	1,711.92
Miscellaneous	488.85	123.00
Exchange profit	-	
Total income	12,946.10	20,380.23

EXPENSES (GBP)

	1996	1997
<i>Bulletin</i> costs		
-printing	6,319.00	4,895.00
-supplements	-	-
-typing	80.00	-
-dispatch	2,515.95	2,313.17
Editorial	52.89	24.12
Secretarial costs and misc.	1,937.53	2,603.95
Colour Marking Register	866.01	159.50
Bank charges	166.03	168.11
Depreciation on computers etc.	1,075.00	650.00
Exchange loss	1,128.19	983.54
Investments	-	-
<i>International Wader Studies</i>	1,564.91	4,850.00
Reservation - Breeding Waders	150.00	150.00
Total expenditure	15,855.51	16,797.39
Excess of income over expenditure	2,909.41	3,582.84



BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1997

	1 Jan 1997	31 Dec 1997		1 Jan 1997	31 Dec 1997
Computers & printers	650	0	Capital	13,455	12,176
Stock of back <i>Bulletins</i> and Publications	p.m. 2,498	p.m.	Subscriptions in advance	567	
Cash at Bank and on Deposit	20,761	23,405	Conference Fund	1,982	3,027
Debtors -	340		<i>Bulletin 69</i> Methodology Issue	2,000	2,000
			Breeding Waders in Europe	256	321
			Arctic Waterfowl Monitoring	470	-
			Great Basin Shorebirds	2,681	103
			Odessa Proc.	-	3,120
			Hebrides Project	-	500
	21,411	23,745		21,411	23,745

BUDGET 1999

	GBP		GBP
Subscriptions	10,000	<i>Bulletin costs</i>	
Interest received	650	-printing	5,750
Colour Marking Register	350	-typing	100
Sale of back <i>Bulletins</i> & Publications	350	-dispatch	2,500
		Secretarial costs & Misc.	1,550
		Colour Marking Register	400
		Bank charges	200
		Depreciation	650
Total Income	11,350	Total expenses	11,350



**WSG/WETLAND
INTERNATIONAL LIAISON
OFFICER'S REPORT**

The WSG acts as Specialist Group both to Wetlands International and, through this arrangement, to IUCN's Species Survival Commission (the latter being a general arrangement for all Wetland Internationals waterbird Specialist Groups so as to make effective linkages at international level). 1997 has been a busy year in a number of areas.

The largest task by far has been the final stages in the completion of the Odessa proceedings (*International Wader Studies 10 - Migration and international conservation of waders: research and conservation on north Asian, African and European flyways*). This 480 page IWS volume is scheduled for publication in September, and by the time of the AGM we hope you will be in long-awaited receipt of your copy. The volume contains 54 papers and 22 abstracts on waders in eastern Europe and northern Asia, and a further eight on these species in more southerly areas. It is prefaced by four papers and abstracts describing current international wader conservation activity, including proposals for ways of developing a global wader flyway conservation strategy.

Producing a volume of this size and complexity has been a daunting undertaking for a volunteer group such as the WSG, and has at times stretched the editors to their limits! Completion of the project has involved a great many dedicated people, and much of the work has been undertaken in a voluntary capacity, although to speed up the later production stages we have, through generous financial support from the Dutch government and Wetlands International and use of the WSG's own resources, engaged some professional publishing assistance.

The editors' aim has been to reflect the great diversity of research on waders in eastern Europe and northern Asia in the 1980s and early 1990s. Hence papers range from faunistic surveys in limited study areas, through sophisticated

ecological analyses to brief reviews summarising long-term research programmes. Overall it is hoped that the volume will provide a picture of the nature of wader research in the region, and yield a wealth of new data for those studying the ecology and distribution of different species and populations.

The proof of the volume will be in its use. It is to be hoped that by bringing all this material into a fully edited international publication series, rather than see it scattered through grey literature in many languages, its value and use will be greatly increased. We hope that it provides a source of information, knowledge and inspiration to many who read and use it. We believe that it provides a major contribution to our understanding of these fascinating birds in a poorly known region, and will contribute substantively to underpinning effective global wader flyway conservation in the future.

Another means of influencing global wader conservation commenced during the year with the first ideas being floated for the development of a global action plan for threatened waders (WSG *Bull.* 82: 34-37). The Group has the potential, through its membership as well as working in partnership with other national and regional wader study groups, to collate and review information (much of which may be unpublished) on the status and conservation needs of threatened waders world-wide. The initial proposal has been well-received and the commencement of such a review would dovetail with the proposed publication of the third edition of BirdLife's world list of threatened birds to be published in several years time.

Commencement of work on this project has been awaiting the completion of the Odessa volume and will need to be carefully planned in the light of the significant organisational task that it entails. This will be a priority area for development later in 1998 and 1999. In January 1998, Wetlands International played host to a meeting of the co-

ordinators of its Specialist Groups at its headquarters in The Netherlands. The meeting proved a very valuable opportunity for the Group Co-ordinators to meet together and exchange experience. Particular pertinent points that arose were the need for Groups to co-ordinate their principle activities with the key objectives of Wetlands International to ensure mutually supportive activity. In this WSG is well-placed, as many of our past and current projects - such as the current initiative to review flyway population sizes in the East Atlantic area, and the dissemination of data and information through our publications programme relate directly to core Wetland International priorities.

There were a number of suggestions for joint projects between different Specialist Groups and some of these are in early planning stages. We will be announcing further details of these in due course.

Early planning of a major review of the status of waders in the African-Eurasian region was undertaken during 1997 and 1998 and it is to be hoped that we can soon announce the commencement of a further new project with funding from Wetlands International. This flyway atlas would be an opportunity also to commence data gathering at a regional scale that would also be valuable for the global action plan.

Looking forward, there are a number of conservation opportunities with the forthcoming Conference of Parties to the Ramsar Convention in May next year, and the anticipation that the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement of the Bonn Convention will soon be activated with a sufficient number of signatory governments. Through Wetlands International, as well as in its own right, WSG has opportunities to influence the development of the direction international conservation through the appropriate application of its most significant asset - the data, information and expertise on the world's waders held by you, the membership!

David A. Stroud



PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Publication of the results of two WSG Projects - the Inland Wader Counts and the Kentish Plover Project - made little progress in 1997. A number of manuscripts on Kentish Plovers have, however, been completed, but funding problems and time limitations concerning editorial work makes it uncertain whether they will now be published in an issue of *International Wader Studies* or in a *WSG Bulletin*. Ruff census spring 1997/1998, co-ordinated by Eddy Wymenga, had its first field season in 1997. In this "pilot phase" of the project, counters from six countries participated, counting up to 40,000 Ruffs in two counting periods in late March and early April (*Bulletin* 84: 23-25). In spring 1998, a comprehensive counting programme is scheduled covering eight counting periods. This project will provide a better picture of Ruff migration in Western and Central Europe.

Late in 1997, another project involving fieldwork was adopted as a WSG project: "Tringa glareola 2000", co-ordinated by Magdalena Remisiewicz. The project aims to throw light on the migration pattern of the Wood Sandpiper by colour ringing and observations at a large number of sites, primarily in Eastern and Central Europe (*Bulletin* 84: 21-22).

In the project "Breeding Waders in Europe 2000" a workshop was held in connection with the WSG Annual Conference in August in Vester Vedsted. In several European countries major updates of national wader populations will be undertaken during late 1997 and 1998, and it was decided during the workshop to end the "update phase" of the project in autumn 1998. By then national co-ordinators will have compiled their latest population estimates together with data quality estimates, and a report will then be compiled presenting European breeding waders totals.

In 1997 the final preparations for the

Winter 1997/98 European Non-estuarine Coastal Waterfowl Survey (NEWS) were made. The project has an almost Europe-wide coverage (*Bulletin* 83: 10-11). Field work took place in December and January, but at the time of writing I have not yet received any details of its outcome.

Ole Thorup

EDITOR'S REPORT

I formally took over as WSG Editor-in-Chief this year and it has been something of a baptism of fire: David Stroud is a hard act to follow. I hope you will bear with me in the first couple of years as I learn the ropes - it is by no means as easy producing three large *Bulletins* a year as David made it look! After successfully getting the August and December 1997 *Bulletins* out on time, I had a sudden rush of papers at the same time as a considerable increase in my workload at the RSPB. It looked as though the April 1998 issue would be badly delayed until Rodney West came to my rescue and took over the lay-out.

In addition, because of print quality problems, we had also decided at the 1997 Executive Committee meeting to try a new printer. This unfortunately led to what should have been only a short delay being considerably longer than anticipated. We can only apologise for this and hope it won't discourage you from continuing to send in your contributions.

Overall the amount of material we have published in the three *Bulletins* in 1997 has kept up the recent pattern, with a total of 169 pages. It has been particularly pleasing to report an increase in the geographical spread of papers, with increasing numbers covering waders from outside Europe, and I would particularly encourage submission of more such papers.

In addition to the regular *Bulletins* we published one volume of *International Wader Studies*, on shorebirds in the Great Basin, USA and we were able to send this excellent and challenging

volume on an important and little known part of wader flyways free of charge to all members through the generous support of several US organisations and individuals. The final stage of editing on the major volume of the Odessa proceedings continued to take up much of the time of the *IWS* editorial team, and publication of this huge (almost 500 pages) volume is scheduled for summer 1998.

Throughout the year, I have had a great deal of support, help and encouragement from the members of the Executive Committee and the editorial team I inherited. Thanks go to all of them - it makes a big difference when you are struggling to get everything done. Thus far, I have continued with the format that has been in use for some time. However, we are always looking for ways to improve, so please let me know if you have any suggestions or comments on what you see. I hope that during 1998, as I settle into the job, you will notice the difference.

Julianne Evans

