

REVIEWS

Prokosch, P. & Solomonov, N.G. 1998. *Lena-Delta and New Siberian Islands Nature Reserve*. WWF. In Russian, with English and German translations. A WWF-Arctic Programme publication, available from WWF-Norway, Kristian Augustsgt. 7A, Postboks 6784 St Olaves Pl, N-0130 Oslo, Norway.

For any wader biologist, this area conjures up the magic of the high Arctic, with its remarkable landscape and isolation. The stunning photographs do considerable justice to this, the largest protected area in Russia. The core of the reserve is strictly protected, whilst elsewhere limited harvesting is permitted to supply the needs of the indigenous people. The Lena-Nordenskiöld International Biological Station opened in 1994, providing a base for international cooperation in nature conservation, science and education.

This short, glossy publication will be of general interest as it gives an overview of some of the natural features of the area — polygon tundra and the rich fauna and flora, notably migrants from east and west which take advantage of the short-lived abundant summer food supply. There are 89 species of birds, of which 59 breed, and 372 species of vascular plants recorded within the reserve.

Wadden Sea Ecosystem No. 8. 1998, Common Wadden Sea Secretariat Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Group, Joint Monitoring Group of Breeding Birds in the Wadden Sea. ISSN 0946-896 X

This comprises two reports, bound together, which will be of particular interest to researchers in similar fields:

Thyen, S., Becker, P.H., Exo, K.-B.,

Halterlein, B., Hötter, H. & Sudbeck, P. 1998. *Monitoring Breeding Success of Coastal Birds. Final Report of the Pilot Study 1996-97*. Wadden Sea Ecosystem No. 8. Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Wilhelmshaven, pp. 7-55.

This is a report of the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP), of the Wadden Sea, part of a programme of protection of populations of coastal birds. The target species are Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*, Black-headed Gull *L. ridibundus*, Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*, Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* and Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, all characteristic of the Wadden Sea and distinguished by different breeding and feeding strategies.

Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands have Trilateral Ecological Targets for the Wadden Sea's breeding and migrant birds. The monitoring programme has been established to provide an early warning system of environmental problems that might trigger a population decline, e.g. deterioration in food availability. Breeding colonies and sites of potentially different ecological quality are monitored. At these sites regular nest inspections, as appropriate, augment field census of breeding populations, following standardised methods.

Early results are promising, although a high proportion of chick losses were to unknown causes, making interpretation of the results difficult. Generally, hatching success was greater in 1997. In 1996, levels of predation were higher and tern chicks, at least, were affected by poor food availability and the weather. Long-term studies will be necessary to maximise the usefulness of this approach.

Becker, P.H., Thyen, S., Mickstein, S.,

Sommer, U. & Schneider, K.R. 1998. *Monitoring Pollutants in Coastal Bird Eggs in the Wadden Sea. Final Report of the Pilot Study 1996-1997*. Wadden Sea Ecosystem No. 8. Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Wilhelmshaven. Pp. 59-101.

The two-year pilot study measured the residues of PCBs, DDT and its metabolites, HCBs, HCHs (including Lindane) and Mercury in the eggs of Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* and Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* from the North Sea coasts of the Wadden Sea in the Netherlands and Germany.

Ten fresh eggs per species from each of seven sites were collected, representing ten breeding females in each case. The report summarises information about threshold levels for toxic-induced impairment of hatching success. There has been a general decrease in residues since the late 1980s in most of these chemicals, with the exception of Lindane which is stable or increasing at Oystercatcher breeding sites. The highest contamination of Common Tern eggs was found at the mouths of the Elbe, Trischen and Rhine estuaries, with high levels of PCBs in the Elbe close to the tolerance threshold.

For Oystercatchers, the highest contamination of PCBs were found in eggs from the Dollard and were associated with recent discharges. Generally higher contamination levels were found in the eggs of Common Terns than those of Oystercatchers, because of higher contamination levels in their prey through biomagnification.

The report recommends the integration of this monitoring with that of breeding success and extending it to include new generation chemical pollutants.

Rowena Langston

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Wieland, A. 1999. *Surveys of flora and fauna in the Senné fishponds area, Slovakia Spring 1997. WIWO Report 65.*

The Senné fishponds complex in Eastern Slovakia, is a wetland important as a stopover site for waterbirds migrating over land along the East European and the Central European flyways. Despite the fact that the area is designated as a Ramsar site, some substantial data on its importance for birds and on other elements of fauna and flora were lacking.

The report summarised the results of the project carried out in the area in spring 1997 by the Vychodoslovensky Ornitologicky Klub pri Zemplínskom múzeu with the support of two Dutch students. The project aimed to provide information on breeding and migratory birds using the site, on other fauna and flora, against the background of the general characteristics of the area — its status, physical environment, hydrology, landscapes, habitats, land use and threats.

The site is a mix of reedbed, rush, wet meadows and willow thickets which surrounds the extensively used fishponds and is a typical example of a wetlands in this part of Europe — one of its conservation values. The surveys, combined with earlier data, proved that the site is attractive for many species of waterbirds. Breeding colonies of *e.g.* Great White Egret *Egretta alba*, European Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*, Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* and Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*, consist of remarkable, and in some species — recently increasing, numbers of pairs. Among breeding waders Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* and Redshank *Tringa totanus* are notable. However, the greatest

importance of the Senné fishponds is during migration and wintering periods when the site regularly supports an appreciable assemblage, including Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*, Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*, bitterns and herons, terns and gulls — (*e.g.* Little Gull *Larus minutus* and White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus*).

The composition of migratory wader species is typical of Central European inland wetlands, consisting mainly of Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, Dunlin *Calidris alpina*, Little Stint *Calidris minuta*, Black-tailed Godwit and Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*. The numbers of waterfowl supported regularly by the site on migration and in winter exceed 20,000, including besides waders also geese (Bean *Anser fabalis* and White-fronted *A. albifrons*) and ducks (mainly Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, Wigeon *A. penelope*, Shoveler *A. clypeata*, Common Teal *A. crecca* and Tufted Duck *A. fuligula*).

Waterbirds are complemented by the other typical birds of wetland habitats such as reedbed passerines and harriers. The results of spring ringing performed in earlier years and during in the project clearly proved that the site is located on flyways linking the north and north-east of Europe with the Mediterranean region. During the survey also other valuable natural features of the site were identified, for example the composition of butterfly species and rare plant species.

The study has confirmed the importance of the site for birds against several Ramsar criteria. Part of the area is already protected as a nature reserve, and adjacent meadows are leased and managed by the Vychodoslovensky Ornitologicky Klub, but the remaining part is used for fish-farming. However, management measures which reconcile needs of extensive fish-farming and

other kinds of land use and of birds are proposed.

The report will be of interest for all bird and nature observers who wish to visit Slovakia, being a detailed description of one of the most interesting birding place of the country. Tables presenting the results of breeding and migration seasons surveys, detailed description of character of occurrence of each bird species in the area, and 25 maps presenting all the ringing recoveries of birds caught in the site are valuable scientific data. Also readers interested in conservation issues should find the report useful. It is a good example of an initial management plan of a man-created and used inland wetland.

Fishpond complexes, especially after decreases in intensity of their use due to recent economic changes in Central Europe, are important sites for waterbirds. At the some time, their management for birds can be difficult to implement, as the expansion of colonial fish-eating birds would be in clear conflict with the main purpose of land use. Therefore, the recommendations of the project are noteworthy as a compromise between the ecological and the economic rôles of this type of wetland (which has already proved to be acceptable).

Since the end of the project some of the recommended nature management practice were implemented and in 1999 a committee was establish in order to decide and assure the ecological functions of the Senné fishponds.

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Also received

(these volumes will be reviewed in a future *Bulletin*)

Cranswick, P., Pollitt, M., Musgrove,



- A. & Hughes, B. 1999. *The Wetland Bird Survey 1997-98: Wildfowl and Wader Counts*. BTO, WWT, RSPB & JNCC, Slimbridge. 218 pp. £30.
- Delany, S., Reyes, C., Hubert, E., Pihl, S., Rees, E., Haanstra, L. & van Strien, A. 1999. *Results from the International Waterbird Census in the Western Palearctic and Southwest Asia 1995 and 1996*. Wetlands International Publication No. 54. Wageningen, The Netherlands. 178 pp.
- Beintema, A. & van Vessem, J. (eds.) 1999. *Strategies for conserving migratory waterbirds. Proceedings of Workshop 2 of the 2nd International Conference on Wetlands and Development held in Dakar, Senegal, 8-14 November 1998*. Wetlands International Publication No. 55. Wageningen, The Netherlands. 71 pp.
- Underhill, L.G., Tree, A.J., Oschadleus, H.D. & Parker, V. 1999. *Review of ring recoveries of waterbirds in southern Africa*. Avian Demography Unit, University of Cape Town. 119 pp.
- Taylor, P.B., Navarro, R.A., Wren-Sargent, M., Harrison, J.A. & Kieswetter, S.L. 1999. *TOTAL CWAC Report. Coordinated waterbird counts in South Africa, 1992-97*. Avian Demography Unit, University of Cape Town. 251 pp.
- Duckworth, J.W., Slater, R.E. & Khounbolin, K. (compilers) 1999. *Wildlife in Lao PDR. 1999 Status report*. Vientiane: IUCN-The World Conservation Union/Wildlife Conservation Society/Centre for Protected Areas and Watershed Management. 275 pp.
- Pepping, M., Piersma, T., Pearson, G. & Lavaleye, M. (eds.) 1999. *Intertidal sediments and benthic animals of Roebuck Bay, Western Australia*. NIOZ-Report 1999-3. Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, Western Australian Department of Conservation and Land Management & Curtin University of Technology, Perth. 214 pp.
- Moore, N. (ed.) 1999. *National NGO Wetlands Report: Ramsar 1999*. Korean Wetlands Alliance, Seoul. 142 pp.
- WIWO 1999. *Between Taimyr and Table Mountain: Forward Plan 1999-2003*. WIWO, Zeist, The Netherlands. 54 pp.



Officers of the Executive Committee sign the legal contract that changes the Wader Study Group from a British institution to a Dutch one.

