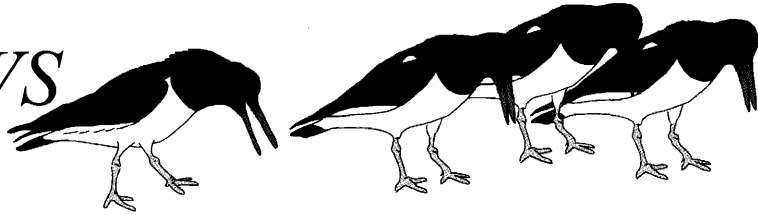


NOTES & NEWS



BIRDS AUSTRALIA HONOURS CLIVE MINTON

Clive Minton has recently been awarded the John Hobbs medal by Birds Australia (Royal Australasian Ornithological Union). This is presented annually to an amateur ornithologist, and is in recognition of his work over the past 22 years in leading studies of waders and terns in Australia. Clive, a founding member of the IWSG, was also made a Fellow of the RAOU in 1998.

DELAWARE BAY MONITORING PROGRAM UPDATE

The monitoring of shorebirds dependent upon horseshoe crab eggs during the spring migratory stopover on Delaware Bay took place for a fourth year with assistance from international team members from the United Kingdom. The need for systematic long-term monitoring in the Western Atlantic Flyway is becoming more and more evident as the controversy over the horseshoe crab harvest and shorebird populations escalates and expands to the entire U.S. Atlantic Coast. Despite concern that over-harvesting horseshoe crabs may impact shorebirds, catch data has shown that the primary cohorts of Red Knot and Ruddy Turnstone captured on the Delaware side of the Delaware Bay have achieved good departure weights for the fourth consecutive year. Later cohorts may not be in such good condition - in 1997 a late cohort believed to have been delayed by headwinds during northward migration had a rough time.

This year was a particularly important year for monitoring efforts in

Delaware. After three years of monitoring led almost exclusively by more experienced international members, a local team was formally trained by staff from the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) and the Wash Wader Ringing Group (WWRG) during a four-day training program. The successful training and development of a team of local staff (several of which have been assisting with catching for four years) capable of implementing a long-term monitoring program was one of the primary aims of this year's work in Delaware. It culminated with the Delaware Shorebird Team making their first catch ever without the assistance of more experienced cannon-netters on May 29, 2000. Building on this success, the team plans to conduct several small catches during the fall migration, and is already gearing up for the May 2001 spring monitoring. More formal training is being planned in 2001 for the Delaware Team. Delaware has remained very focused on developing a local team to conduct long term monitoring. This focus is intended to avoid diluting limited team resources in the early stages of program development. However, it is hoped that after next year the Delaware Team will be well established, enabling more consideration and investment of effort into cooperative projects across state and international boundaries. In the mean time, all Delaware data collected with government support will be placed into the public domain, and it is hoped that it will provide useful data for other studies in the flyway.

In addition, staff from the BTO and WWRG assisted the State of Delaware with outlining a detailed

systematic long-term monitoring program. Monitoring Red Knot, Ruddy Turnstone, and Sanderling during their spring stopover on Delaware Bay is both necessary and practical since it is a major concentration point in the annual migratory cycle of these species. The Delaware program has been designed to monitor the health of migrant shorebirds passing through Delaware Bay. It will provide an early warning system if population parameters vary which may lead to a decline in the population.

The Delaware Coastal Programs (DCP) have now acquired the monitoring equipment needed by a Delaware team and have committed to securing funding from various sources to implement the first five years of this monitoring program. The DCP have concluded that long-term scientific data must be collected to provide the common ground between polarized political entities with conflicting perspectives on the shorebird/horseshoe crab issue. It is also crucial to the development and refinement of sound management programs for the migratory shorebird and fishery resources dependent upon Delaware Bay. The DCP recognizes the critical role Delaware must play in monitoring these birds for the entire Western Hemisphere. It is hoped that long term monitoring will provide the information necessary to re-direct the resources from the distracting political battles between various interest groups to more tangible monitoring and management needs.

Many thanks to the many international participants that have helped the Delaware Team get their monitoring program started. A special thanks to Nigel Clark, Phil Ireland,



Clive Minton and Alan Baker for their highly significant contributions spanning the period from 1997-2000.

*David B. Carter, Environmental Program Manager II, Delaware Coastal Program, Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, USA.
E-mail: Dcarter@dnrec.state.de.us*

BIRDS AND AQUATIC ENVIRONMENTS

The Waterbird Society will hold its 24th Annual Meeting and Workshops, November 1-5, at the Plymouth Sheraton Conference Center in Plymouth, Massachusetts. In keeping with the broadened scope of the Society to include all waterbirds, the theme of this meeting is "Birds and Aquatic Environments: Science for Management and Conservation." In addition to platform and poster sessions on a variety of topics and species groups, the scientific program will include symposia on "Global Change and Waterbirds: Implications for Conservation and Management in the 21st Century" and "Managing Wetlands for Waterbirds: Multi-Species Approaches."

Workshops will include the official release of the North American Colonial Waterbird Conservation Plan, U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan—Research and Monitoring Group, and the Roseate Tern Technical Working Group. A seabird/whale watch to Stellwagen Bank, a cruise of Boston Harbor and trips to Cape Cod will be among the field trips offered. Social events include a Pilgrim Gathering and the Annual Waterbird Society Awards Banquet.

Further details can be found at www.manomet.org, or by contacting the Meeting's Co-ordinator, Robert E. Kluin at Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, P.O. Box 1770, 81 Stage Point Road, Manomet, MA, 02345, Tel: (508) 224-6521, Ext. 249 Email: robklui@aol.com

PASOC 2000

PASOC 2000, the second Pan Asian Ornithological Congress, will be held 23-29 October 2000 in Kandy, Sri Lanka, organised by the Field Ornithology Group of Sri Lanka. The theme is to be "bird conservation - visions for the 21st Century".

The specific aims of PASOC 2000 are:

- 1) To formalise the establishment of PASOC as a viable organisation for the region.
- 2) To provide a forum to present and discuss research publications of relevance to the region.
- 3) To provide a forum for international interaction and to plan activities of conservation for the region.
- 4) To collaborate with the BirdLife Asia Program to achieve: the follow-up program on the Asian Red Data Book on Birds; the implementation of the Important Bird Area Program in south Asia; to review and consolidate the activity plans for implementation of the BirdLife 2000 Program into the 21st Century.

Research presentations, seminars, workshops and poster sessions will be organised under the following topics: Ecology and conservation of birds in different habitat (ecosystem) types: forests, wetlands, arid, urban etc.; seabird ecology; bird migration and navigation; avian physiology; economic ornithology; breeding biology; avian behaviour; taxonomy and systematics of birds; zoogeography; eco-tourism and birds; development and impacts on birds; threatened birds; site specific conservation. There will be a mid-conference field outing and post-conference excursions.

Further information contact: The Congress Secretariat, CDC Conventions (Pvt) Ltd, 87/4 Dudley Senanayake Mawatha, Colombo 08, Sri Lanka. E-mail: Prof. Kotagama or Dr Devaka Weerakoon at fogsl@slt.lk.

CHINA NORTHWARD MIGRATION SHOREBIRD COUNTS

The Australasian Wader Studies Group, in conjunction with Wetlands International China Programme, has just completed the fifth consecutive year of training, surveying and shorebird counting activities in China during northward migration. Results from previous years showed that some shorebird species did not use the Yellow Sea mudflats in large numbers and we decided to visit inland wetlands for the first time choosing the two largest, Poyang Lake and East Dongting Lake, both of which are located on the middle reaches of the Yangtze River. Then we returned to the inter-tidal flats of the Yellow Sea, surveying the coastline of Tianjin Province for the first time before returning for the second year running to the Yalu Jiang National Nature Reserve, on the border with North Korea. The activities were carried out as part of the Asia-Pacific Shorebird Action Plan funded by Environment Australia. Brief count results and observations follow:

POYANG LAKE (29°10'N; 115d 57m E) - 29 April to 2 May.

Boat surveys were carried out within the Poyang Lake National Nature Reserve (22,400 ha), which represents 5% of the total area of the Lake. The count totaled 3,535 birds of 22 species, including three species present in internationally significant numbers Wood Sandpiper (1,550), Common Greenshank (404) and Spotted Redshank (371). Reserve staff reported that they had seen more than 3,000 Black-tailed Godwit in October 1999.

The logistical challenge of getting around by boat meant that only part of the Reserve could be surveyed. The Reserve, itself, probably carried significantly more shorebirds than we were able to count, whilst the whole Lake can be reasonably expected to have supported tens of thousands of birds. Poyang Lake is



best known for the large numbers of cranes and Anatidae present during the winter, when water levels are at their lowest. The region may well also support important concentrations of shorebirds at that time.

EAST DONGTING LAKE (29° 20' N; 112° 55' E) - 4 to 6 May

Surveys were carried out within the East Dongting Lake National Nature Reserve (132,800 ha) by road and boat. The Reserve includes about half of the Dongting Lake system. The count totaled 829 birds of nine species including internationally significant numbers of Spotted Redshank (618). Reserve staff reported that a number of species are common during southward migration and winter, including Dunlin (17,000 during southward migration), Pied Avocet (6,000 in winter) and Northern Lapwing (2,000 in winter). Like Poyang Lake, East Dongting Lake is better known for its crane and Anatidae numbers during winter although the region certainly supports significant numbers of shorebirds at various times of the year.

As a first step to developing more information on the importance of inland wetlands in China for shorebirds, it is planned to hold a course in 2001 for staff from inland wetland Nature Reserves with the objective of training them to find, identify and count shorebirds in their own Reserves.

TIANJIN PROVINCE COASTLINE (39° 04' N; 117° 45' E) - 9 to 14 May

The complete Tianjin Province coastline of 70 km in NW Bohai Wan was surveyed. The extensive shrimp ponds and saltworks behind the coast were also surveyed in part. This is the first detailed count of the region and resulted in a total of 73,553 birds of 31 species being recorded. Species present in internationally significant numbers were Red Knot (14,277), Curlew Sandpiper (12,489), Grey Plover (6,493), Great

Knot (3,610), Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (2,855), Marsh Sandpiper (2,425), Asian Dowitcher (966) and Lesser Sand Plover (357).

This is the first area surveyed during the last five years to hold large numbers of Red Knot, Curlew Sandpiper, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Asian Dowitcher. During the previous four years, despite a cumulative total of close to 500,000 shorebirds being counted at major sites around the Yellow Sea, only 4,611 Red Knot, 73 Curlew Sandpiper, 379 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and 16 Asian Dowitcher had been seen. Birders have reported large numbers of Red Knot, Curlew Sandpiper and Asian Dowitcher in the Shi Jiu Tuo (Happy Island) area in NE Bohai Wan, indicating that the coast and sub-coastal ponds between Tianjin and Shi Jiu Tuo could hold many more individuals of these three species. One yellow-flagged Red-necked Stint (NW Australia) and two orange-flagged Curlew Sandpiper (SE Australia) were seen.

YALU JIANG (39° 49' N; 123° 57' E) - 16 to 23 May

The coastline length surveyed was about 50 km. This year's count of 92,990 birds of 27 species compared with 151,708 birds of 25 species in 1999, when the count took place from 2 to 9 May. Species present in internationally important numbers were Bar-tailed Godwit (26,169), Great Knot (26,093), Dunlin (22,482), Grey Plover (7,232), Eastern Curlew (731), Broad-billed Sandpiper (723), Lesser Sand Plover (647) Eurasian Curlew (563) and Eurasian Oystercatcher (189). Three Nordmann's Greenshank and one Spoon-billed Sandpiper were seen.

The reduction in numbers between years is explained by a halving in the Bar-tailed Godwit and Great Knot populations, with the departure of around 3,000 Eastern Curlew being counter-balanced by the arrival of a similar number of Grey Plover. Migration was certainly "in the air"

during our visit. The excited calling and recruitment flights of birds about to depart on their final flight to the breeding grounds was an emotional experience. A number of flocks were seen commencing migration. Recounts on the final two days of the region surveyed on the first day confirmed that massive departures had occurred in the intervening period.

A total of eight Bar-tailed Godwit flagged in NW Australia were seen. This is an interesting change from last year when eight Godwit from SE Australia and New Zealand were observed and only one from NW Australia, this on the last day. The result indicates that the *baueri* race from eastern Australasia passes through the northern Yellow Sea before the *menzbieri* population arrives, perhaps from the west coast of South Korea. The prevalence of *menzbieri* was confirmed by the dominance of white-rumped birds in Bar-tailed Godwit flocks.

Two Great Knot flagged in NW Australia were also seen.

Mark Barter

Chair, Asia-Pacific Shorebird Working Group, 21 Chivalry Avenue, Glen Waverley VIC 3150, AUSTRALIA
voice/fax: +61-3-9803 3330,
E-mail: markbarter@optusnet.com

NORTH-WEST AUSTRALIA WADER EXPEDITIONS

The next AWSG Wader Expeditions to N.W. Australia will take place from 30th December 2000 to 20th Jan 2001 (small expedition - 15 people) and from 15th September to 17th November 2001 (nine-week expedition, average team 25). Participation by IWSG members is strongly encouraged. On the last major expedition in 1998, 127 people from 17 different countries took part over the 13 week period. 50 species of wader (nearly 25% of the world's species) have been seen in NW Australia and



around 35 species are likely to be caught and banded during the larger expedition.

A complete count of 80 Mile Beach will be undertaken in 2001. A similar count in October 1998 revealed 467,000 waders. Would interested participants please contact CLIVE MINTON at 165 Dalgetty Road Beaumaris 3193 Victoria, Australia. Phone/fax: 61-3-9589-4901 email:mintons@ozemail.com.au

NWA 2000 RESULTS

A most successful 'small' (11 people) expedition was made to NW Australia in May/early June 2000. 1,700 birds were caught. This enabled an accurate determination of the age structure in each species of birds which had not returned northward to their arctic breeding grounds. Plumage ageing characteristics of such immature birds were obtained. The complex and highly variable partial or complete primary moult of each species was also studied.

Red Knot showed the greatest variability between individuals with almost every bird different, many also having differences between their left wing and their right wing. Adult Red Knot were, surprisingly, still departing on northward migration until mid-May, three weeks after their normal latest departure date. Their weight gain schedule may have been disrupted by "the Easter cyclone" (very severe and very late). Even more surprisingly many first year Terek Sandpipers and Greater Sand Plovers were also putting on significant weight and departed, at least on a partial northward migration, in the second half of May.

Clive Minton

RED-NECKED STINTS GALORE

The Victorian Wader Study Group (VWSG) has had an extremely successful season with 8000 waders being caught between late October 1999 and early April 2000. Totals were aided by most species having a good breeding season in the Siberian Arctic in 1999. Red-necked Stints had their second successive good breeding season - an unusual occurrence- and populations at some places reached record levels.

Clive Minton

BANDED STILTS

Banded Stilts are endemic to Australia and can only breed after heavy rains fill ephemeral inland salt lakes. Heavy rains in central Australia in mid-February provided 18,000 pairs of Banded Stilts the opportunity to nest (colonially) on an island in the middle of Lake Eyre North. Unfortunately large numbers of Silver Gulls also moved inland and bred on the same island. Their principal food was the eggs and newly hatched chicks of the Banded Stilts. The last 9,000 nests were completely predated by gulls in seven days. Predation took place throughout the day AND at night. The Banded Stilts had a further attempt to nest in late May on the same island after the arrival of new flood-waters, from Queensland, in the lake. This time the colony lasted less than a week, the gulls again being successful, so quickly that they had completed the job before the planned culling operations. At the time of writing (early June) the Banded Stilts are amassing at a different island and are again try to breed. If gull control cannot be successfully introduced this species will suffer a severe decline in population as breeding opportunities only occur once or twice each decade.

Clive Minton

WATCH FOR COLOUR-RINGED KNOTS!

As part of a long term study on the ecology of Red Knots, *Calidris canutus islandica* and *C.c. canutus*, the wader group of the Netherlands Institute of Sea Research (NIOZ) on Texel, The Netherlands, and WWF-Germany has started colour-ringing this species.

More than 1,200 Knots have been individually colour-ringed during the past 4 years along the Wadden Sea coast of the Netherlands (>900 birds) and Schleswig-Holstein, Germany (>300 birds). Birds of both populations, the Siberian and the Nearctic, are involved so there is a good chance of locating colour-ringed birds within any Knot flock along the North-east Atlantic Flyway.

Every Knot is marked individually with four colour-rings: one yellow flag and a metal ring (the yellow flag can be on the tarsus as well as on the tibia!) or four colour-rings, a metal ring on the left tibia and a blue ring on the right tibia (caught in Germany). There are always two colour-rings on the left and two on the right tarsus. The metal ring is always on the tibia.

Please forward any sightings to either Bernard Spaans, NIOZ (spaans@nioz.nl) or Klaus Guenther, WWF (guenther@wwf.de)

*Klaus Guenther, WWF-Projektbuero Wattenmeer, Norderstr. 3, D-25813 Husum, Germany
Tel.: +49-4841-62073
Fax: +49-4841-4736*

WATERBIRDS IN THE ZOUTE DELTA 1998/99

The report *Watervogels in de Zoute Delta 1998/99* presents the results of monthly counts of waterbirds in the salt waters of the Delta area, SW Netherlands during the period July 1998 – June 1999. It is one of a



series of publications reporting on the on-going biological monitoring of the Zoute Delta. Only the most remarkable changes in the waterbird fauna of the Zoute Delta are mentioned. The 80-page document is in Dutch with the summary and figure titles repeated in English.

During the winter months, more than 450,000 waterbirds were present in the Zoute Delta. The area is of major international significance for waterbirds throughout the year. The 1% level (1% of a population regularly present, indicating international significance) is exceeded more than 40 times during August through March, and more than 100 times in winter. Mean numbers and 1% levels mentioned in this report are based on counts during the three seasons 1996/97 – 1998/99 (three-year mean maxima).

Each of the major components of the Zoute Delta are reported upon separately, these being Voordelta, Grevelingenmeer, Oosterschelde, Veerse Meer and Westerschelde. Notable changes in wader numbers at these sites include a continuation in the decline of Dunlin *Calidris alpina* and Oystercatchers *Haematopus ostralegus* in the Voordelta and Oosterschelde respectively. On the plus side, Knot *Calidris canutus* in the Oosterschelde reached a new long-term mid-winter peak of 22,000 whilst in the Westerschelde Sanderling *Calidris alba* passage peaked at an all time high of 2,800 birds. The occurrence of six species within the Zoute Delta is described in more details, the shorebird species being Oystercatcher and Dunlin.

Watervogels in de Zoute Delta 1998/99 is authored by C.M. Berrevoets, R.C.W. Strucker & P.L. Meininger and published earlier this year by Rijksinstituut voor Kust en Zee, Postbus 8093, 4330 EA Middelburg, Netherlands.

OPERATION GODWIT - ICELAND SPRING 2000

During the spring of 1999 an exploratory trip was undertaken to Iceland to locate flocks of staging Black-tailed Godwits and find colour-ringed birds from the Solent and the Wash in the UK. Ruth Croger & Pete Potts joined Icelfarer Tomas Gunnarsson for two weeks and had a very successful trip.

A small group of wader enthusiasts from the UK (Ruth Croger & Pete Potts from the Farlington Ring Group and Jenny Gill, Graham Appleton, Phil Atkinson & Tim Turner from the Wash Wader Ringing Group) returned this spring from mid-April to mid-May. We worked closely with Tomas Gunnarsson and Gudmundur Gudmundsson and had a very successful trip. A full report will appear in a future IWSG bulletin.

As part of the trip, attempts were made to catch recently returned godwits at staging sites on the coast and inland. A total of 175 individuals were caught, colour-ringed and colour-dyed. Each bird has been fitted with two tall colour-rings on each tibia, the lower right ring always being a LIME coloured ring (scheme marker), and dyed yellow with picric. The position of the dye varies depending on the site where they were ringed. They have either been dyed on their wing bars and upper tail coverts or on vents from legs to tail or on their under-wings

We would welcome ALL sightings wherever they are seen. It would be especially exciting if we had sightings from further afield than the UK but we would of course also welcome ALL records of colour-ringed birds at any time. Thank you.

Please send sightings as follows to:

Colour-dyed birds only to: Pete Potts, Farlington Ringing Group Solent Court Cottage, Chilling Lane, Warsash, Southampton,

Hampshire, SO31 9HF, England, UK.

*Email: ppotts@compuserve.com
Colour-ringed godwits sightings to:
Dr Jenny Gill c/o University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ, England.
Email: j.gill@uea.ac.uk*

SOLENT SHOREBIRD COLOUR-MARKING PROJECT

A REQUEST FOR SIGHTINGS PLEASE!

During the last four winters the Farlington Ringing Group have been undertaking increasingly intensive studies of wintering shorebirds in the Solent, an estuarine complex on the south coast of England. The work is concentrating on one estuary, Southampton Water, and how birds use it in relation to the rest of the Solent. This project is part of a much larger environmental impact assessment into the possible consequences of a proposed port extension at Dibden Bay (on Southampton Water) by Associated British Ports. The ringing studies are being co-ordinated by the Farlington Ringing Group for the consultants Ecological Planning & Research. The majority of the waders marked have been ringed in the last two winters and include the following species:

Oystercatcher (95) - left tarsus single tall colour-ring; right tibia one colour-ring and two on tarsus

Grey Plover (45) - left tibia one colour-ring and two rings on left tarsus; right tarsus a single colour-ring.

Dunlin (298) - with the majority ringed with a single colour-ring on the right tibia and two on tarsus below, and a third with the same on the left leg.

Small samples of Redshank, Curlew & Turnstone have also been colour-ringed.



All waders caught have also been colour-dyed with picric acid and have yellow/orange areas differing with the catch site. We would welcome ALL records of any birds seen on migration through Europe either this year or in previous years. We are of course keen to hear about any birds seen in the winter period too. Thank you.

All sightings please to the Farlington Ringing Group c/o Peter Potts, Solent Court Cottage, Chilling Lane, Warsash, Southampton, Hampshire, SO31 9HF, England. Email:

ppotts@compuserve.com

SOLENT BLACK-TAILED GODWIT & GREENSHANK COLOUR-RING PROJECTS

The Farlington Ringing Group have been studying both the migrant Greenshank populations during autumn migration and also the wintering Black-tailed Godwits in the eastern Solent harbours (estuaries) since the late 1960s, but in detail since 1992 when a colour-ringing project started at Farlington Marshes nature reserve, Langstone Harbour.

We would appreciate ALL sightings of either colour-ringed species marked as part of our schemes. The details of what to look for are set out below:

Greenshank - 150 individuals have been colour-ringed as follows:

Left leg - all have a tall red ring on tarsus and a single colour-ring on tibia above.

Right leg - all have two colour-rings on tibia

Black-tailed Godwit - 150 individuals have been colour-ringed as follows:

Left leg: tarsus all have a tall red ring; on tibia a single colour-ring

Right leg: two colour-rings on tibia

All sightings please to the Farlington Ringing Group c/o Peter Potts, Solent Court Cottage, Chilling Lane, Warsash, Southampton, Hampshire, SO31 9HF, England. Email: ppotts@compuserve.com

THREATS TO MIGRATORY SHOREBIRDS IN BANGLADESH

Wetlands in the Ganges delta, Bangladesh, support a large number of migratory wader species. The great majority of these occur in coastal areas that are increasingly threatened by habitat destruction from development and disturbance by human recreation and pollution. The coastal area is broadly categorised into three regions based on physiographic characteristics. The eastern region is known as the Pacific type. The most settled of the three regions, it is a narrow strip with a long sandy beach interface with the sea on the western side, and the hill forests of Cox's Bazaar on the other. Only a few rivers viz., Karnafuli, Matamuhuri, Sangu, and Naf, traverse this strip. The western region is termed the Atlantic type. Many criss-crossing tributaries characterise this region which is relatively stable and covered by the largest mangrove forest in the world, known as the Sunderban.

The third central region, is the most active area of the delta, where the massive sediment load to the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna river systems empty into the Bay of Bengal through the Mehna estuary. Land erosion and accretion is a continuous process and land reclamation prospects are high. There is a series of offshore islands formed by sediments. It has been widely quoted that 1.5 to 2.5 billion tons of sediments are carried by the waters of the river. Its combined flood level water flow can exceed 140,000 m³/second. About two-thirds of the sediment goes into the Bay of Bengal and thus sediments

become a dominant feature in the geomorphological dynamics of the coastal area of Bangladesh. The central region, and western and eastern regions are very important feeding sites for migratory shorebirds.

The reclamation of coastal areas for industrial and agricultural purposes continues to accelerate. How will populations of shorebirds respond to this loss of feeding areas? In the case of feeding disturbance, the first response of most individuals is to stop feeding and look at the source of disturbance. Larger species tend to fly long distances and smaller species fly shorter distances.

The convention on the conservation of migratory species of wild animals (CMS) or Bonn Convention, which was launched in 1979, is to protect those species of wild animals that migrate across or outside national boundaries. Bangladesh is located in a strategic position on the central East Asian Migratory Bird Flyway and thus its coastline is an important wintering ground for migratory waders.

Nijhum Dweep, Kalkini, Hatailla, Jangalia, Manpura, Damar char, Moheshkhali, St Martin's and Shahpari Dweep etc. are very important coastal locations for wintering of waders because of their zoogeographical position. The Bangladesh Government Agency (National Conservation Strategy-NCS) is currently implementing a conservation project at some important coastal and inland wetland areas. St Martin's is one of them. This is a tremendous site for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. NCS should develop a strategy, policy, and action plan to protect migratory waders as well as all other natural resources. An awareness campaign for some species is to be implemented along the central areas to promote the protection of migratory shorebirds. It is important to carry out an EIA prior to any sort of



developmental activities. Some wader wintering sites like Chakaria, have already disappeared due to aquaculture and salting.

M. Sazedul Islam

OUTCOME OF MOSCOW CONFERENCE

The fifth national meeting on the study and conservation of shorebirds was carried out in Moscow on February 2-4, 2000. The meeting was organised by the Russian Wader Study Group and Moscow State Pedagogical University. A total of 35 papers and 50 posters from 114 participants were presented. About 70 ornithologists from Russia and other countries registered for the conference, however many were not able to attend due to financial difficulties.

The conference consisted of four symposia:

1. Shorebirds in an anthropogeneous habitat
2. Shorebird numbers and distribution
3. Breeding biology and behaviour of shorebirds
4. Migration and feeding ecology of shorebirds

The largest proportion of papers and posters were submitted for the second symposium. One round table session was held - "Questions of study of Common Snipe and Eurasian Woodcock". Video films were screened during the evening of February 3.

This was the first time for many years that Russian ornithologists studying shorebirds have been able to get together. Much has changed in Russian ornithological circles since the last conference was held ten years ago. Many of the younger ornithologists had not met before this conference and were not familiar with each other's work. The conference enabled direct dialogue

between colleagues and has allowed them to discuss their respective investigations and to establish business and personal contacts. All participants have expressed the hope that the following meeting will be sooner than 10 years from now.

Yu. Gerasimov

1999 ARCTIC BREEDING SUCCESS (A SOUTHERN PERSPECTIVE)

The main wader population monitoring programme for the 1999/2000 summer has now been completed by the Victorian Wader Study Group. It appears that 1999 was quite a good breeding season in Arctic Siberia for most of the species of wader that visit Victoria - as measured by the proportion of young birds in catches (Figure 1). In particular, Red-necked Stints in the Nooramunga National Park section of Corner Inlet in mid February (previous highest total in 20 years was 14,000). Based on the one good catch of Red Knot, they seem to have had extremely good breeding success in 1999.

Broome Bird Observatory has also recorded a high (51%) proportion of young birds in a recent good catch of Red-necked Stints. Small samples of Broad-billed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper and Greater Sand Plover also contained a high proportion of young birds. In contrast, a good sample of 182 Great Knot contained no juveniles and young birds were also absent in smaller samples of Bar-tailed Godwit (13) and Black-tailed godwit (40).

It will be of interest to hear how the 1999 Arctic breeding season appeared from an Arctic-based perspective.

Species	Sample size	Juveniles	
		Count	%
Red-necked Stint	3769	571	15
Curlew Sandpiper	1016	206	20
Red Knot	286	93	32
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	244	25	10
Ruddy Turnstone	68	11	16
Great Knot	40	3	7
Bar-tailed Godwit	31	3	10

Figure 1 VWSG population monitoring catches mid Nov 1999 to end Jan 2000

