

Annual conference of the International Wader Study Group, Cádiz, Spain, 25–28 September 2003

The 2003 WSG annual conference was hosted by Grupo de Conservación de Humedales Costeros (Group for the Conservation of Coastal Wetlands) based at the University of Cádiz and was sponsored by the Andalusian Regional Ministry of the Environment, the University-Enterprise Foundation of Cádiz (FUECA) and the ANDANATURA Foundation. It was held in the beautiful old part of Cádiz, close to the Atlantic shore.

As we soon realised, Grupo de Conservación de Humedales Costeros is a pioneering and very enthusiastic group of coastal ecology researchers that made wonderful conference hosts. They came together in 1989 and, as demonstrated by several of the conference talks and posters, their work now covers a wide variety of studies, ranging from the feeding and breeding ecology of waders, especially in salt pans, to wader and seabird migration, to bird-human conflicts as well as wetland management and restoration.

All who took part were grateful to the organising committee for everything they did to make it such a successful and enjoyable weekend:

- Alejandro Pérez-Hurtado acted as General Coordinator
- Jose Antonio Masero acted as Scientific Coordinator
- Gonzalo M. Arroyo acted as General Assistant and Treasurer
- Francisco Hortas organised communications and the conference website

- Macarena Castro, Sora Marin and Gonzalo Olias were in charge of logistics and accommodation
- Coral G. Gago, Mayca Lozano, Isabel T. Escribano, Blanca Lopez-Varela and David Cuenca assisted

The conference started on the Friday morning with a special workshop addressing the question: “Are waders worldwide in decline?” This was all a bit depressing because the inescapable conclusion was “Yes, a great many wader populations are in decline”. Saturday morning began with the usual WSG Annual General Meeting followed by talks throughout the morning. After lunch and a poster session we set forth on an excursion to the nearby salt pans to see waders, such as Avocets, Black-winged Stilts and Kentish Plovers, as well as Greater Flamingos, Slender-billed Gulls and Audouin’s Gulls. We all had a nice time and the weather was just perfect.

All day Sunday, it was back to work with a full programme of talks, followed in the evening by the highlight of the weekend: the conference dinner. This took place outdoors, on a balmy evening, in a beautiful location overlooking the ocean shore. It was an interesting and excellent meal accompanied by much chatter and was washed down with more than adequate quantities of cerveza, vino y sangria. Afterwards we were entertained with flamenco guitar songs, a delightful conclusion to a fantastic weekend!

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Minutes of the 2003 International Wader Study Group Annual General Meeting

The 2003 WSG Annual General Meeting was held at 09.00 hours on Saturday 27 September during the annual conference at Cádiz, Spain.

The Chairman (Hermann Hötker) opened the meeting, welcoming everyone to Cádiz.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Gerard Boere, Ralf Joest, Mike Pienkowski and Magdalena Remisiewicz. The Minutes of the 2002 AGM were agreed by the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

2. Chairman’s report

Hermann Hötker thanked the Executive Committee for their work over the past year, the conference organisers at Hel, Poland in 2002 and Cadiz, Spain 2003, and the WSG Con-

ference Co-ordinator Petra de Goeij. The chairman also thanked Humphrey Sitters, the Bulletin Editor, in particular for his hard work to bring about the excellent Bulletin 100, and the team in South Africa who have been responsible for producing the Bulletin. In 2003, Bulletin 69 finally came to fruition, a compilation of methods papers published in back issues of the Bulletin. Thanks were also extended to the other officers. An invitation was extended to members to become more involved in the work of the group; a note will appear in the Bulletin to seek help from other members. The Global Flyway Conference, in Edinburgh in April 2004, was announced, at which a substantial WSG presence is planned, with “Rodney’s (Membership Secretary) 5-day stand” to promote the WSG and its publications, and a symposium on declining waders drawing on the outcome of the Cadiz workshop.

The Chairman also made reference to the Two-Tier Membership “pilot” and the proposal to offer a Life Membership

