

International Wader Study Group Annual Report for 2010

For the International Wader Study Group, 2010 was a good year. Membership increased and the finances recovered. The annual conference in Lisbon was very well attended, with 126 delegates, many members and new members, from as much as 26 countries.

In the past year we welcomed Henk van Huffelen to the ExCo as the new Colour-mark Officer. Henk was the interim manager during 2009 so he had a head start. We also recruited a new webmaster, Richard du Feu. Here follows a short summary of the statistics of our group at the end of 2010, and an overview of the achievements in the last year. The full Officer's reports for 2010 can be found on the IWSG website.

- Robin Ward, our Membership Secretary reports that the *International Wader Study Group's membership* at the end of 2010 stood at 526. It is pleasing to report that our membership continues to recover from a low of 467 in 2007. Membership in 2010 comprised 390 paying members who were members in 2009 or earlier. The non-members Annual Conference fee, introduced in 2007, led to the recruitment of a number of new members amongst the delegates at the 2010 Conference in Portugal. Correspondence with new members during 2010 continues to show that the Wader Ageing and Sexing Series published since 2007 in the Bulletin, has particularly attracted wader ringers to join. Those members willing to receive membership reminders electronically are requested to keep the IWSG informed of their current e-mail address. This can be best done by visiting the new IWSG Web site where you can view and edit your contact details whilst also checking up on your current membership status. Furthermore, since early 2008, you have been able to pay for your next membership renewal by credit card via the IWSG site. Why not take a look?
- David Turner, the IWSG Treasurer, reports that the *financial year 2010* of the IWSG ended with a surplus of £3,971.00. This is good news, but is ultimately the result of a transaction from the Conference Fund towards the bulletin costs and the release of advanced subscription payments made in the previous year totalling about £6,500.00, and the fact that some DTP costs of 2010 were paid in 2011. The production (print and despatch only) of bulletin 117/2, the final bulletin of the 2010 financial year, was by our new UK printers. These production costs, compared to our previous suppliers, are approximately 75% for print and 66% for despatch. The 2011 costs also support this reduction so we are very hopeful that our overall cost of production can be maintained at these levels. The income from subscriptions showed an annual increase over the previous year.
- In 2010 the Editor of the *Wader Study Group Bulletin*, Humphrey Sitters, managed the publication of 27 papers and seven short communications from 17 different countries, as well as the usual regular features such as Notes & News, Wader Thesis Abstracts and the IWSG Conference Report. The 2010 Bulletins covered an aggregate of 220 pages. For ten years the Wader Study Group Bulletin was printed with care and efficiency by Mills Litho Book Printers in Cape Town, but in 2010, for economic and logistic reasons, the printing was moved to the UK. This was prompted partly by the fact that production in the UK would facilitate quicker distribution to our largely European membership. We would particularly like to express our gratitude to all those who contributed in 2010: Marja Wren-Sargent for typesetting and layout, Włodzimierz Meissner for co-ordinating the Ageing and Sexing Series, Silke Nebel for compiling Notes & News, and Rob Robinson for compiling Wader Thesis Abstracts.
- The Conference Coordinator Jutta Leyer supported the organisation of the annual IWSG Conference in Scotland and planned future meetings. We want to thank José Pedro

Granadeiro and his colleagues from the Museu Nacional de História Natural for an excellent Conference in Lisbon, Portugal. For 2012, we received an invitation from Guillaume Gélinaud to come to Séné, Golf of Morbihan, Brittany, France during the weekend of 22-23 September, with a likely workshop day on Monday 24 September. The venue can hold up to 250 people and accommodation will be youth hostel style. Please keep yourself informed by visiting the website. For 2013, we plan to have a joint / back-to-back conference with the Waterbird Society in Wilhelmshaven, Germany. The Waterbird Society meeting will be from 24 to 28 September, the IWSG conference is scheduled for 28-29 September 2013, with a joint excursion day on Friday (27 September) and a joint conference day on Saturday (28 September), and an IWSG workshop day on Monday 30 September. Details will follow on the web.

- The *Colour-mark Register* is run by the Colour-mark Officer Henk van Huffelen. In 2010 the observations were processed smoothly, largely thanks to a team of >20 species experts (SPEX), who helped the IWSG deal with the sightings. Many thanks to all! In 2010, the IWSG received 86 scheme requests from 54 ringers. The processing time for new scheme was 4-6 weeks. We extended our collaboration with Dirk Raes from cr-birding; this website will eventually display all the schemes of the IWSG Register to further serve observers. Note that only schemes approved by the IWSG will be listed on the cr-birding site! We would like to encourage everyone to apply for schemes at least three months before needed, since especially spring is a busy time and requests are often received at the very last moment.
- Pedro Lourenço, the *Publicity Officer* reports that the major publicity initiative this year was the production of new IWSG t-shirts which are to be sold at IWSG meetings and other international or regional meetings as a means of publicising the group and to obtain a small profit. A total of 100 t-shirts were printed, using a design made by Portuguese artist Maria Nunes. The t-shirts were a great success at the Conference in 2010, where we sold about half the stock. The cost of this endeavour was €475 and the expected gross revenue is about €1000 (at a unitary sale price of €10 for IWSG members and €12 for non-members).
- Project coordinator Simon Gillings reports that there are currently four *IWSG Projects* at various stages of completion. Project TRINGA GLAREOLA 2000 completed its fieldwork phase in 2007 and 12 papers on different aspects of the species' migration have been published or are in press in journals such as the *Journal of Ornithology*, *Ardea*, *Ornis Fennica*, *Ornis Svecica* and the *WSG Bulletin*. More research papers are in the pipeline and a monograph providing an overview of Wood Sandpiper migration is planned within a few years. The INTERNATIONAL GOLDEN PLOVER SURVEY 2008 resulted in counts being submitted from many countries in NW Europe. All data have now been received and a short summary paper will be submitted to the *Bulletin* shortly. The aim was for repeat Golden Plover surveys every 6 years, meaning the next would be due in 2014 if there is sufficient interest and funding available.

The ARCTIC BIRDS BREEDING CONDITIONS SURVEY, an ongoing joint venture of IWSG and Wetland International's Goose and Swan Specialist Groups has had mixed fortunes. Activities in 2010-2011 included mostly collation and web-publication of data for breeding seasons 2009 and 2010. As of August 2011 the online survey database contained 1,354 breeding conditions reports spanning 1989-2010 and a wealth of information on status and abundance of birds and mammals in the Arctic and human impacts. However, the survey development and its functioning has been grossly impaired by discontinued funding since 2008 turning what was a steady increase in coverage to a decline and causing delays in data collection, publication and translation from Russian to English, and a cessation of all survey development and analysis. Restoration of funding of the ABBCS is essential to prevent the degradation of this survey network which provides a synchronized circumpolar information

resource on Arctic terrestrial ecosystems. Finally, the most recent addition to the IWSG Projects, THE SANDERLING PROJECT, has been doing very well in 2010. Through the IWSG network 2,693 sightings of 1,002 colour-ringed Sanderlings were reported by 239 people (22 nationalities). The information on the IWSG web pages of the Sanderling project, and the several requests on e-mail groups, other popular websites and bird journals have aided this success. Additionally, of the 569 Sanderlings that were colour-ringed in 2010, 191 individuals were ringed by volunteers involved in the Sanderling project in Portugal, Ireland and Poland and these have already resulted in many valuable resightings.

- Since late 2010 the *IWSG Website* (www.waderstudygroup.org) has been maintained by Richard du Feu. He facilitates membership, conference registration and general communication. We encourage all members to send Richard notes and news to be posted on the IWSG website.

In 2011 we hope to further stabilize the financial situation, partly through recruiting new members and partly through obtaining external funding sources. Again I encourage everyone to publish in the *Bulletin* and to keep citing articles published in the *Bulletin* as you have been doing. Looking forward to meet you all in Strathpeffer in the Scottish Highlands in September 2011!

Yvonne Verkuil
Chair IWSG