

International Wader Study Group

Annual Report for 2009

Chair's Report (Yvonne Verkuil)

The past year the International Wader Study Group was in good form. The annual conference on Texel had 192 delegates, many members and new members, from as much as 32 countries. This conference especially brought together waderologists and nature conservationists. We are also very proud to announce that the WSG Bulletin appeared in the Conservation Science section of Nature (Nature 466: 448)! The article on Spoon-billed Sandpipers (WSGB 117: 1-8) featured as an example of good research that might save the species. This illustrates that the Bulletin plays an important role in and outside the shorebird community and that publication in the Bulletin can make a difference for wader conservation.

During 2009 a few changes happened in the ExCo. Rowena Langston resigned and we hope to bid her a formal goodbye at the 2010 Annual Meeting in Lisbon. From late 2009 on Mark Collier continued on as an ordinary ExCo member and handed over the Colour-mark Register to an interim officer, Henk van Huffelen. We hope to welcome Henk as a formal Colour-mark Officer in 2010. Simon Gillings announced that he will resign as webmaster but continues on as project coordinator. We are now recruiting a new webmaster. Here follows a short summary of the statistics of our group and an overview of the achievements in the last year. The full Officer's reports over 2009 can be found on the IWSG Website.

- For the second year now, the *IWSG's membership* has increased, from 473 members in 2008 to 494 members in 2009. Many new members were recruited at the 2009 meeting in the Netherlands and also through the *Wader Ageing and Sexing Series* published regularly since 2007 in the Bulletin, which particularly attracted wader ringers to join in 2009. We want bring to your attention that on the IWSG Website you can view and edit your contact details anytime, whilst also checking up on your current membership status.
- The *financial year 2009 of the IWSG* ended with a shortfall of £7,330.00 and a reduction in Capital. However, the advance received subscriptions for 2010 (a result of the development of the Website) and the net surplus from the annual meeting on Texel, created an increase in cash on the balance sheet this year. Momentarily the costs of the WSG Bulletin are out-weighing the income from subscriptions. An important factor is paying for the Bulletin in South-African Rand. The ExCo are looking at alternatives to maintaining the high level of content, production and delivery of the bulletin, hopefully avoiding a future raise in subscriptions on the membership.
- The *Wader Study Group Bulletin* published in 2009, 240 pages comprising 33 papers and short communications from 18 different countries. Web searches showed that the Bulletin is a highly cited journal, thanks to the inflow of good quality manuscripts, mostly from members. However, financial obligations discussed above have forced us to cut in colour use in the Bulletin, but the editorial team will make sure that it will not affect the scientific content. We encourage you all to keep submitting your manuscript to the Bulletin (and maybe hold back on coloured graphics).
- In 2009 the *IWSG Website* (www.waderstudygroup.org) has facilitated membership, conference registration and general communication. We encourage all member to send it

notes and news to be posted on the Website. The colour-mark sighting web pages are currently used by the Colour-mark Officer and his team, and will go public later in 2010.

- The *annual IWSG meetings* are one of the major tasks of our organization and every time a big success. We want to thank Petra de Goeij and her team for an excellent meeting in 2009 on Texel, The Netherlands. We will meet again from 1–3 October 2010 in Lisbon, Portugal, hosted by José Pedro Granadeiro and his colleagues from the Museu Nacional de História Natural. In 2011, the meeting will be in Scotland, Strathpeffer near Inverness. We also encourage you to attend the 4th Western Hemisphere Shorebird Group/SRGA, held from 11–15 August 2011, at Simon Fraser University, in British Columbia, Canada.
- The *Colour-mark Register* is now run by an interim manager, Henk van Huffelen. Henk established a team of species experts (SPEX) and species coordinators (SPCO), who help the Colour-mark Officer (CMO) with dealing with sightings and in the future with scheme requests. Again 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. We want to thank the resigning Colour-mark Officer, Mark Collier for his 6 years of devotion to the Colour-mark Register.

I hope that 2010 will end as successful as 2009 and that the IWSG will be able to continue to bring wader and shorebirds researchers and alike together. Again I encourage everyone to publish your work in the Bulletin and to keep citing the published articles of the Bulletin as you have been doing. Looking forward to meet you all in October 2010 in Lisbon!

Yvonne Verkuil
Chair IWSG

Officers' reports for 2009

Membership Secretary's report (Robin Ward)

The International Wader Study Group's membership for the year 2009 stood at 494. This was made up as follows:

Life Members	11
Individual members	421
Low income members	18 (approximate)
Institutional members	10 (minimum)
Gratis members	18
Exchange	16

It is pleasing to report that the steady decline in membership of recent years has for the second year has ceased. There was in fact an increase in the number of members between 2008 (473 members as of February 2010) and 2009 (494 members as of February 2010). Following the attendance to over-scribed conferences of many non-members, a non-members Annual Conference fee was introduced in 2007 to the value of the current year's membership into which it can be converted. This led to the recruitment of a number of new members amongst the delegates attending the 2009 Conference in the Netherlands. Correspondence with new members during 2009 has also shown the Wader Ageing and Sexing Series published regularly since 2007 in the Bulletin, has particularly attracted wader ringers to join in 2009 and back date their subscription for the earlier issues

The delivery of membership renewal reminders electronically since 2007 to those members having provided a current e-mail address, has continued to help improve efficiency (e.g. by reducing the cost) and the final results of the renewal process. Those members willing to receive membership reminders electronically are requested to keep the Membership Officer informed of their current e-mail address. This can be best done however by visiting the new IWSG Web site where upon registering 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 Web site using PayPal. Why not take a look?

Treasurer's Report 2009 (David Turner)

Receipts and Expenditure Account

The financial year 2009 ended with a shortfall of £7,330.00. There were a number of contributing factors. Payment still had to be made for previous year's production of the bulletin not related to this financial year. This is now fully caught up. There is an exchange loss between euro/sterling and paying for the bulletin in Rand. There was relatively no interest income. Finally, even allowing for bulletin payments outside this financial year, annual subscriptions do not match the cost of the bulletin production and distribution.

Balance Sheet

As a result of the shortfall there has been a reduction in Capital. The significant effect on the Balance Sheet this year, despite the reduction in Capital, is the increase in cash. Primarily as a result of the development of the web-site we received a significant amount of subscriptions in advance for 2010. There was also quite a significant cash contribution from the net surplus from our conference on Texel in The Netherlands.

The Budget

Although there are some relatively small items of income and expenditure for the Group the budget is centred on the expenditure of the bulletin and income from subscriptions. As previously stated, primarily because of the current exchange relationship with the Rand, the costs of the bulletin are out-weighting the income from subscriptions. However, even at the better end of the exchange-rate range, we will struggle to cover the bulletin costs at the current membership level. The ExCo are looking at alternatives because on one hand we are committed to maintaining the high level of content, production and delivery of the bulletin while being conscious of the strain of increasing subscriptions on the membership.

Editor's report (Humphrey Sitters)

The three issues of the *Wader Study Group Bulletin* published in 2009 comprised 33 papers and short communications from 18 different countries. In addition to the regular features, such as *Notes & News*, *Wader Thesis Abstracts*, *the Ageing and Sexing Series* and *IWSG Conference Reports*, 2009 also saw publication of the report of spectacularly intensive, parallel-session, week-long Third Meeting of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Group held in Mazatlan, Mexico in March 2009. The 2009 *Bulletins* covered an aggregate of 240 pages.

I am always greatly encouraged by the support I receive from the team involved in compiling and producing the *Bulletin* and I would particularly like to express my gratitude to all those who contributed in 2009: Marja Wren-Sargent for typesetting and layout, Silke Nebel for compiling *Notes & News*, Wlodek Meissner for coordinating the well-received *Ageing and Sexing Series* and Rob Robinson for compiling *Wader Thesis Abstracts*.

In the nine years since I became editor, we have published 344 scientific manuscripts from lead authors representing 45 countries. There is no other international shorebird journal; the *Wader Study Group Bulletin* is unique and a great asset to waderologists across the world. To make the *Bulletin* even better, we need to increase its funding through more membership subscriptions and increase the inflow of good quality manuscripts.

Conference Co-ordinator's report (Jutta Leyrer)

The 2009 IWSG annual conference was held at Texel, in The Netherlands, hosted and organised by Petra de Goeij and her team from the NIOZ (see WSB Bulletin 116, p210-239 for a full report and conference abstract). It was very well attended by 192 delegates from 32 countries. The preparations for the 2010 IWSG conference in Lisbon, Portugal, are running smoothly, thanks to the very active organizing team. The conference is fully booked now. We will be in Lisbon from 1–3 October 2010, hosted by José Pedro Granadeiro and his col-

leagues, from the Museu Nacional de História Natural. In 2011 we go to Scotland, Strathpeffer near Inverness, the date will most likely be the weekend of 24/25th September, but needs to be confirmed. Anyone who is interested in organizing a conference in the coming years, please contact Jutta Leyrer. Furthermore, David Lank and Ron Ydenberg from the Centre for Wildlife Ecology at Simon Fraser have agreed to host the 4th Western Hemisphere Shorebird Group/SRGA. The meeting will be held at Simon Fraser University from 11–15 August 2011, in British Columbia. This will be the first "Canadian" hosted shorebird meeting.

Colour-marking Officer' report (Yvonne Verkuil (by interim))

Unfortunately Mark Collier stepped back as Colour-marking Officer (CMO). We want to thank him for his 6 years of devotion all the Colour-mark Register tasks. Mark digitalized the database, which was with hundreds of existing scheme a monster job. Meanwhile he dealt with all the resightings send to the IWSG. Last years colour-marking took such a high flight that this task became too large for one person. Fortunately, we were able to find an excellent interim Colour-mark Officer in Henk van Huffelen at short notice. He established major changes in the organisation of colour-ringing to prevent the build-up of workload for the CMO. To this end he established a team of species experts (SPEX) and species coordinators (SPCO), who help the CMO with dealing with sightings. Eventually the SPCO will also help with scheme requests which are very time consuming. Especially spring is a busy time, as requests are often received for projects that are about to start. Again we would like to encourage everyone to apply for schemes at least three months before needed. The team, guided by Jeroen Reneerkens, has been working on a document called 'Colour-mark Considerations' that will summarize common practice, regulation and the IWSG role in colour-ringing of shorebirds. We hope to discuss this with a team of experts at the Annual Meeting in Lisbon. Furthermore Henk established closer contact with Dirk Raes from www.cr-birding.be, to facilitate contact between observer and ringer. The IWSG web-based system for reporting colour-marked waders is now used by the Henk and his team to trace resightings and will soon be published on the Website.