

International Wader Study Group

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 09:00 – 09:45, 19 September 2009, Den Burg, Texel, the Netherlands

The Chair, Yvonne Verkuil, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to Texel. Apologies were received from Gerard Boere, Tómas Gunnarsson, Rowena Langston, David Stroud, and Les Underhill. The minutes of the 2008 AGM, published in *WSG Bulletin* 115(3), were accepted by the delegates.

Chair's report

The Chair's written report (and those of the Conference Coordinator, Project Co-ordinator, Treasurer, Colour Marking Officer, and Editor) had been provided to members attending the AGM and are available on the website of the IWSG (<http://www.waderstudygroup.org>). A summarised version of all reports is published in the *WSG Bulletin* 116(2).

For the present conference many abstracts were submitted, showing the attractiveness of the IWSG.

The new website is up and running very well, thanks the huge efforts Simon Gillings had put into it. As it is the aim to use the website for the communication between ExCo and members, the officer's reports will no longer be printed but only be published on the website. The AGM agreed with this procedure.

There were no comments on the Chair's report.

Treasurer's report

An extract of the Treasurer's report can be found in the *WSG Bulletin* 116(2). Additionally, David Turner pointed to some special points in his report. There had been a £2,000 surplus in the accounts due to exchange rate profits, but this can easily be lost when the world financial situation changes. In total, the IWSG had a deficit in 2008 due to extra expenses which had to be paid. These were old invoices of just over £22,000 for the production of two issues of the *WSG Bulletin* and £7,000 for digitising old *WSG Bulletins* to get them online on SORA.

There is a slight turnover of members with c. 30 members leaving the group each year, but a few more new members join the group, resulting in a small increase in membership. However, this increase is not sufficient to cover the expenses of the group. Therefore, the group loses cash in the bank. In 2009, we still had to catch up with past invoices for the *WSG Bulletin*. Furthermore, very little interest had been received (in some previous years interest had amounted to £1,000 or more). An investigation had been made into whether the production costs of the *WSG Bulletin* could be reduced, but it was found that few savings could be made and it was important that the quality of the *Bulletin* should be maintained. It was concluded that the production of the *Bulletin* in South Africa remains the best and most cost efficient means. As the *Bulletin* has to be paid in South African Rand, costs depend on exchange rates. Currently, the cost is about 175,000 ZAR per year which has ranged between £9,000 and £14,500 depending on the exchange rate. To cover the running costs of the group, the treasurer proposed an increase in the membership fee for 2010 to £30 per year for individuals, the first increase since 2004. In other currencies, the fee will be adjusted according to current exchange rates.

The treasurer's proposal to increase the membership fee was passed by the AGM unanimously.

Membership

Yvonne Verkuil reported that membership stood at 467 at the end of 2008.

Editor's report

Humphrey Sitters referred to his report published on the website with its abstract published in the *Bulletin*. Major changes in 2008/2009 were the colour and design of the covers, setting up an editorial board and adding a subtitle: the International Journal of Shorebird Science.

There were no comments on the Editor's report.

Project Co-ordinator's report

The report of the project co-ordinator was published on the website. Simon Gillings asked the organisers of current projects to present a report on the state of their projects.

Magdalena Remisciewicz reported that the analysis and writing-up of the *Tringa glareola* 2000 project is continuing. In the meantime seven papers arising from the project had been published. A monograph on the Wood Sandpiper was still in preparation.

Jeroen Reneerkens reported on the Sanderling project, which had been running for a year. In this time, a group of collaborators had been build up. Much communication has been via the IWSG website. It is planned that the parts of the website referring to the Sanderling project will be translated into Spanish and Russian. Many colour ring sightings and counts of Sanderlings have been collected over the year. It is planned to conduct coordinated counts.

Simon Gillings reported on the Golden Plover survey in 2008. Currently the count data were being collated. More countries, especially those in the eastern part of the species' distribution, had participated than in the 2003 survey. The final paper was being prepared.

Simon Gillings should be contacted about any proposal to run new IWSG projects.

Conference Co-ordinator's report

Jutta Leyrer reported that the organisation of the conference in the Netherlands had gone smoothly. Since too many abstracts had been submitted, some talks had to be declined. For the first time, part of the conference would be run in parallel sessions. A questionnaire was given to all attendees of the 2009 conference asking for their suggestions on how to handle the large number of contributions. Thanks to the work of Simon Gillings, online registration and online payment was made possible through the IWSG website. This system is planned to be used for future conferences. The 2010 conference will be held in Lisbon. For 2011 an invitation from Scotland had been received.

Colour Marking Register

Mark Collier reported that many requests come in for resightings and new schemes. To keep ring resighters motivated, ringers were asked to respond to resighting reports quickly.

The register is going to be made available on the website, which is currently under development by Simon Gillings and Mark Collier.

Election of Officers

Les Underhill was elected unanimously for three years as member of the Executive Committee.

Due to their long standing service and their tremendous input to the IWSG, Hermann Hötter and Theunis Piersma were elected as Honorary Members.