

New estimates for wintering waders in coastal Sierra Leone

JAN VAN DER WINDEN¹, ALHAJI SIAKA², SJOERD DIRKSEN¹ & MARTIN J.M. POOT¹

¹*Working Group International Waterbird and Wetland Research (WIWO),
Rijksstraatweg 178, 6573 DG, Beek-Ubbergen, The Netherlands. jvdwinden@hetnet.nl*

²*Conservation Society of Sierra Leone, PO Box 1292, Freetown, Sierra Leone*

Van der Winden J., Siaka, A., Dirksen S. & Poot, M.J.M. 2009. New estimates for wintering waders in coastal Sierra Leone. *Wader Study Group Bull.* 116(1): 29–34.

Keywords: Charadrii, waders, shorebirds, wintering, population size, Sierra Leone

The most comprehensive survey to date of the wader population of the coast of Sierra Leone was carried out during Jan–Feb 2005. A total of 66,292 waders of 25 species were counted and the total wader population was estimated at 75,000–79,000. With a count of over 42,000, one site, Yawri Bay, accounted for over half the total. Curlew Sandpiper (24,855) was by far the most numerous species. The coast of Sierra Leone is shown to be particularly important for Common Ringed Plover and Redshank as it supports >4% of their respective flyway populations. We recommend that Yawri Bay and Sherbro Island be designated as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.