

Royal Naval Birdwatching Society



REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 207619

BULLETIN No. 134

APRIL 1996

50th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

YOUR ATTENTION IS DRAWN TO THE ENCLOSED FLYER. IF YOU HOPE TO ATTEND THE AGM ON FRIDAY 6 DEC 96 PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN BY 1 AUG 96.

The 49th AGM was held in the Cinema Old Admiralty Building, Whitehall, on Friday 8 December 1995, commencing at 1400. Capt M K Barritt RN was in the chair, and the President, Vice Admiral Sir David Dobson KBE, Vice-President, Capt Sir Thomas Barlow and 13 other members were present.

THE MINUTES

Item 1. Apologies. Apologies for absence were received from The Venerable Archdeacon Basil O'Ferrall, Dame Marion Kettlewell, Capts Gray, Renshawe and Simpson, Cdrs Kirby and Plummer, Lt Howells, Warrant Officer Curtis, Dr Bourne and Mr Hales.

Item 2. The Minutes of the 48th AGM. The minutes of the 48th AGM, which had been circulated to members with Bulletin No. 131, were put to the meeting. Approval and adoption were proposed by Cdr Casement, seconded by Lt Cdr Lewis, and carried without dissent.

Item 3. Matters Arising.

- A. Publicity (Item 3.1). Action on a Navy News article and on production of RNBWS posters was complete.
- B. 50th Anniversary (Item 3.3). The AGM authorised the Executive Committee, by a show of hands, to book facilities at the Royal Geographic Society for the 50th AGM at 1400 on Friday 6 December 1996. The President agreed to write to the Patron confirming details. The meeting also favoured proposals by Mr Stan Howe that the Chairman should invite North Sea Bird Club members to attend the meeting, and that the BOU should be asked to consider associating themselves with the event. The Chairman confirmed that representatives of AOS, RAFOS, RSPB and other organisations would be invited.
- C. Anniversary Edition of SEA SWALLOW (Item 3.3). This was taken later in the Agenda.
- D. Photographic Competition (Item 11). The AGM agreed that this should lapse and that the Executive Committee should substitute an award for the best article submitted to SEA SWALLOW by a first time contributor.
- E. Marsden Squares for reporting (Item 12.1). The general feeling was that use of Lat and Long should remain the normal practice, but that Marsden Squares might enable work in sensitive areas to be published.
- F. Liaison with Plymouth Marine Biology Laboratory (Item 12.3). Lt Cdr O'Connell-Davidson would be making further approaches.

Item 4. Chairman's Report. Capt Barritt put forward 2 initiatives which he sought approval for the Executive Committee to progress and report back to the 50th AGM. Firstly, he suggested that a Working Group from the Committee, co-opting members with expertise in use of computers, should consult widely and seek to put in place computer-based management of incoming seabird data by 1997. Once proven the system would be extended to land birds at sea, and the RNBWS manuscript records would be incorporated. He stressed the importance of producing a system which met the needs of the professional community whilst being usable by the amateur observer. Secondly, he proposed that the Committee should identify a new structure of administration for RNBWS which would enable the load to be shared more widely, with parcels which were manageable by serving members in busy front-line jobs. After discussion which revealed valuable insights amongst those members present, the initiatives were endorsed by the meeting.

Item 5. Financial Statement. The Financial Statement for 1994 issued with Bulletin No. 131 was put to the meeting. Acceptance was proposed by Dr Porter, seconded by Mr Partridge, and carried unanimously. The Hon. Secretary and Treasurer presented the following unaudited figures for 1995:

	1994	1995
Current A/C	96.73	160.07
Deposit A/C	2138.41	1835.79
NSB A/C	4969.92	4699.73
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	7205.06	6695.59
Less Creditors	381.85	411.05
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	6823.21	6284.54

He noted that of the 75 covenants which expired this year, 56 have been renewed, in some cases for an increased amount. The Society greatly appreciates the generosity of those who have renewed since even with the reduced rebate it remains a substantial proportion of our income. Overall the reduced profit compared with 1994 reflects exceptionally good sales for SEA SWALLOW 43 in 1994 and increases in the cost of printing.

Item 6. Membership Statement. During the year 21 members and Associate members have died, resigned or lost touch. 4 Full, 2 Associate and 2 Library members had joined.

	1994	1995
Ex Officio	5	4
Honorary	9	9
Ordinary	193	184
Associate	36	37
Library	44	40
TOTAL	<hr/>	<hr/>
	287	274

Item 7. Executive Committee and Honorary Appointments. The Executive Committee, who are the Trustees of the Society, offered themselves for re-election.

Chairman	Capt M K Barritt RN
Vice Chairman	Capt Sir Thomas Barlow RN
Vice Chairman	Capt P W G Chilman MN

Hon Sec and Treasurer
Editor Sea Swallow
Exped and Fieldwork Member
Co-opted

Col P J S Smith RM
Cdr M B Casement RN
Lt Cdr G A Lewis RN
Cdr F S Ward MNI RN

Sgt Carr proposed re-election for a further year. This was seconded by Mr Partridge and carried unanimously.

The Hon Sec reported that Capt J Gray was the current Master of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners.

Item 8. Honorary Auditor. The AGM recorded thanks to CPO Writer Craggs for his very professional audit of the 1994 account. The Chairman asked members to assist him in identifying a new Honorary Auditor.

Item 9. Local Representatives' Reports. The meeting agreed that the Hon Sec should write to Mr Martin Cade asking him to be the RNBWS Local Representative at Portland. The following area reports were given:

Dartmouth. Dr Porter reported on the successful Motley I expedition, and the good contacts which should enable a return to the Falkland Islands, this time to Hope I, in 1997.

Devonport. Ken Partridge reported that the Plymouth Area MOD Conservation Society would meet in HMS CAMBRIDGE in Jan 96. It was hoped to organise a small mammal survey on the Mewstone, which has a major S Coast Cormorant colony. Assistance of members would be most welcome.

Portsmouth. Sgt Carr RM reported that good opportunities for field work continued to exist in the Solent and Farlington Areas.

Item 10. Exped Member's Report. Lt Cdr Lewis reported on the substantial progress that had been made with planning for work in the Madeiran Archipelago based on the RM Adventurous Training yacht. However, since financial restraints would confine the yacht to UK waters in 1996, the Madeiran plan had been postponed to 1997. During 1996 a Spring field trip to Lundy was proposed, and Sgt Carr would be investigating the possibility of using the RM yacht for work in the islands of Western Scotland. The Exped Member would follow Mr Howe's advice and consult the Scottish Ornithological Club to establish tasking should this plan prove feasible. The AGM approved funding up to a £50 ceiling for administration of events in 1996.

Item 11. Sea Swallow. Cdr Casement reported on the success of arrangements with the Society's new printers, the good range of contributions to Sea Swallow 44, and the achievement of distribution to Ship's Libraries and to Shore Establishments. He offered to provide copies to Dr Porter for those young officers who had taken part in the expedition to Motley Island. He then turned to consideration of the Golden Jubilee Edition. Members had been asked to vote on sample covers. The AGM approved the allocation of £3,000 from Society funds towards production of this enlarged issue, which would include a colour section. The Chairman was authorised to approach DNPTS and MOD Conservation for additional funding. A cover price of £8 was approved, but those agencies which had already been quoted £6 for 1996 would be exempted. Vol 44 had been produced for £3.19 per copy but Vol 45 would cost £7 to produce (£4,000 total). The Editor was given discretion to increase the print

run if funding allowed. The Editor asked for volunteers to assist with the portion of the special edition which would summarise high-lights from past Sea Swallows.

Item 12. Any other business. There was no other business.

Item 13. Date of the next meeting. The Chairman challenged members to build up interest in attendance at the 50th AGM at the Royal Geographic Society at 1400 on Friday 6 December 1996. A booking form would be circulated early in the New Year.

M K Barritt
Captain Royal Navy
Chairman

P J S Smith
Colonel Royal Marines
Honorary Secretary

FIELDWORK IN CAMBODIA

Following the AGM, Sgt Peter Carr RM, a veteran of 10 expeditions on 4 continents, gave an outstanding talk on his experiences in Cambodia as part of UNTAC and during a return visit in 1994 to conduct a survey of large waterbirds for IUCN/WWF. The work was designed to provide a comparison with the situation in adjoining countries where population explosion and reclamation of wetlands had had a severe impact on habitat. As well as assessing threats, the second trip was designed to train Cambodians for survey work. Sgt Carr explained the difficulties of the task in the war-torn country, and the achievement of identifying 8 new species and 3 new breeding species. He described the discovery of non-sustainable harvesting of Red Book Species. His talk provided a classic example of trained military personnel using their leadership, field and observing skills to the benefit of conservation and scientific study.

It is hoped that Sgt Carr and a number of other active members will be available for a series of short presentations of their work at the 50th AGM.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Belated congratulations to Frank Ward on his promotion to Commander, to James Reed on his promotion to Lieutenant RM and to Peter Carr on his to Colour Sergeant RM

NEWS FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

RAFOS Newsletter No 60, Autumn 95 includes a short account of the Akamas, Cyprus survey, an expedition to Hungary and trips by members.

Bird Life International Network News, Jan 96 discusses the Jakarta conference on Biodiversity. One outcome of work in this area has been a 4 Volume "A Global Representative System of Marine Protected Areas" which aims to identify priorities for new protected areas. In Senegal the task of persuading children not to kill Terns continues with some success. The United Arab Emirates have declared the coral reefs of Al Facquit, Dhadnah and Al Aqqa on the east coast as marine nature reserves. Socotra Cormorants, *P.nigrogularis* have fallen from a previously historic high of 28 colonies to 11. The Hellenic Ornithological Society have found 7 new colonies of Audouin's Gull, *L.audouinii* in the Aegean bringing the Greek total to around 200 pairs. The previous issue announced a historic agreement on the conservation of migratory waterbirds by some 50 African, European and Middle East

countries. The 4th North Sea Ministerial meeting admitted the grave state of fish stocks but were unable to agree any practical remedy. An assessment of the measures necessary to protect species and habitat was initiated and tougher measures against oil discharge were proposed. In Australia the longline catch of seabirds is to be classified as a Key Threatening Process which means the Government will have 3 years to come up with a legally binding remedy. If successful this would affect about 15% of longline fishing.

Seabird Group letter Newsletter No 72 refers to the Eilat Shearwater (Sea Swallow Vol 44 p 60) which appeared to be larger than the small Shearwaters but smaller than the Manx *P.puffinus* and with quicker wing beats. Sightings have been reported near the Comoros Islands, Aldabra and Mozambique. The species has been named the Mascarene Shearwater, *P.atrodorsalis*, but it is agreed that much work needs to be done to resolve the current species / subspecies. This year's Beached Bird Survey in the UK produced average figures with the Channel area the worst. It is thought that rats have been eliminated from 3 of the islands of the Sept-Isles archipelago, it remains to see if Seabird re-colonisation will take place. The next Seabird Conference will take place at Glasgow in Nov 1996 and will include the nature of seabird dispersion, foraging, feeding and the impact of the fishing industry. **Newsletter No 73** reports that the Kittiwake, *L.tridactyla*, colonies being monitored in connection with the shortage of Sand Eels have been so heavily predated by Great Skuas, *S.skua* that the exercise is threatened. The shortage of fish to pirate has led to the Skuas developing a taste for Kittiwake to compensate. 1995 has been a bad year for oil pollution in Shetland. A visit to the Desertas is described.

The North Sea Bird Club's Fulmar No 79 has a report on a massive night movement of landbirds over the Gulf of Finland on 29 Apr 95. Seabird records elsewhere include Pomarine Skua, *S.pomarinus* off BRITOIL and VIKING in early May and one off BUCHAN A in late June. Off the east coast of Britain there were late summer sightings of Great Skua, Arctic, *S.parasiticus* and long-tailed, *S.longicaudus*. No 80 reports that Jun 95 was one of the best years for Skua though Manx Shearwaters, *P.puffinus* were scarce. Single Little Auks, *A.alle* were seen in June at VIKING and October at NINIAN N.

The 1993 Scottish Bird Report received this year, promises an article on identifying large yellow legged gulls in their next edition, in particular sorting the Mediterranean, *L.cachinnans* from the Baltic, *L.a.omissus*. The more interesting of the individual records have been published in earlier bulletins.

Scottish Bird Winter 95 includes a report on the birds of Handa Island showing 3 species gained and one lost, reductions appear to be due partly to rats and partly to a reduced food supply. A note on Yellow-legged Gulls suggests they may be given separate species status and detailed reports of all birds seen are called for. A pair of Roseate Terns, *S.dougalli* nested on May Island but no young survived.

Scottish Bird News No 39 reports on the 1995 breeding season. Fulmar *F.glacialis* reversed the trend at Eynhallow, Orkney where they have been decreasing and also increased in the Firth of Forth but the Loch Leven colony failed again. Auks appear to have had a good year with both Razorbill, *A.torda* and Guillemot, *U.aalge* doing well on May Island. Shags, *P.aristotelis* have begun to recover from the 1994 wreck but are still only a third of their original numbers. Kittiwakes were up in some areas but productivity was low. Terns were successful on May Island though numbers were poor in East Lothian and the Forth. **No 40** reports complaints from Aberdeen about gulls nesting on rooftops. Bill Bourne was severely taken to task when he light heartedly supported a suggestion that in view of the current shortage of gamebirds they should be put on the menu as an alternative. Although

there has been ample food for seabirds on the east coast between Kintyre and Mallaig, colonies have suffered severe predation probably from mink and otter. **News No 41** had nothing on seabirds.

London Bird Report for 1994 has its usual share of seabirds. Cormorants, *P.carbo* had 136 nests at Walthamstow. Herring Gulls, *L.argentatus* and Lesser Black backed, *L.fuscus* are both breeding on rooftops. Arctic, Great and Pomarine Skua, *S.pomarinus* were all sighted and a Sabine's Gull, *L.sabini* passed through in August. A Ring-billed Gull, *L.delawarensis* appeared for the fifth consecutive winter, at least 49 Mediterranean Gulls, *L.melanocephalus* wintered and up to 150 Yellow-legged Gulls were present in the autumn. A record 6 Iceland Gulls, *L.glaucoides* were seen but Glaucous, *L.hyperboreus* declined to a single bird. A Fulmar appeared at Tower Bridge on Feb 14.

Dutch Birding Vol 17 No 4 reports up to 2900 Mediterranean Gulls in the Pas de Calais in July. Several pairs of Little Gull, *L.minutus* attempted to breed in the SW Netherlands probably unsuccessfully. Unconfirmed sightings of seabirds include the first sighting of Bulwer's Petrel, *B.bulweri* in the Netherlands 21 Aug. Six Soft-plumaged Petrels, *F.madeira / mollis* were sighted off Ireland mostly in July. At least 100 Balearic Shearwaters, *P.mauretanicus* were recorded in NW Europe including 24 at Cley, Norfolk 10 Jul; 11 Porthgwarra, Cornwall 28 July and 10 Prawle Pt 27 Jul. Laughing Gulls, *L.atricilla* were seen at Langlu, Denmark and Suffolk in July, one bird spending 3 weeks at Dungeness. 50 Sabine's Gulls were seen off Les Sables D'Oleron, Vendee 19 Aug and a Bonaparte's Gull, *L.philadelphia* was reported at Hanningberg, Finland 3 Jul. Ringing recoveries showed a Lesser Black-backed reaching nearly 32 years and a Kittiwake 28½. A Ross's Gull, *R.rosea* was off Teeside 12-27 Jun and off the Farnes in Jul. An Ivory Gull was reported at Inverness 18-22 Jul. For the 12th year running a female Lesser Crested Tern, *S.bengalensis* visited the Farne Islands and one was seen off the Isle of White. Roseate Terns, *S.dougalli* increased at Rockabill, Ireland and one ringed there in 1991 appeared in a breeding colony at Bird Island, Massachusetts the first recorded transatlantic crossing. Unconfirmed reports from Vol No 5 include sightings of Black-browed Albatross, *D.melanophris* off Cape Clear, Cork 2Sep, Malin Hd, Donegal 11 Sept and 2 more off Norway. Soft-plumaged Petrels, *Pterodroma sp.* were seen off the Eastern end of the Azores and 2 Bulwer's were photographed in Portuguese waters mid-August. A White faced Storm-Petrel, *P.marina* was reported off Helgoland on 7 Oct and a Frigate bird, *Fregata sp.* off Holyhead 3 Sep. A pair of Mediterranean Black-headed Gulls attempted to nest amongst Kittiwakes on Helgoland. **No 6** has an interesting account of an apparent courtship between 2 Madeiran Storm-petrels, *O.castro* seen at sea. Unconfirmed reports include Denmark's first recorded Bulwer's Petrel on 29 Oct and Finland's first Corys Shearwater, *C.diomedea* on 8 Oct. A Double-crested Cormorant, *P.auritus* was present in Nov at Galway, Ireland. A Laughing Gull, *L.atricilla* was seen off Oland, Sweden and the 2nd Bonaparte's Gull, for Denmark was at Nordjylland 7 - 12 Oct. Slender-billed Gull, *L.genei*, the 3rd for Sweden was seen at Ekesakra Skane 8 Oct. A Yellow-legged Gull, *L.cachinnans* was seen at St Johns Newfoundland and lastly a Ross's Gull appeared off Ijmuiden, Holland in Nov. **Vol 18 No 1** has an article on House Crows, *C.splendens* at Rotterdam. This species is an inveterate stowaway and members should be alert for this species which has spread from India to the Middle East, East and South Africa (Durban). In the Azores and Madeira archipelagos Yellow-legged Gulls, usually stick close to the islands. On some occasions they have been seen following ships well out of sight of land and they are suspected of wandering to West Africa. Unconfirmed reports include Laughing Gulls at Nimmo's Pier, Galway 29 Jan and Sunderland 19 Feb. Sabine's were seen off Tenerife 4 Feb. Bonaparte's Gulls were reported from Cornwall, Cleveland and Norway. In this period (Dec-Feb) there were many sightings of the Ring-billed Gull off the coasts of Western Europe.

SULA Vol 9 No 2 deals mainly with the problems of identifying Divers, and with the spring migration of Black-throated Diver, *G.arctica*. A letter reports seeing a White-tailed Tropic bird, *P.lepturus* with a golden apricot wash over its plumage and asks if anyone else has seen anything

similar. Another reports a pure white Sooty-Shearwater, *P.griseus* found on a New York beach. **Vol 9 No 3** discusses the current 4 phase classification for the Fulmar, *F.glacialis*; Franeker suggests that this is difficult to apply in the field. He proposes 2, the majority are 'Light' with mainly white under wing, white head and neck or coloured which have grey axillaries under the wing and whose heads shade into the colour of the back. He goes on to cover a number of other points to look for. Using these criteria an observer at Svaalbard, Norway found that around 99%, of the Fulmars were 'coloured', the few 'light' birds caught were male and tended to be larger. A major sea-bird colony was investigated at Alkhornet, Svaalbard, it is reasonably easy to count and would be useful for monitoring Fulmar, Kittiwake and Brunnich's Guillemot, *U.lomvia*. **Vol 9 No 4** reviews the gulls and terns breeding in Holland. Mediterranean Gulls have risen to 75 pairs and Lesser Black-backed have also increased but other gulls have fallen from a peak 1979-85 probably due to predation by foxes. Little Gulls, *L.albifrons* and Black Terns, *C.niger* are also down. Cormorants, *P.carbo* have colonised several new sites on the Dutch coastal islands. A special issue considers the value of counting oiled birds on shore. When taken as a percentage of the total number of dead birds found it can be of value as an indication of the level of pollution.

ALAUDA Vol 63 No3 has a short article on the increase of Cormorant, *P.carbo* in Europe, Audouin's Gull, *L.audouini* were found breeding on a breakwater near Ajaccio, Corsica, the first record for an artificial site; the Algerian population is discussed. **Vol 63 No 4** has an article on Storm-petrel, *H.pelagicus* on the Cantabrian coastal islands. Letters mention Laughing Gull *L.atricilla* in Senegal Jan 95 and Common Terns, *L.hirundo* wintering off Cap Breton in 1992.

SEE VOGEL Dec 95 has a wide range of articles from the effects of offshore wind farms to the need for speed limits in marine national parks. A review of Beached Bird Surveys Oct 92 to Dec '94 found 35% oiled of which 48% were Guillemots and the bulk of the remainder Razorbill, Kittiwake, Fulmars, Eider and Common Scoter, *M.nigra*. There was a steady increase of oil spills over the period.

OSME Bulletin No 35 includes unconfirmed records of the first Herring Gull for Cyprus and Shags at Alexandria in Feb. Pomarine and Long-tailed Skua plus a Common Gull, *L.canus* were all seen at Port Said. A Sabine's Gull seen west of Alexandria was the third sighting for Egypt. In Israel a Great Shearwater, *P.gravis* was seen at Tel Aviv Jan, Sooty Shearwater were reported off Aquaba, Jordan 19 Apr and Fujayrah 11 May, the latter the first sighting for the UAR. Another first was the sighting of a Tropic bird, *Phaethon sp.* at Aquaba 14 Apr.

OMAN Bird News No 18, in a list of confirmed sightings for 1994, lists Wedge-tailed Shearwater, *P.pacificus* and a Sooty Tern, *S.fuscus*. In 1995 over 45 Red-billed Tropic birds, *P.aethereus* and several Brown Boobies, *S.leucogaster* were seen.

Marine Ornithology Vol 22 No 2 reveals the depth of work being carried out in the Southern Hemisphere. A colony of Caspian Terns, *S.caspia* failed when a 9°C drop in temperature killed off the fish in a nearby lake. An article on Cetacean / seabird association noted that most birds with the exception of Light-Mantled Albatross, *P.palpebrata*, Antarctic Fulmar, *F.glacialis* and Blue Petrel, *H.caerulea*, had been seen flying near whales or actively feeding round them. Examination of Pintado Petrel, *D.capensis* found they eat a higher proportion of fish than previously recorded. The feeding of Magellanic, *S.magellanicus* and Gentoo Penguin, *P.papua* are discussed. Actions taken to mitigate the effects of longline fishing are detailed and most of the remainder covers the minutes of the Working Group on Bird Biology Sub-Committee A Scientific Committee of Antarctic Research. The need for an international procedure on the use of implantable transponders and for blood sampling are mentioned in **Vol 23 No1**. A study of the effects of Black Rat predation on Shearwaters suggests that with a high

rat population on small islands is a major threat to seabirds they may be able to coexist on medium to large islands. A survey of Potter Peninsular, King George Island, Antarctica reveals that the Kelp Gull, *L.dominicanus* has established itself recently and that there is a possibility that the Black-bellied Storm Petrel, *F.tropica* is breeding among the Wilson's, *O.oceanicus*, other species are generally unchanged. The eradication of cats on Marion Island has led to a significant increase in breeding success for Great winged, *P.macroptera* and Blue Petrel, *H.caerulea*, but White chinned, *P.aequinoctialis* remains low probably to Skua predation. Other articles include studies of breeding birds on the Argentine side of the Beagle Channel, in the Ahlmannryggen, Western Dronning Maud Land and Duthoit Pt. Nelson Island, South Shetlands. There is also a note on oiled Penguins in South Georgia the oil is thought to have come from fishing operations.

Australasian Seabird Group Newsletter No 29 contains an updated version of the Southern Ocean Albatross Atlas by Lance Tickell (The earlier version was published in Sea Swallow Vol 42). Lincoln University, New Zealand have tracked 3 Westland Petrels, *P.westlandica* which travelled up to 300 km from the breeding colony during foraging. **No 27** has a record of a Black-headed Gull at Honiara, Guada canal Island, the second for this area. An article on the Blue Noddy suggests that the various forms may be reduced to 2 forms *P.albivitta* and *P.cerulea*. Mr J Morlan gives a detailed account of sighting a Light-mantled Albatross off California the first for the northern Pacific. There is a summary of a cruise in the area of Bounty and Campbell Islands, a Sooty Albatross seen for the first time in New Zealand waters is being put up for ratification by the NZ Ornithological Society, Papers presented at the 1993 RAOU Congress are outlined. **Newsletter No 28** has a review of Albatross banding data from which the effects of longline fishing are deduced. It is suspected that Campbell Island Black browed, *D.melanophris* may be at grave risk. Future strategy to examine the problem is proposed. Notes on the breeding of seabirds on Heard and Macquarie Islands are provided as part of a case for considering these islands when looking at Antarctic conservation.

Hong Kong Bird Report for 1994 has a major article on the identification of large white-headed Gulls in the area which concludes that the commonest form of Herring Gull is *L.a.taimyrensis*, followed by *L.a.vegae*, a further 5 forms have occurred. Reported sightings include an all time high for Saunderson's Gull, *L.saundersi* of 172 in Feb 94. An Ancient Murrelet, *S.antiquus* was seen off Cape D'Aguilar 28 Mar. A new spring high of 80 Whiskered Terns, *C.hybridus* occurred at Mai Po 6 May. Aleutian Terns, *S.aleutica* were seen off Cape D'Aguilar in Aug / Sept and one in Mirs Bay 6 Oct.

Pacific Seabirds Vol 22 No2 rejoices in the success of their EXXON-VALDEZ advisory team which succeeded in getting some of the award spent on buying several islands as reserves. A Mexican committee has been set up to co-ordinate projects (all listed) and money is forthcoming for their seabird database. Amongst the numerous other items a report from Midway states that the level of organochlorines in Albatross is getting dangerously high; the source is believed to be in Asia. In British Columbia closer working between fishery biologists and oceanographers is advocated. A big wreck of Common Murres, *U.aalge* happened in California in the latter part of summer 95, the cause is not yet known. A Seabird By-catch Working Group is being set up to study seabird mortality in fishing activities. Using Internet technology international groups will be set up to study the problem, collect data and make recommendations. The initial Network E mail address is FISH 11 FR @ AOL.COM. Initial studies will be on the Marbled Murrelet, *B.marmoratus*.

National Geographic Jan 96 has a short item which answers an old question, where do the Spectacled Eider, *S.spectabilis* go in winter? US Fish and Wildlife Service biologists fitted 22 with transmitters and one signal sent them to an icehole in the Bering Sea which was packed with Eider.

LANDLUBBERS CORNER

BTO NEWS No 201 reports the first breeding of a Yellow-legged Gull in UK and an increase in nesting Mediterranean Gulls. Current enquiries include the routine breeding birds survey, common bird census and garden survey (Registration £10), Heronry census, Barn Owl nesting, Setaside enquiry (Mornings between Apr and Jul in 96 and 97), a pilot study on Skylarks, the Waterways bird survey plus wader and wildfowl counts. Anyone who is interested in any of these should contact the BTO, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 2PU saying you are RNBWS.

Other requests:

Sedge Warblers in rape. Anyone with information on Sedge Warbler or any other species using rape crops is asked to contact K Bowey, 3 Alloy Terrace, Highfield, Rowland's Gill NE39 2ND
Pesticides. Any corpses of Peregrine, Sparrowhawk, Kestrel, Merlin, Long eared Owl, Barn Owl, Heron, Kingfisher or Great Crested Grebe should be put in a sealed plastic bag inside a box or padded envelope and sent to Miss L Dale, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, Monk's Wood, Abbots Ripton, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE17 2LS. Postage will be refunded.

BTO NEWS No 202 notes that the winter distribution of Yellow-legged Gulls in NE Spain is influenced by rubbish tips.

BIRDWATCH UK BIRD RACE 18 May 96

For a team you need a captain, scorer and 2 members. Entries are £10 a team un-sponsored and £75 if sponsored by an organisation. Entry forms are held by Hon Sec. The aim is to record by sight or sound as many species as possible in any single county between midnight and midnight on the 18 May. Funds are raised by getting sponsorship for each species recorded and this year will go to reed bed conservation. There will be a prize for winning teams in a number of classes, e.g. private or public transport, further details should be available from Hon Sec nearer the time.

RECENT RINGING

Sooty Gulls, *L.hemprichi*. 274 chicks were ringed on Qarnein in 1955. Rings were marked POB4553 Abu Dhabi. Any sightings to M. Gallagher (Address inside back page of Sea Swallow)

Colour ringed Gulls. Vorne Bird Observatory has ringed the following using engraved PVC rings: Lesser Black backed, *L.fuscus* and Yellow-legged, *L.cachinnans*, single white, green or orange, or one on each leg. White may look yellowish and orange look rusty.

Common Gull *L.canus*. Single green or black.

Great Black backed, *L.marinus*. Single green.

In association:

Yellow legged, *L.omissus*. Single Black (Latvia)

Yellow legged *L.cachinnans*. Single red. (Poland, Rumania and Ukraine)

Lesser Black backed, *L.f.heuglini* and Taimyr Gulls, *L.taimyrensis*. Single red or white (Russia and Siberia).

Lesser Black Backed, *L.fuscus*. Single blue or orange. (Faeroes, Iceland, Norway and Spain).

Any sightings to Norman Van Swelm, Ornithogisch Station Vorne, PO Box 305, 3233 ZG Ostvoorne, The Netherlands.

JOUANIN's PETREL, *B.fallax*

Anyone finding a Jouanin's alive or dead is requested to remove any feather lice, put them in a well sealed plastic tube of spirit, pack it well, add the details of finding; and send to B. Zonfrillo, Applied Ornithology Unit, Zoology Building, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

SEABIRD MONITORING BOOK. Designed for field workers it has detailed instructions for each species in Britain and Ireland. Now available from the Natural History Book Service, 2-3 Wills Rd, Totnes, TQ9 5XN.

STATISTICS FOR ORNITHOLOGISTS. A revised edition is now available £12.90 incl p&p from the sales department, The Nunnery, Thetford.

BIRDLOG 96. IBM COMPATIBLE PC FREWARE

Jonathan BARNES is releasing his Birdlog Software as Freeware to encourage wider pooling of Bird records. The programme (compiled using MS Q Basic) is designed for easy adaptation to other operating systems and environments. It will run on any IBM PC compatible or emulation supporting the Q Basic interpreter. Comprehensive record management and report generation is included. A clear comprehensive manual is included on disc. Birdlog may be fully customised. For a full working copy write enclosing a cheque for £3.50, made payable to J R BARNES to:
J R BARNES, The Holt, Newton Valance, near ALTON, Hants GU34 3RB.

RECORDS RECEIVED

Since the publication of Bulletin 133 the following Seabird and Landbird Reports have been received, together with numerous letters. These are gratefully acknowledged, and will be summarised in the next annual report, Sea Swallow 45.

SEABIRDS

Mrs Jean Abbott MV HORNCLOUD Oct 95, Guatemala to Dover, (1)

Capt N.G. Cheshire MN, RV FRANKLIN - Four voyages: Apr 95 Fremantle - Christmas I - Dampier (1 chart, 4 data sheets + 22 daily report sheets; Jun 95 Fremantle - Abrolhos - Fremantle (1 chart, 2 daily report sheets); Jun / Jul 95 (1 chart, 1 data sheet, 19 daily report sheets); Sep - Oct 95 (1 chart, 2 summary sheets, 5 data sheets, 30 daily report sheets)

Radio Officer M G FINN MN, MV FEZZANO. 20 Oct - 29 Dec 95, Korea-Thailand - Balbao - Houston Texas (7 census sheets).

Stephen Hales. Fishing boat NEW CHALLENGER off Goa, India. 6-9 Dec 95 (2).

CPO G A Johnson MN, SS MDV UNCLE JOHN Jun Oct 95, North Sea / N Atlantic (1).

LA (Metoc) Chris Patrick RN, HMS ENDURANCE, Deployment to South Atlantic / Antarctic 18 Jan-31 Dec 94 (14 report forms + summaries)

Mrs David Pentreath, YACHT SALVATION JANE, 30 Aug- 9 Oct 95, Turkish Ports to Bodrum, Med / Central Aegean (2).

LH (Comms) A H Todd RFA, RFA OAKLEAF, 29 Aug-18 Dec 95, Caribbean and W. Atlantic (5).

CPO (Comms) G H Walton RFA, RFA GOLD ROVER, 14 Sep - 23 Nov 95 Falklands and South Atlantic (20 report and census sheets).

LANDBIRDS

Mrs Jean Abbott, MV HORNCLOUD, 16 Oct 95, Caribbean (1).

LSA M A J Cutts RN, HMS HERMIONE, Oct 91 - Mar 92, Med, Red Sea, Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf (3).

CPO G A Johnson MN, 13 Mar-18 Apr 95, Baltic/Kiel canal (1). SS MDV UNCLE JOHN 8 Jun-25 Oct 95, North Sea (1). OPV SEILLERN 1-6 Dec 95 (1).

LH (Comms) A H Todd RFA, RFA OAKLEAF, 31 Aug 95- 15 Jan 96, Caribbean and W. Atlantic (7).

CPO (Comms) G H Walton RFA, RFA FORT GEORGE.

Photographs for the Golden Jubilee Edition of Sea Swallow.

It is hoped to include a section of the best colour photographs for this Edition. The Editor already holds a number of suitable photographs previously published only in black and white, but if any Members are holding additional colour photographs worthy of consideration, please contact Michael Casement as soon as possible.

AMENDMENTS TO LIST OF MEMBERS DATED 1992.

New Members

Carr, A, POWRN, 5 Grenadier Close, LOCKS HEATH, Hants S031 6UF.

Cuthbert, L S, Miss, 364 Powerscourt Rd, Copnor, PORTSMOUTH, P02 7JS.

Hirst, S, LWtr RN, Thornbank Cottages, Shore Rd, KILCREGGAN, G84 OHN (HMS SUTHERLAND).

Peach, C C Esq., Old School House, Curtisknowle, TOTNES, Devon TQ9 7JU.

Snell, A J, CPO RN, 18 Cunningham Rd, Tamerton Foliot, PLYMOUTH PL5 4PS (HMS SUTHERLAND)

Woods, P A Capt MN, 47 Ballantrae Rd, Calderstones, LIVERPOOL. Merseyside, L18 6JG.

Change of Address

Barritt, M K Esq., 1 Boyle Close, UXBRIDGE, Middlesex, UB10 OXB.

Colston, P R, Mr, 3 Lammas Rd, CHEDINGTON, Bucks LU7 ORY.

Winter, M Esq., 5 Beechwood Rd, GOSPORT, Hants PO12 2EP.

Resigned

Drummond, J R G.

Hunt, N.

Fox, M J.

Marden, R V.

AMENDMENTS TO LIST OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS DATED 1993

Change of Address

Boswall, J, Mr, Senior Lecturer biological Imaging, Derby University, Green Lane, DERBY DE1 1RX

Gale, E S, Mrs, Policy and Requirements Division, SHAPE HQ, BFPO 26

Hales, S, Mr, 17 Weatherbury Way, DORCHESTER, Dorset DT1 2ED

Raby, R, Mr, C/O 21 Chanctonbury Way, SUTTON ON SEA, Lincs LN12 2JR.