

NEWSLETTER 83

SEPTEMBER 1999



BIG WAVES IN SHETLAND

Earlier this year I published a note in *Atlantic Seabirds* on the effects of a spring gale in May 1997 on breeding guillemots at Sumburgh Head in Shetland. When the draft was returned, I was asked to consider commenting on whether such storms that wash away guillemot eggs and nests of other species might be increasing in frequency, and whether there is a link with global warming. At the time I couldn't say anything meaningful, believing the "freak" wave I saw in 1997 to be a one-off event.

The events of this spring have changed my view. Because of time constraints, I only monitor guillemot breeding success in a single plot on the east side of Sumburgh Head. Just before guillemots laid this year, I watched a wave sweep over the plot on 21st April with just as much ferocity as in 1997, while another easterly gale on 10th May was seen to take out several hundred incubating guillemots and several shag nests in adjacent areas on the east side of the Head. On the morning of 22nd May I checked the plot with difficulty in a south-west 6-7 wind, but by afternoon the wind had increased considerably (gusting to 62 knots at Lerwick

Observatory) and I returned to the Head to witness a devastating scene.

A massive south-westerly swell had built up and waves were crashing 50-70 feet up the cliffs on the west side of the Head, while the air was thick with fulmars, shags, kittiwakes and (especially) guillemots. It was difficult to stand still in the wind, but looking south you could spot the big rollers, usually two successive waves, that were going to do the worst damage. For those who know the place, the large stack on the west side of the Head which normally holds c.3,500 guillemots was being almost completely inundated every few minutes - after each wave swept over the stack, hundreds of guillemots struggled into the air as the water drained off, and at times some of the shag nests we monitor must have been under 40 feet of water. The next day I expected the tideline on Sumburgh beach to be littered with seabird corpses, but this wasn't the case. Instead, about 1,000 guillemots were back on the stack and perhaps 10,000 were on the sea offshore on the west side of the Head. In 22 years I have never seen such a sea during the seabird breeding season, and I later learned that on Fair Isle a huge

piece of driftwood that had remained undisturbed for many years was shifted during this gale.

It was only in the shag and kittiwake breeding success plots that we could assess the actual damage the storm had done on the west side of Sumburgh Head. Of 54 shag nests that were presumed incubating on 19th May, 31 (57 %) had disappeared. Of these, 24 (77 %) were rebuilt and eggs relaid, and eventually fledged a total of 19 young (success 0.79). Kittiwakes fared better with only 12 out of the 111 nests (11 %) presumed being incubated on 19th May disappearing, although birds were still nest-building and laying at the time and the storm undoubtedly delayed this. Judging by the number of chicks remaining by the 3rd week of July, a proportion of guillemots relaid although I would doubt whether more than 10 % of those that lost their first eggs on 22nd May managed to rear a chick to near-fledging age, and great black-backed gulls took a high proportion of chicks during the second half of July.

These spring gales will have had a widespread effect on the Seabird 2000 counts of certain species this year, particularly shags, and despite delaying surveys of western coasts until mid-June to allow rebuilding, the 1999 counts of shags were low along almost all stretches of coast, both on the east and west sides of Shetland. Finney *et al* (Journal of Avian Biology 30: 23-30. 1999) recently reported on increased foraging costs of adult guillemots and reduced energy intake of chicks during stormy weather, and noted that one of the earliest and most dramatic effects of predicted climate change is to be an increase in storms at mid to high latitudes in the northern hemisphere.

Last year I resorted to roping myself and telescope to a fence during the daily checks of the guillemot success plot, and last week some of the unfledged shag chicks from eggs relaid after the 22nd May storm were washed away by the first big seas of autumn. Apart from any effects of increased storminess on seabird populations and their breeding success, we should also consider the effect on fieldworkers and be ever vigilant about safety on cliffs and during surveys in small boats.

Martin Heubeck,
AURIS/SOTEAG, Sumburgh Head
Lighthouse, Virkie, Shetland ZE3 9JN,
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EDITORIAL

This will be my last issue as editor of the Seabird Group Newsletter. I have been editor since 1984 and thus have been responsible for the production of more than half of the issues ever produced. I think however that it is time to let someone else develop the Newsletter (and possibly take it further into the electronic age). I am pleased to say that Chris Wernham has agreed to put herself forward to take up this task, and will do so if elected at the AGM (see later). I wish her the best of luck with the job that I have enjoyed for more than a third of my life!

I shall take this opportunity to put a few thoughts on paper about the Seabird Group. I am still concerned at our relatively small size. If we want to push forward the bounds of seabird knowledge and conservation, we need to grow and attract new members. You will find a membership leaflet in with this issue - please use it to sign up a new member.

I am very pleased with the alliance with the Dutch Seabird Group to produce *Atlantic Seabirds*. Seabirds have no respect for international boundaries and neither should those who study them. I have long felt that a more international group is the way forward on this side of the Atlantic. Many decisions that affect seabird conservation are taken at the international, or even global level, most notably those on fisheries and shipping. If we are to influence at these levels, we too must aim to work at these levels. The work of BirdLife International at the global level is particularly important. The Seabird Group should certainly maintain its associate membership of BirdLife. The first Seabird Group conference to

be held outside UK is also a good step forward.

The Executive Committee needs new members if these ideas are to be pushed forward. If you are interested in these or other initiatives, why not put yourself forward for election?

I wish my successor and the Group the best of luck and thank you for allowing me to edit this Newsletter.

Mark Tasker

SEABIRD GROUP CONFERENCE, WILHELMSHAVEN, MARCH 2000

Arrangements for the 7th conference of the Seabird Group are now well in hand. Please see the 2nd announcement and booking form attached to the back of this Newsletter.

SEABIRD GROUP LEAFLET

You should find enclosed with this newsletter a new leaflet on the Seabird Group, and a membership application form. Please do not use this form to renew your membership, rather talk to friends or colleagues and persuade them to join. Further leaflets and forms are available from the Membership Secretary: Sheila Russell, Clober Farm, Craigton Road, Milgavie, Glasgow, G62 7HW

SEABIRD GROUP AGM

At the suggestion of several of our members at previous AGM's, this winter's AGM will be held within the Scottish Ringer's Conference meeting at the Fife Arms Hotel in Braemar at 15.00 on Saturday 13 November. For

information on the Scottish Ringer's Conference, and accommodation, please contact: Shirley Miller, Tay Ringing Group, Edenvale, 1 Lydoc Cottages, Dairsie, Fife KY15 4RN (Tel: 01334 870988).

We hope that this move to north of the border will encourage a few more members to come to the AGM.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POSTS

Three posts become available at this AGM - the Executive Committee would be very pleased if you were interested in serving. Please contact John Uttley or a member of the Executive Committee if you are interested (see last issue for addresses).

ENCOURAGING RESULTS FOR OILED SEABIRD REHABILITATION

Much has been written recently concerning the value of saving oiled birds, guillemots in particular. It has been suggested that the post release survival for rehabilitated guillemots is very low (Sharp 1996) and BTO Research Report No. 186.

Although the South Devon Seabird Trust (SDST) has only been ringing guillemots for five years, evidence is already emerging which is most encouraging, indicating that good results can be achieved. To date, there have been eleven ringing recoveries for the first 300 birds ringed, covering the period 1993 to 1996 (inclusive).

Three returns were for birds found close to the release site within ten days of release and considered to be "failed" releases. Seven ringing returns fall between ten days and a

year. Two of these, one released in March 1993, found in Shetland on 9 February 1994 (324 days, 1089 km) and the second released in May 1993 and found in Norway on 11 March 1994 (307 days, 1134 km) can both be reasonably linked with the wreck of seabirds in early 1994, since they were both found in this period. A third bird was found after 209 days in Holland.

The most recent ringing return for a rehabilitated oiled guillemot concerns a bird released in June 1996 and seen on in a breeding group on Skomer in summer 1998 (751 days).

It should not be automatically concluded that rehabilitated birds found within a year of release have perished because they were once oiled. When released, they a subject to the same risks as other seabirds. For example, in following up a ringing return for a great crested grebe (53 days after release), it was found to have been killed by a speedboat. In another example a victim of the Sea Empress oil spill was released in South Devon and found dead at Land's End ten days later. This area is well known for casualties of drowning in fishing nets - the bird may have died from this cause. Thirdly, a guillemot released by SDST on 10 February 1998 in Devon was rescued, with fresh oil on it in Dorset on 5 April 1998. Fortunately this bird survived and was able to be treated a second time. If it had been found dead, it would probably have been reported as "found dead", and classified, due to its proximity to the point of release, as being "failed rehabilitated bird".

This last bird appears to have flourished in the brief period between release and re-rescue. It weighed 900 grams at first release, and when rescued for the second time 853

grams. Upon its second release (one month after rescue) it was again 900 grams.

Most of the birds SDST deals with are victims of “chronic” pollution and on average 80% are returned to the wild. It is difficult to judge from the outset which birds are most likely to survive the rehabilitation process. Birds which are heavily oiled appear to have just as good prospects as those which are lightly oiled (if not better) because they may not have preened, and ingested, as much oil as those which appear lightly oiled.

It is possible that some rehabilitators only address the problem of the birds’ contaminated plumage, and not problems caused by ingested oil. Victims of oil pollution obviously need time to recover fully. Some rehabilitators may be releasing birds before they are fully fit. This could be for a variety of reasons:

1) Belief that keeping birds for more than a few days might be detrimental. We do not believe that this view is borne out by results. BTO report 186 cites a guillemot which survived for 8 years after release. It had been kept for several months before release while it underwent delayed moult. Similarly for the longer-surviving SDST birds mentioned above: the Norwegian recovered bird was held for six weeks, that found in Shetland for two months and that seen on Skomer for two months.

2) Damage to feet, legs and keel from being kept on concrete. Birds can be kept for long periods on soft material, for instance an inch of foam rubber with washable/removable covering.

3) Wasting of muscles from lack of exercise (flight). The birds will take all

the exercise they need to keep fit, if provided with sufficient aviary space and pools during the period in captivity.

4) Stress. Human contact must be kept to a minimum.

The work of SDST is still in its infancy, but I believe that the ringing returns already to hand indicate that good results can be obtained. We agree that all rehabilitated birds should be ringed, as it is probably only through ringing returns that a picture will be built up of the fate of these birds. As BTO Report 186 notes “there appear to be difficulties of surveying many colonies for marked birds.

Jean Bradford
South Devon Seabird Trust

EXPEDITION FIELD TECHNIQUES: BIRD SURVEYS by Colin Bibby, Martin Jones and Stuart Marsden

The Seabird Group has received a copy of this recent book published by the Expedition Advisory Centre with Birdlife International. It is designed to ensure that those planning expeditions use the best available scientific techniques and make best use of both their time and of any results. However, despite the fact that many expeditions go to islands holding seabirds, our favourite group hardly gets a look in, even under the heading of “problem species and difficult habitats: bird colonies. Thus, I cannot recommend this book for seabird workers, with the exception of the chapter on “Maximising the impact of the work”, which gives admirable advice applicable to all who are writing reports and summarising their work.

The booklet can be obtained for £10 from the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR (email: eac@rgs.org)

Mark Tasker

From *SULA* Vol 12, no. 4

Just when you thought *Sula* had completed publication, the final edition is delivered. This special issue is entitled "Booming gulls in the Netherlands and Belgium in the 20th century". It was edited by Arie Spaans, and is a review of gull population growth on the Low Countries over the past century. As might be expected, it is an excellent review, and worth acquiring by anyone interested in gulls. In The Netherlands, gull populations have increased from a few tens of thousands of pairs at the start of the 20th century to almost 400,000 in the mid 1980s followed by a decline to 250,000 pairs. A similar trend occurred in Belgium. New species have arrived: there are now nearly 700 pairs of Mediterranean gulls breeding in the two countries; prior to 1970, the species was rare in both. Little gulls have been breeding since the 1940s in variable, but relatively small, numbers. Black-headed gulls have been the commonest breeding species throughout the century with the Delta area and the Wadden Sea holding most birds. Relatively small numbers of common gulls have nested throughout the century. Both black-headed and common gull numbers have declined since the hunting of red foxes stopped in coastal areas.

Lesser black-backed gulls first bred in 1926 in The Netherlands and increased to over 50,000 pairs nowadays. Roof nesting has been

recorded in 25 localities. Herring gulls also increased spectacularly, but have declined both recently, and during periods of persecution (the second world war) and pollution (1960s). Yellow-legged gulls were found first in 1985, and has hybridised both with herring and lesser black-backed gulls. No pure pairs have been seen with certainty. Surprisingly (for UK readers), the most recent arrival is great black-backed gull with about a dozen pairs breeding in 1998, following first nesting in 1993. The issue forms a fitting end to the excellent run of publication of *Sula*. Kees Camphuysen and his editorial assistants over the years must be warmly congratulated for their efforts over the years. *Atlantic Seabirds* has two very impressive parents.

From *MEDMARAVIS NEWS* No 22

The sixth Mediterranean seabird symposium will be held at Benidorm (Alicante, Spain) between 11-15 October 2000. The subjects of the symposium will include Mediterranean seabird populations, their relation with fisheries and marine productivity and current research on other marine species. For further information contact: Dr Eduardo Minguez, Técnico "LIFE-ISLAS", Consellería de Medio Ambiente de la Generalitat Valenciana, Delegación Territorial de Alicante, C/Churruca 29, 03071 Alicante, Spain. Email: eduardo.minguez@cma.m400.gva.es

Medmaravis also has a home page. Visit it at www2.arnes.si/guest/kpornitold1/Medmaravis/enter.htm

The latest maricultural activity in the Mediterranean is tuna penning. Bluefin tuna are caught by purse seine

and then transported to be released in a pen for growing. Two developments are proposed, one off Gozo, and the other off Malta. The latter site is immediately under the Ta' Cenc cliffs. These cliffs hold Malta's largest Cory's shearwater colony as well as smaller colonies of Levantine shearwaters and storm petrels. Birdlife Malta has made several presentations in an effort to prevent planning licences being issued for the development.

A European Union-funded project has been started to improve the conservation status of the Balearic shearwater. The plan includes the following actions: surveillance of the colonies to prevent human exploitation (illegal hunting persists in some areas); control of rats and other introduced mammalian predators; installation of artificial nests in areas where there is undue competition with other species for nest sites and encouragement of re-colonisation of areas by use of artificial attractants. In parallel with this monitoring of numbers and vital life parameters will be undertaken at their colonies. Satellite tracking will be used to establish moulting and feeding grounds. There will then be a study of diet and energy requirements during the breeding season along with assessment of food availability at feeding grounds. Public education will include the creation of a specialised thematic centre in Formentera. The two year project has a budget of nearly 3 million Euros. Further information is available at www.life-puffinus.org/

From *SEEVÖGEL* Vol. 20 No 2

Oil pollution continues to be a killer in the German Bight. David Fleet and colleagues describe the results of beached bird surveys on the German

North Sea coast from 1 July 1994 to 30 June 1998. In this time, 24,246 individuals of 128 species were found dead, with variable proportions oiled. Over percentage oiling rates (a good index of pollution) was higher in the four year period under review than they were in years around 1989/90. The commonest birds found dead were herring gull, oystercatcher, guillemot and black-headed gull. Razorbills and guillemots had the highest oiling rates.

Stefan Garthe and colleagues review the diets of lesser black-backed, herring and common gulls as shown in pellets collected on Amrum, Schleswig-Holstein in 1994 and 1995. Lesser black-backed gulls fed mainly on fish (from the open sea, at fishing vessels and on tidal flats), crustaceans and bivalves. Herring gulls fed on bivalves and crustaceans while common gulls fed on all the above as well as terrestrial foods.

SEABIRDS ON THE CHANNEL DOORMAT

This excellent title is the sole paper in *Le Gerfaut* Vol 86. Written by Henk Offringa and colleagues, it is a description of seabird usage of the waters of Belgium and adjacent areas of the southern North Sea and English Channel (Manche). Standard seabirds at sea techniques were used, and data from the European Seabirds at Sea database analysed alongside those collected by the authors. Belgian waters were surveyed well; those of the greater Thames estuary have hardly been looked at. The authors note that this area may be very important for a variety of seabirds including red-throated divers and great crested grebes.

Detailed seasonal distribution maps are presented for each species, along with good comprehensive, well-referenced text. Numbers of birds present are estimated. The reference section will be of great use to anyone interested in the seabirds of the area.

Copies of this issue may be available; apply to Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique, rue Vautier 29, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium.

NEWS FROM BIRDLIFE

The only item of direct relevance from BirdLife Update of June 1999 is the appointment of Alan Burger (of British Columbia) for a year on Cousin Island developing a new seabird monitoring handbook for the Seychelles. He took a copy of the UK seabird monitoring handbook with him, so it will be interesting to see how its tropical cousin develops.

From *WORLD BIRDWATCH* Vol 21 No 2

This issue reports the implementation of the global action plan to reduce the impact of long-lining on seabirds (see *SGN* 82). Elsewhere port developments at Mejillones Bay, Chile threaten large concentrations of grey gulls, elegant terns and shorebirds. A Peruvian tern colony is present nearby in sand-dunes and offshore there are important feeding areas for several seabirds. The local BirdLife partner is expressing concern. Good news from Japan, where the short-tailed albatross population on Torishima in the Izu islands now exceeds 1000 birds - the highest the population has been since rediscovery of the colony in 1951.

A survey of wetlands in south-east Kazakhstan is reported in depth. Only 132 pairs of Dalmatian pelican were found. In the mid-1980s, over 800 pairs were known at these sites. In addition, no white pelicans were seen. The reasons behind these declines are not known, but disturbance by fishermen may be significant. In addition, the deltas may be drying out due to past hydro-electric dam construction, leading to an expansion of grazing land into former reedbeds. A colony of 1,200 pairs of relict gulls was found to be deserted. Only two pairs of over 300 great black-headed gulls had young. Foxes may have been to blame.

From *WWF ARCTIC BULLETIN* No 2.99

This issue focuses on the concept of ecoregions. This concept may be new to some readers; essentially the planet has been divided up into 237 regions representing every major habitat type on the planet. In the Arctic, the Bering sea and Barent's Seas are both representatives of polar and sub-polar marine ecosystems, and will provide a focus for future broad conservation action.

News is also given of the impending development of the Northstar oil field offshore of northern Alaska. Offshore developments in this area, with subsea pipelines have not been attempted before, and there is concern that any oil spill during the frozen parts of the year will be almost impossible to control.

TRESHNISH ISLES AUK RINGING GROUP REPORT FOR 1988

The Group visited the Treshnish Isles in late June/early July 1998. The islands are important for storm petrels, and a total of 571 was caught without the use of tape lure in three 18m nets. Most birds were in breeding condition. The first great skua nest on the islands was found - confirming its continued spread in the west of Scotland. All surface nesting seabirds were censused. To contact the group, please write to Simon Walker, Snipe Cottage, Hamsterley, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham, DL13 3NX.

OPERATION SEAFARER RECORDS

The following were deposited with the Librarian at the Natural History Museum, Tring on 22 March 1999, to be passed on for incorporation in the Fisher Archive in the General Library at South Kensington as arranged with Mrs Carol Grice on 16 March 1999.

1. A sheaf of seven envelopes containing correspondence relating to England, Wales, Scotland, Shetland and Orkney, the Outer Hebrides, Ireland and the North Atlantic during James Fisher's fulmar census of 1959.
2. An envelope containing James Fisher's correspondence with the Seabird Group, 1967-70, including papers as Chairman of its Census Committee. Also his obituaries and the opening pages, reviews and reports of progress of the resulting book: *The seabirds of Britain and Ireland* (Collins, 1974).
3. Six folders containing the top copies of the summaries by David Saunders of the results for each species for Operation Seafarer, 1968-70, namely: 1. fulmar; 2. petrels, Manx

shearwater, gannet, cormorant, shag; 3. skuas and terns; 4. gulls, excluding, 5. herring and common gulls; 6. auks.

4. Sixteen files in alphabetical order of associated correspondence first by Raymond O'Connor for the pilot survey in 1967 and then by David Saunders for Operation Seafarer in 1968-70.

5. An envelope of papers relating to the wreck of the Torrey Canyon in 1967.

WRP Bourne

Editors note: The Executive Committee is presently investigating the ownership of some of these items and assessing ease of access to any that belong to the Seabird Group.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir

It seems surprising that in addition to accepting a questionable classification of the albatrosses (*Birding World* 12: 123-124) among other species Birdlife International cannot even get its rare bird names right (*SBG Newsletter* 82: 10-11). Thus the "new" scientific name of Steller's (or the short-tailed) albatross should be *Phoebastria* (not *Thalassarcha*) *albatrus*, while *Pterodroma defilippiana* was called after De Filippi, not Defilippe.

Yours faithfully

WRP Bourne

2nd Announcement/Booking Form

7th Seabird Group Conference 2000

17 – 19 March 2000 in Wilhelmshaven, Germany

The Seabird Group will start the new millennium by holding its 7th conference in Wilhelmshaven, north-west Germany, between 17-19 March 2000. This will coincide with the EXPO by the Sea, the maritime section of the EXPO 2000 in Hannover. The conference will be our first outside UK, and will be hosted by Institut für Vogelforschung "Vogelwarte Helgoland", one of the oldest and largest ornithological research institutions in the world with a major focus of seabird research. We hope that the location will enable many continental seabird biologists to join us, to make this a truly international meeting, and a suitable way to welcome the new millennium.

The meeting will be held in the STADTHALLE of Wilhelmshaven, where also catering and drinks will be served.

The main topic for the meeting will be "SEABIRD REPRODUCTION", but as in previous years, offers of papers on other aspects of the biology of marine birds will be most welcome.

You can expect an interesting programme, comprising key note talks of two invited scientists leading in their fields, many informative orals, and posters will be displayed throughout the conference and presented in a special session.

The conference language is English.

Participation

The symposium is open to all ornithologists, scientists, and students who are interested in seabird ecology and who announce their participation in advance.

Important Dates

Submission of contributions

(titles and abstracts): 15 November 1999

Registration: 31 December 1999

Accommodation: 31 December 1999

Late registration: 1 March 2000

Preliminary Time Table

17 March 1600: Arrival, Registration

1900: Introductory lecture,
bar

18 March 0900-1900: Scientific Programme

2000: Conference Dinner

19 March 0900-1600: Scientific Programme

1700: Visit to the Institut

für Vogelforschung

„Vogelwarte Helgoland“

20 March: Excursion to Helgoland

20-21 March: Excursion to Wangerooge

Registration

See the registration form for details. Registration includes two lunches, the conference dinner, coffee, tea and some drinks but not accommodation. Students may pay a reduced fee if proof of student status is supplied.

Registration will be valid and acknowledged only if the fee is paid. Cancellations with 80% refunding will be accepted until 1 February 2000; thereafter 50% will be refunded.

Submission of Contributions and Abstracts

The deadline for the submission of oral (< 20 min) or poster papers is 15 November 1999. Oral and poster presentations will only be considered if an abstract is submitted. Abstracts (in English, maximum length of 250 words, including title, name and postal address, preferably in Word 6 or earlier) should be submitted to Peter H. Becker, preferably by e-mail: ifv@ifv.terramare.de (subject Seabird Group Conference), or on disc by post to him (address see below).

Owing to time constraints, the number of papers that can be accepted for oral presentation is limited. Contributions accepted but not selected as orals by the scientific programme committee can be presented as posters (max size 120cm high, 100cm wide).

Authors of accepted contributions will be notified by 15 December 1999 and will receive further guidelines.

Scientific Programme Committee

Peter H. Becker (see above); Mark L. Tasker, JNCC, 7 Thistle Place, Aberdeen AB10 1UZ, Scotland (email tasker_m@jncc.gov.uk); Kees Camphuysen, NIOZ, PO Box 59, 1790 AB Den Burg, Texel, The Netherlands (email camphuys@nioz.nl).

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(subject: Seabird Group Conference)

Accommodation

Accommodation close to the conference centre „Stadthalle“ will be arranged by Wilhelmshaven-Information to which your booking form is forwarded by the local organiser. As seabirders make frequent use of ships, we have booked cabins and rooms on three ships in the harbour. For students cheap accommodation is available in TERRAMARE and SEERÄUBER („pirate“); book soon, limited places!

See for details the accommodation booking form. Booking will be confirmed by Wilhelmshaven-Information (Bahnhofplatz 7, D-26382 Wilhelmshaven, Germany; phone ++49 4421 913000; fax ++49 4421 9130010).

Travelling Information

You can reach Wilhelmshaven by train from the Bremen (1.5 h), Hamburg or Hannover (2.5 h) airports, which have regular flight connections to London, Amsterdam or Frankfurt. We recommend arriving on 17 March, and departing on 20 March (21 March for those going on excursions, and late 23 or early 24 March for members of the ICES Seabird Ecology Working Group, whose meeting immediately follows the conference.). Railway stations could be reached by an

airport shuttle (Hamburg, Hannover, about 30-60 min) or by tram (Bremen, No. 5, 20 min).

Post-Congress Excursions

You should use the opportunity to experience the typical landscape of northern Germany and their old cities. We plan excursions to Helgoland and to the Wadden Sea island Wangerooge.

HELGOLAND is the only offshore island of Germany (70 km offshore). The red sandstone cliffs houses colonies of several seabird species. The Institut für Vogelforschung „Vogelwarte Helgoland“ was founded here in 1910 and now operates a satellite station „Inselstation Helgoland“. One day tour on 20 March 2000 by bus and ferry. It starts in Wilhelmshaven at 0800 am, and ends at Cuxhaven at about 0700 pm. From there the airports can be reached by train in the same evening. Flights back next day. Tour price 55 EURO.

WANGEROOGE is the most easterly of the East Frisian Islands situated within the national park „Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer“. Salt marshes, dunes and the huge intertidal areas in the „Wadden Sea“ are important habitats for seabirds, waterbirds or waders during migration, overwintering or the breeding season. Visit the national park centre „Rosenhaus“. Two-day tour on 20-21 March by bus and ferry, guided by Annette Wilms. Start in Wilhelmshaven in the morning (20 March), accommodation on the island, return to Wilhelmshaven about 1200 (21 March) so that airports and flights can be reached by train the same day. Tour price 60 EURO (including travel and accommodation).

The prices do not include food costs and the tours will occur only if there is sufficient interest.

This second announcement is also available on the conference homepage http://home.t-online.de/home/O.Hueppop-IfV/Seab2000.htm
