

Groningen, 22 oktober 1988

Dear Dr. Verschuren,

With some ornithologists (waderologists) from The Netherlands, Ghana, France, Portugal and Spain (A.-M. Blomert, Y. Ntiamoa-Baidu, M. Klaassen, R. Rufino, R. Maheo, L. Alberto) we hope to prepare two articles on the population increase in the European Avocet and the consequences for the wintering distribution, combined with the spring passage of Avocets along the Mauritanian Banc d'Arguin. We would like to ask your cooperation. An enormous population increase has taken place in the breeding areas in recent years. This is just partly covered by the counting data on the wintering grounds in SW Europe. Our theory is now, that those areas were already full and that the overflow of the population had to go to other areas. Partly, ~~this is supported by increasing wintering numbers along the edges of the wintering range (Great Britain and Italy).~~ We also have the idea that relatively more Avocets leave to winter in Africa (mainly Senegal and S. Mauritania). At least relatively high numbers are counted in the more recent years, compared with your reports (for instance Gerfaut 1978). Now, we hope to produce some real time series for some Senegalese wetlands (Saloum-delta; Senegal-delta; Casamance?) in order to make comparisons possible with the European data. Is it possible for you to produce as detailed as possible your Avocet-observations? And firstly, are you willing to do that? We should be very grateful, as the Avocet should then be one of the first wader species for which such an analysis is possible.

Yours sincerely,

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