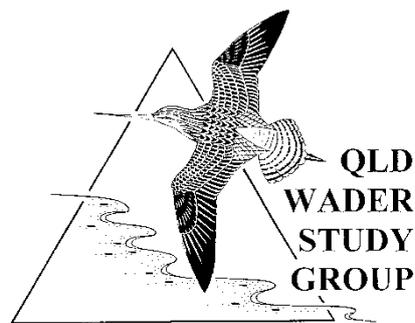


QUEENSLAND WADER



Issue number 064

June, July, August 2008

Newsletter of the Queensland Wader Study Group (QWSG), a special interest group of Birds Queensland Incorporated.

Port of Brisbane Corporation Count Results – 2007

Results of our fifth year of thorough monthly counts are now complete for the Port of Brisbane Corporation (PBC) at Fisherman Islands, and as in the past, counts were conducted on the day before, or after the scheduled monthly count day set down for the QWSG count programme.

The methodology used for the counts stayed the same, with numbers being listed under the appropriate habitat the birds used, (dry open area, wet margin, broken ground and bund wall). In 2007 the overall count was 53,780 waders and 15,931 waterbirds, which does not include the figures for the Visitors Centre Lake (109 waders and 3,975 waterbirds). These figures of course are not the number of birds using the site at any one time, but a culmination of the monthly totals. The largest count of waders was in January (8,853).

2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
53780	73033	51416	56124	57302

S3B – a portion of what was left of S3A now forms part of this site and continued to support good wader numbers and species during 2007. This is still a favoured site for Pacific Golden Plover with 454 recorded in January and 677 in February. A total of 974 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper were also recorded on the site in October.

Area 5 – it appears the waders continue to prefer the reclamation ponds instead of this man-made roost, however, close to a thousand waders were recorded on site in October. Chestnut Teal have certainly taken to the roost using it most months. Particularly good numbers were recorded in April, May, June, and the largest total of 234 in July. In June 386 Little Black Cormorant and 1 Buff-banded Rail were a highlight and 487 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper were counted in October.

R1 – most of this site has been filled in and only a small corner remains for the few waders (mainly Red-necked Stints) that have used it.

R2 – there are a variety of birds using this site which includes the ever popular Broad-billed Sandpiper being seen in February (1), March (3), April (1), October (3) and December (5). Other good sightings are 1571 Little Tern in January and 907 in March. October had a good number of Red Knot (119) and 595 Common Tern, while November was the best month for Red-necked Stint (1054). This site is also used by Double-banded Plover with the highest number recorded being 17 in May.

C1 – this site does not appear to attract many waders with only a couple of records of a few hundred Red-necked Stint. The site did however attract 662 Silver Gull in April and 30 Whiskered Tern in December.

C2 – in 2006 this site was not attracting many waders. In 2007 the site attracted waders on the northward and southward migration only, and very few numbers used the site during the rest of the year. Over four thousand birds were counted in January with 390 Pacific Golden Plover, 400 Greater Sand Plover, 751 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and 1686 Curlew Sandpiper being among the numbers. In March 6 Broad-billed Sandpipers were seen on the site and 75 Grey Plover counted in October.

FPE BS – this continued as one large site until April when it was split to form BS1 and BS2. The site is still not being used by many waders although something attracted 106 Red-necked Avocet to the site in September, 150 Red-necked Avocet and 1029 Red-necked Stint in November. A group of 336 Little Black Cormorant were also attracted to the site in June.

BS2 – formed in April when FPE BS was split into two and is not attracting many birds as yet.

FPE Outer – still the largest area to count on the outer section of the expansion, which is done by driving around it. It continues to be the favoured site for Grey-tailed Tattler, Ruddy Turnstone and Pied Oystercatcher. Good counts as follows for Tattlers are 738 in February, 803 in March, 700 in November and 670 in December. Best counts for Turnstones are 64 in September, 160 in November and 82 in December.

Claypan – a very large area that was difficult to count due to size, and trees obscuring views, but made easier in 2007 by accessing the site from the other side of the drainage channel giving clear views. As with previous years there are a number of species (in smaller numbers) using the site, but it is still the most favoured by Eastern Curlew and Whimbrel. The best count for Eastern Curlew was 334 in March and 405 Whimbrel also in March.

Visitors Centre Lake – only small numbers of Masked Lapwing and Black-winged Stilt were recorded during the year. The only other wader record was 3 Black-fronted Dotterel in April and 5 in May. The site continues to support good numbers of waterbirds, with breeding records for Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Chestnut Teal and Black Swan.

Flagged birds seen throughout the reclamation area as follows:

January	Green flags on Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Red-capped Plover (1) and Red-necked Stint (1).
February	Green flag on Red-capped Plover (1).
March	Green flag on Ruddy Turnstone (1) and Lesser Sand Plover (2).
June	Green flag on Red-capped Plover (1).
August	Green flag on Grey-tailed Tattler (1 – CS) and Ruddy Turnstone (1 – AS).
September	Orange flag on Red Knot (2) and green flag on Greater Sand Plover (1).
October	White flag right tibia and red over yellow bands on both left and right tarsus on Bar-tailed Godwit (1). Green flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (2), Curlew Sandpiper (1), Lesser Sand Plover (2), Red-capped Plover (1), Red-necked Stint (2).
November	Green flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (4), Pied Oystercatcher (1 – AC), Ruddy Turnstone (1), Grey-tailed Tattler (1 – EE), Greater Sand Plover (1 – AD), Lesser Sand Plover (1) and orange flag on Caspian Tern (1).
December	Green flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Pied Oystercatcher (1 – AD), Grey-tailed Tattler (1), Red-necked Stint (1) and orange flag on Caspian Tern (1).

Breeding records: Red-capped Plover species were recorded at **C1** in January (1 chick). In October there were a number of records as follows: - **3A** (2 chicks), **3B** (1 chick), **Area 5** (1 chick) and **R2** (6 chicks). In November **R2** (2 chicks) and **B1** (1 chick).

It was great to record a breeding success for Pied Oystercatcher species in October at **R2** (2 chicks).

Some other interesting sightings (not waders) during the counts were:

January	1 Peregrine Falcon over C2 and 1 Great Cormorant at Visitors Centre .
February	117 Black Swan and 1 Buff Banded Rail at Visitors Centre Lake .
March	Although 9 Broad-billed Sandpipers were counted during the official count, a total of 16 (group of 11 and group of 5) were seen in two reclamation areas after the count was completed. 122 Black Swan at Visitors Centre Lake .
April	2 Pink-eared Duck at Visitors Centre Lake .
May	13 Pink-eared Duck and 89 Australian Pelican at Visitors Centre Lake .
June	14 Pink-eared Duck and 120 Chestnut Teal at Visitors Centre Lake .
July	15 Pink-eared Duck and 1 juvenile Black-necked Stork at Visitors Centre Lake .
August	13 Pink-eared Duck and 1 juvenile Black-necked Stork (with rubber ring around bill)*** at Visitors Centre Lake .
September	1 Collared Sparrowhawk at Claypan .
October	15 Chestnut Teal ducklings in 3A , 3 Chestnut Teal ducklings at Visitors Centre Lake .
December	2 Pink-eared Duck at the Visitors Centre Lake .

*** *The juvenile Black-necked Stork that was seen at the Visitors Centre Lake in July and then again in August with a rubber ring around it's bill was observed for quite a number of weeks later by PBC staff, still with the rubber ring around the bill. A rescue effort was organised to catch the bird and remove the rubber ring as the bird would have eventually starved to death. The good news is that it was eventually caught and the ring removed. The bird, christened 'Dunlop', was seen at the Visitors Centre Lake and Area 5 during the May 2008 count and appeared to look healthy.*

Wader species (in taxonomic order) and numbers using the PBC sites during 2007 are included with this article. Many other waterbirds were also recorded using the sites, however, lack of space in the newsletter does not allow the printing of them.

Our thanks to the PBC for their ongoing support to the QWSG and supplying the vehicles and equipment during the counts. A special thanks to Wayne Young for the continual sacrifice of his time on the weekends of the counts. The November count was the last sacrifice Wayne had to make before taking up a new position in Karratha in Western Australia. We extend our best wishes to him and Renee in their new jobs and state.

Victoria O'Rourke, Environmental Planner, and Brad Kitchen, Manager Environment, for the PBC share the role in looking after our welfare and needs during the counts.

The excellent results obtained for the PBC and our database would not be possible without the help of committed regular counters and other members and friends whose names appear below. We thank you all sincerely, and I apologise if I have omitted anyone from the list.

Dawn Beck, Alan Boardman, Michele Burford, Vicki Campbell, Lynn Cole, Jon Coleman, Ken Cowell, Alan Crawford, Linda Cross, Phil Cross, Brian & Shelagh Dawson (UK), Peter Driscoll, David Edwards, John & Megan Gabell, Andrew Geering, Jade Grigg, Joyce Harding, Sandra Harding, Dave Houghton, Lawrie Kearney, Peter Kindness, Brad Kitchen (PBC), Stephen MacDonald, Deborah Metters, David Milton, Joanna Morgan, Pete Nichols, Rocio Noriega, Victoria O'Rourke (PBC), Graham Palmer, Ralf Reiger, Peter Rothlisberg, Rebecca Ryan, Kath Shurcliff, Brenda Smith, Graham Smith, Heather Smith, Jim Sneddon, Andre Varlamov, Floss Wainwright, Colin Williams, Renee Young, Robyn Young and Wayne Young (PBC).

Ongoing counts are continuing at the PBC for 2008 and we still need a good support group to help us each month. If you can assist us (even by scribing), please make contact with myself or Peter Rothlisberg. The dates and meeting times for the PBC counts are listed at the back of this newsletter.

Linda Cross email: xxxx@xxxx.net.au Home: xxxx xxxx

Or Peter Rothlisberg email: xxxx@xxxx.au Home: xxxx xxxx Work: xxxx xxxx

	06.01.07	03.02.07	03.03.07	29.04.07	20.05.07	17.06.07	14.07.07	05.08.07	16.09.07	14.10.07	11.11.07	09.12.07
Species												
Latham's Snipe												
Black-tailed Godwit												
Bar-tailed Godwit	985	689	708	168	225	394	463	329	554	821	667	609
Whimbrel		27	405		3	3			40		13	64
Eastern Curlew	228	262	336	19	14	19	59	124	85	40	159	164
Marsh Sandpiper										3	2	
Common Greenshank	4	1	11						3	5	4	7
Terek Sandpiper		3	6	1			1	8	7	8	8	4
Grey-tailed Tattler	255	767	802	118	350	143	171	132	592	100	846	735
Ruddy Turnstone	14	27	98	31	15	47	23	23	64	68	171	106
Great Knot	58	95	120						120	81	133	81
Red Knot									70	155	27	
Red-necked Stint	1926	1290	2978	355	840	441	515	425	975	2363	1601	2623
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	1082	352	693	2	28			4	557	1821	437	174
Curlew Sandpiper	1813	501	781	7	16	21	24	38	276	1123	662	622
Broad-billed Sandpiper		1	9		1					3		5
Bush Stone-curlew												
Pied Oystercatcher	133	92	81	55	52	36	66	62	28	36	25	57
Black-winged Stilt	89	109	161	160	239	288	348	310	53	99	97	65
Red-necked Avocet	32	28	1	10			5	32	120	150	44	1
Pacific Golden Plover	1090	714	405	16	23	26	6	2	249	258	146	284
Grey Plover	45	23	35		1					72	50	4
Red-capped Plover	66	32	57	83	34	63	33	51	27	61	89	56
Double-banded Plover				17		16	6	16				
Lesser Sand Plover	590	219	605	68	136	44	30	72	63	298	708	2
Greater Sand Plover	441	28	14	3	5				1	41	272	
Black-fronted Dotterel												
Red-kneed Dotterel												
Masked Lapwing	2	4		7	7	2	2	1	1	3	4	1
Unidentified wader			1									
Total Wader Species	18	21	21	17	17	14	15	16	20	22	22	20
Total Wader Numbers	8853	5264	8307	1120	1989	1543	1752	1629	3885	7609	6165	5664

The table following is the count results for the total of migratory waders recorded at the Port of Brisbane Corporation over the last five years.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2007	8853	5264	8307	1120	1989	1543	1752	1629	3885	7609	6165	5664
2006	12323	10573	7055	4230	2142	1969	2250	2635	5296	8051	8995	7514
2005	4751	5609	3572	3317	2162	3034	2436	2096	3790	6173	6745	7731
2004	11650	4528	7398	1607	2416	1617	1328	2410	2974	6026	5976	8194
2003	7445	6922	6126	4021	2286	2107	2041	1720	4466	4118	8054	7996

Report on the Deployment of Satellite-tags on Bar-tailed Godwits *Limosa lapponica menzbieri* at Roebuck Bay, North West Australia February 18-23 2008.

Global Flyway Network
The Shorebird ecological Demographics & Conservation Initiative

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Introduction

As one aspect of the Pacific Shorebird Migration Project during February 2007, in New Zealand, 16 Bar-tailed Godwits (*Limosa lapponica baueri*) were implanted with satellite transmitters (PTTs) to gather data on their northward migration. This study went better than could have been hoped for with the batteries lasting, not only until the birds reached their breeding grounds in Alaska, but all through the southward migration. This wonderful result proved once and for all that the Alaskan breeding Bar-tailed Godwit undertakes the longest single non-stop migration in the avian world. This was best illustrated by the now famous 'E7' as she covered a 29,000 km round trip from Miranda Shorebird Centre, Firth of Thames on the North Island of New Zealand to staging sites in the Yellow Sea and on to breeding areas in western Alaska before the epic journey back across the Pacific Ocean.

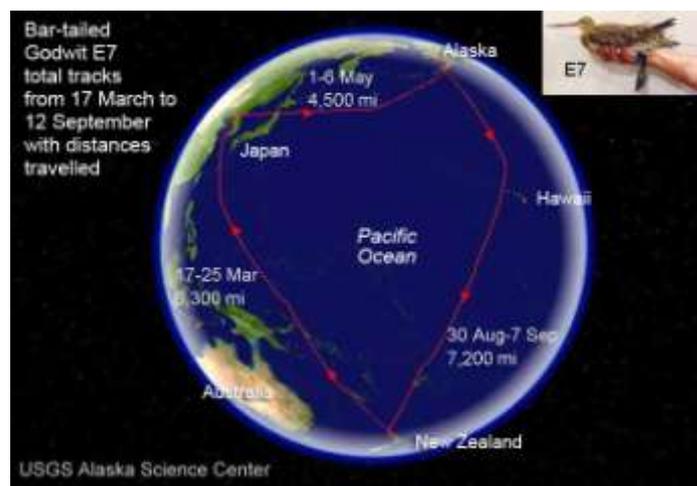


Image USGS Alaska Science Centre

After the success of the 2007 work, consultations began between Nils Warnock of PRBO Conservation Science (PRBO), Bob Gill and Lee Tibbitts of the United States Geological Survey, Alaska Science Centre (USGS), Clive Minton of the Australasian Wader Studies Group (AWSG), Theunis Piersma of the Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ) and Chris Hassell of the Global Flyway Network (GFN) to extend this work to the *menzbieri* sub-species that spends the non-breeding season in north-west Australia and breeds in the Yakutia region of Eastern Siberia.

With the continued generous funding from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation the talk became action and a team of researchers gathered at the Broome Bird Observatory (BBO) to undertake the work between February 18 and 23 2008.

Field work

The birds to be implanted with PTTs were captured by cannon net in 4 catches, one of which yielded no godwits. The weather during February is very hot and humid with regular rain. We were lucky in that catching was not restricted too much by heavy rain. The first catch was a regular catch with the net set just above high tide and with limited twinkling we caught 116 birds. Seven Bar-tailed Godwits had surgery, performed with great expertise by veterinarians Dan Mulcahy of USGS and Brett Gartrell of Massey University, New Zealand. All birds were successfully released 2-3 hours after surgery. For this catch we had a TV crew with us filming for the ABC's Stateline programme. They got some excellent footage and interviews; the segment went to air on the last night of our field work and was watched by us all with great interest.

The second day's catch was less successful with repeated bird of prey disturbances over the catching area. We only caught 3 birds and none were Bar-tailed Godwits.

The third days catch was a tricky affair with very heavy overnight rain persisting in to the morning and delaying the setting of the net. Eventually we went out with the whole team ready to set a net and catch promptly. We set the net well below high tide and with twinkling, decoys, luck (and no little skill!) we made a catch of 12 birds. They were many more close to the net but as I waited for them to walk in to the catching area heavy rain started to fall so I took what was available. I had expected to catch about 30 birds but the net and its sand covering were very wet and the net went slowly. Ten of the total were Bar-tailed Godwits and five underwent successful implant surgery. The remaining birds were transported back to BBO and processed in the Shade House out of the inclement weather. All birds flew well on release.

We had only planned for 3 catching days due to tides and tight travel arrangements for the overseas researchers, however we had 3 PTTs left and so some hasty rearranging of flights saw us out on the northern shores of Roebuck Bay for a fourth attempt. Once again we set the net well below high tide, some 30 metres, as it was a high tide of 8.63m and on such tides the birds do not stay on the beaches but roost at inaccessible locations in and beyond the mangroves. We started twinkling very early on had a possible catch soon afterwards but within seconds of firing all the birds flew. After some more skilled work from Maurice and Adrian we once again had birds close to the net and eventually they were catchable as the tide pushed them close enough. I fired and a good catch of 97 was made. Extraction and getting birds in to cages was hectic, with only a small team and due to the fast moving spring tide, but was accomplished successfully.

The final three PTTs were implanted in birds and all went strongly on release.

There were some old birds among the re-traps with Great Knots at 15, 14 and 11+ (this bird is now individually colour-banded). We also now have Bar-tailed Godwits at 18+, 14+ and 12+ colour-banded and others at 18+ and 15+ with engraved leg flags from this latest field work. Two of the birds carrying PTTs were retraps and are 13 and 5+ years of age as they set off with their precious cargo.



Image Adrian Boyle.

Catch details below.

February 19 2008					
SPECIES	NEW	RETRAP	1ST YEAR	ADULT	TOTAL
Bar-tailed Godwit	48	12	14	46	60
Curlew Sandpiper	2	0	2	0	2
Great Knot	39	12	6	45	51
Red Knot	3	0	1	2	3
TOTALS	92	24	23	93	116

February 20 2008					
SPECIES	NEW	RETRAP	1ST YEAR	ADULT	TOTAL
Curlew Sandpiper	1	0	0	1	1
Great Knot	0	2	0	2	2
TOTALS	1	2	0	3	3

February 21 2008					
SPECIES	NEW	RETRAP	1ST YEAR	ADULT	TOTAL
Bar-tailed Godwit	9	1	1	9	10
Greater Sand Plover	1	0	0	1	1
Terek Sandpiper	1	0	0	1	1
TOTALS	11	1	1	11	12

February 22 2008					
SPECIES	NEW	RETRAP	1ST YEAR	ADULT	TOTAL
Bar-tailed Godwit	33	17	0	50	50
Black-tailed Godwit	1	0	0	1	1
Curlew Sandpiper	1	0	0	1	1
Great Knot	29	13	2	40	42
Ruddy Turnstone	2	0	1	1	2
TOTALS	66	30	3	93	96

As of March 12 2008 all 15 PTTs are communicating effectively with the ARGOS satellites and providing data about the birds' whereabouts in Roebuck Bay. During regular colour-band re-sighting field work 7 of the birds have been seen in the field at roost sites looking strong and healthy. In addition to the thin aerial protruding from their feathers they can be identified by their large black flags engraved through to white with a single letter and a single digit.

The Future

In mid-March 2008 the PTTs will automatically switch on their regular reporting schedule of 6 hours on and 36 hours off. This should allow the batteries to last at least until the birds arrive on their Arctic breeding grounds. Any additional data received after mid-June (i.e. after approximately 400 hours of transmission time) will be a bonus. You will be able to follow the migrations of the Roebuck Bay Bar-tailed Godwits by following the links from Chris Hassell's Global Flyway Network site <http://globalflywaynetwork.com.au/>, Broome Bird Observatory <http://www.broomebirdobservatory.com/standard/index.html> or directly to the USGS Migration page http://alaska.usgs.gov/science/biology/shorebirds/barg_updates.html

Acknowledgements

Projects such as this take an enormous amount of money and effort, not just in the field work stage but during all the meticulous planning. Please bear with me while I thank the many people involved. The considerable financial contributions from David and Lucile Packard Foundation, PRBO Conservation Science, USGS Alaska Science Centre, US Department of Interior and are gratefully acknowledged. Microwave Telemetry Inc is thanked for the development and manufacturing of the PTTs used in this study. To BirdLife Netherlands, thanks for funding my permanent position.

The team in the field did a great job, having my Broome team with me fills me with confidence so thanks to Adrian Boyle, Maurice O'Connor, Helen Macarthur, Andrea Spencer, Yindi Newman and Jan Lewis. Also Mavis Russell, Petra de Goeij, Grant Pearson and Theunis Piersma (all honorary Broome team members). Bob Gill, Nils Warnock, Lee Tibbitts, Colleen Handel for field work and being instrumental in getting the project going here in Broome. To the highly skilled Vets Dan Mulcahy and Brett Gartrell. To John Curran for veterinary assistance and vital support with medication supplies. To Andrea Spencer, Maurice O'Connor and Helen Macarthur for wonderful food and plenty of it! The BBO wardens Pete Collins and Holly Sitters for hosting us and for field work. To Annie Tibbitts for field work. To Graeme Hamilton, Alison Russell-French and Rob Davis of Birds Australia for field work. To Jan Van de Kam for images of all the birds. To the AWSG committee for support of this initiative. And last but not least to Clive Minton for continuing his unfailing support of me over the past 12 years.

New Discoveries about Non-breeding Grounds of Spoon-billed Sandpiper

March 4 2008

In January members of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Recovery Team, working in two groups, discovered major non-breeding grounds of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper in the state of Arakan in the Bay of Bengal and Martaban Bay, near the border of Thailand.

A total of 84 birds were observed at two coastal wetlands in Myanmar (formerly Burma) casting new light on the non-breeding distribution of this Endangered species and confirming the international importance of these wetlands for this and other species of shorebirds. The Arakan team counted 50,000 shorebirds including Flyway significant numbers of Broad-billed Sandpipers and Mongolian Plovers as well as Pallas's (Great Black-headed) Gull.

Vice President of the Russian Bird Conservation Union, Evgeny Syroechkovskiy, stated that there was evidence that the world population of this species may have declined by as much as 50% between 2006 and 2007, making this the most significant discovery for this species for many years. The known global population of Spoon-billed Sandpiper has plunged alarmingly in the last few years and was thought to be down to only 200-300 pairs remaining.

The Spoon-billed Sandpiper Recovery Team which found the birds included staff from Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association (BANCA): BirdLife International's Partners in Russia and Thailand, and members of ArcCona Consulting (Cambridge, UK and Kiel, Germany) and the Japan Wetlands Action Network (JAWAN).

ArcCona's analysis of satellite images, combined with the experience of previous surveys in India, Bangladesh and Thailand, and with historical records of the species in Myanmar, suggested that potentially suitable habitats existed in the south-western state of Arakan in the Bay of Bengal, and Martaban Bay near the Thai border.

"The Arakan coast has never been surveyed before, and Martaban Bay only marginally in 2003," explained **Christoph Zöckler** of ArcCona Cambridge.

Thirty-five Spoon-billed Sandpipers were counted at one high-tide roost in Arakan, including one juvenile ringed at the breeding ground in Chukotka last summer. The team at Martaban found a total of 48 Spoon-billed Sandpiper, scattered over the huge mudflats of the bay but included a flock of 39 birds.

"Our surveys have covered only a small section of the promising Arakan coast," **Christoph Zöckler** added. "Although small-scale reclamation of the mudflats for prawn ponds has been observed, the coastal zones are largely healthy ecosystems, which provide both crucial habitat for tens of thousands of arctic shorebirds, and livelihoods for hundreds of thousands of people."



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The Main sponsor for the survey work is Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund. Additional contributions by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (BirdLife in the UK), Asia Bird Fund of BirdLife International, the Manfred Hermsen Foundation (Bremen) and private Russian sponsors.

BirdLife's Preventing Extinctions programme aims to identify and carry out conservation actions to save all the world's most threatened (Critically Endangered) birds. BirdLife is actively seeking Species Champions to fund work for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper.

Saemangeum Shorebird Monitoring Program 2008 Report on

Third Count Cycle: May 7th-12th, 2008

This is a summary of count data (and habitat assessment) from the third of the four spring-tide cycles of the 2008 Saemangeum Shorebird Monitoring Program (SSMP), a joint initiative of the domestic organization Birds Korea and the international Australasian Wader Studies Group. The program was launched in 2006 to monitor the impacts of the 40,100 ha Saemangeum reclamation (i.e. wetland destruction) project on globally important populations of shorebirds supported by this estuarine system, already recognized as the most important known shorebird site in the Yellow Sea (Barter, 2002). These data will be analysed further, for publication in the SSMP 2008 Report and in other papers, and can be cited freely by others (with proper acknowledgement and caveats).

Following several days of exploratory surveys, a total of 23 people participated in dawn to dusk land- and boat-based survey work for the SSMP Third Count Cycle between May 7th and 12th, covering the Geum Estuary, the Saemangeum area, and Gomso Bay (combined "The Study Site"). Experience over the past two years of the SSMP has indicated that this is the period in which numbers of most migratory shorebird species should peak in the study site. In addition to carrying out high tide counts at all the known shorebird roosts in these areas (repeating the counts at all of the major roosts), low tide counts were carried out through most of Saemangeum, as it was suspected that recent alterations in tidal flow (with tidal range increasing from c. 15 cm to almost 1.5 m) caused changes in the local movement patterns of shorebirds. Understanding these movements between roosts and feeding areas remains important to ensure that shorebirds are not double-counted or overlooked.

The Third Cycle count took place during a relatively long period of spring tides, with the highest tides at night outside of the Saemangeum reclamation area exceeding 7m. This was helpful for the surveys of the Geum Estuary and Gomso Bay, as the less elevated roosts were submerged, confining shorebirds to a small number of more elevated roosts where counts were reasonably straightforward. At both the Geum Estuary and Gomso Bay, high tide counts were also repeated on lower tides (c. 6 m) to assess the effect of tide height on numbers observed. In Saemangeum the effects of the large tidal amplitude were less predictable. Through the 2007 surveys, only one or two of the sluices of the gates in the Saemangeum sea-wall had been left open, resulting in a tidal range within Saemangeum of only a few centimetres. During early May more sluices were open (including four out of seven sluices in the southern sea-gate) and in combination with the large tidal amplitude in this tide series, tidal range within Saemangeum exceeded 1.3 m, with high tides peaking 2-3 hours after the peak of high tide outside the sea-wall. These high tides pushed birds off island tidal flats in the outer Saemangeum system to mainland roosts, and also made some tidal flats of the inner Mangyeung and Dongjin estuaries suitable for feeding shorebirds at low tide. The more elevated regions of inner Saemangeum (which had been tidal flats until 2006) remained unsuitable for shorebirds, as they have been overgrown by saltmarsh vegetation over the past two years, so at high tides birds feeding in the inner Saemangeum were forced to a small number of mainland roosts, notably at Okgu, Simpo, and on the shores opposite the Gunsan air-base. At low tide the increased tidal range in Saemangeum exposed mudflat areas that were sub-tidal through most of 2007 and 2008. However these newly exposed tidal flats were probably rather depleted of potential prey, as there had been a massive shellfish die-off on the lower flats in late April 2008, coinciding with a temporary draw-down of water levels within the Saemangeum system.

In total, 147,088 shorebirds were counted during this count period, with 97,640 in the Geum Estuary, 34,274 within the Saemangeum reclamation area (the vast majority in the outer parts of the system), and 9,861 at Gomso Bay. These compare to SSMP counts during the Third Count Cycle period in 2007 (May 15th-19th) of 93,342 shorebirds at the Geum Estuary, 54,771 shorebirds within Saemangeum, and 726 at Gomso Bay – numbers already significantly reduced when compared to the same period in 2006.

Within the SSMP study site, Dunlin *Calidris alpina* (75,557) was much the most numerous species (compared to whole study site counts during northward migration in 2006 and 2007 of 85,987 and 71,365 respectively), followed by Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris* (21,539, compared to whole study site counts during northward migration in 2006 and 2007 of 116,139 and 83,350 respectively), Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* (16,259), Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* (5,912), Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* (5,539), Mongolian Plover *Charadrius mongolus* (5,288) and Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* (4,727).

At the Geum Estuary, eight shorebird species were recorded in Ramsar Convention-defined internationally important concentrations (i.e. 1% or more of population), based on Wetlands International (2006). Dunlin were found in unprecedented numbers for this site, with a total of 53,565 birds occurring almost entirely in a single roosting flock at Yubu Island. This might reflect displacement of birds from Saemangeum, as the combined Dunlin totals found in Saemangeum and the Geum Estuary in 2008 were similar to those recorded in 2006. Another highlight in the Geum Estuary was the number of the Endangered Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*, with the minimum count of 56 birds comprising 7% of the global population; there were also a minimum of 8 Spoon-billed Sandpiper, at least 1% of the world population of this now Critically Endangered species. Great Knot (13,780) had declined markedly compared to the corresponding period in 2007 (36,252) but were still present in internationally significant numbers (3.6% of the flyway/global population), as were Eastern Oystercatcher *Haemaphysus (ostralegus) osculans* (5%), Grey Plover (3%), Bar-tailed Godwit (7% of combined totals of *baueri* and *menzbieri* subspecies), Eurasian Curlew *Numerius arquata orientalis* (2%), Far Eastern Curlew (7%). In addition, eight Black-faced Spoonbill *Platelea minor* (Endangered) and 20 Saunders's Gull *Larus saundersi* (Vulnerable) were also logged during the count period. A parallel survey of all major shorebird sites in South Korea between May 2nd and May 13th, conducted by Birds Korea with essential support from the AWSG, has confirmed that the Geum Estuary is now by far the most important shorebird site remaining in the country, and one of the most important in the East Asian – Australasian Flyway. It has recently survived a reclamation threat, but being a small area close to a large industrial city, it is far from secure. Ramsar listing for this site would be highly desirable.

Counts within the Saemangeum reclamation area demonstrated a huge decline in Great Knot numbers, with only 2,769 birds feeding in the reclamation area (c.f. 8,169 in 2007, and 83,404 in 2006 before reclamation began to take effect on this species). A further c.5,000 Great Knot fed on tidal flats just outside the southern base of the Saemangeum sea-wall, and c. 2000 of these moved into Saemangeum briefly during high tide periods, perhaps taking advantage of the later times of high tide into Saemangeum to spend 1-2 hours extra feeding on tidal flats as the tide rose. However, it is unlikely that this is a major foraging area for them, given that c. 3,000 Great Knot from the same feeding areas near the sea-wall roosted in Gomso Bay (c. 15km away) in preference to Saemangeum (c. 1km away). Some 3,000 Dunlin also fed just outside the sea-wall, most at high tide joining the 15,699 Dunlin that routinely fed in Saemangeum. Five shorebird species were again found in Ramsar Convention-defined internationally important concentrations (as described above): *osculans* Eastern Oystercatcher (1%), Grey Plover (1-2%), Bar-tailed Godwit (1% of combined totals of *baueri* and *menzbieri* subspecies), Great Knot (3%) and Dunlin (1% of combined total of *sakhalina* and *articola*). In addition, seven Black-faced Spoonbill, two Chinese Egret *Egretta eulophotes* and five Saunders's Gull were recorded during the count period. Clearly, while much degraded (and already supporting significantly reduced numbers of shorebirds), the Saemangeum reclamation area remains an internationally important wetland for waterbirds. Restoration of an increased and regular tidal-flow would greatly reduce the impacts on shorebirds caused by this massive loss and degradation of habitat.

Higher shorebird numbers (reaching 9,980 on one date) were recorded in Gomso Bay than ever before. These counts included c. 2,000 Great Knot and c. 1,000 Dunlin that did not actually feed in Gomso Bay (except perhaps briefly on the ebbing tide), instead flying into the bay to roost when high tide drove them from core feeding areas on the tidal flats immediately south-west of the Saemangeum sea-wall. Nevertheless, some 5,000 to 7,000 shorebirds appeared to be using Gomso Bay as a feeding area as well as a roosting area, and these included internationally important numbers of 1686 Whimbrel *Numerius phaeopus* (c. 3% of the flyway population), 615 Terek Sandpiper (c. 1% of the flyway population), and near-significant numbers of 2,966 Great Knot and 3,127 Dunlin.

In parallel to the counts, extensive searches were made for leg-flagged and individually colour-banded birds. These searches were unusually intensive (in part due to the presence of two dedicated flag and band researchers from the Global Flyway Network), and have generated such a volume of resightings that we have not yet been able to enter all of the data. However, the sightings confirm that the region is used intensively by migratory birds from non-breeding areas in Australia, New Zealand, and Thailand; from staging areas which include Taiwan and the Shanghai region; and from breeding grounds as far away as Alaska. One especially noteworthy find was a uniquely marked breeding Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* in the Saemangeum reclamation area that had been banded in the non-breeding season in Taiwan.

Preparations for the fourth and final count cycle (planned for May 19th-25th) are now under way. Our thanks to all who continue to support this extremely important project. SSMP Team, Iksan, May 15th, 2008.

References

- Barter, M.A. 2002. *Shorebirds and The Yellow Sea: Importance, threats and conservation status*. Wetlands International Global Series 9, International Wader Studies 12, Canberra, Australia.
- Wetlands International. 2006. *Waterbird Population Estimates – Fourth Edition*. Wetlands International, Wangeningen, The Netherlands

Seeing the Death of a Coastal Wetland – Draining of the Saemangeum Estuary, South Korea

Three QWSG committee members, Ivell Whyte, Sandra Harding and David Milton and member Margaret Cameron joined a total of 21 other international volunteer counters as part of the third and last year of the monitoring of the impact of the construction of the 33 km long seawall that closed the Saemangeum estuary in South Korea. From 10 April to 10 May 2008, Sandra and I participated in surveys of the waders in different parts of the estuary and the adjacent Geum estuary and Gomsu Bay. The project to monitor the effects of the sea wall closure and draining of 400 km² of intertidal wetlands is a joint undertaking of the local bird conservation group, Birds Korea (www.birdskorea.org) and the Australasian Wader Study Group from Australia. The Saemangeum estuary was the most important refuelling site in the flyway for migratory waders from Australia. Before the construction of the seawall, an estimated 120,000 Great Knot (~ 30% of the entire population) refuelled in Saemangeum. Two years later, the numbers appeared to be much lower (~21,000). So what has happened to them? Have they moved to other nearby estuaries to refuel? or have we started to see another wader species in steep decline (> 70% drop in 5yrs) for the Red Knot population that refuelled in Delaware Bay in the northeastern USA?

While we were in Korea helping with the count program, a second team were resurveying the entire west coast of Korea searching for large concentrations of waders, (especially Great Knot) in other estuaries. Instead what they saw was new reclamations of intertidal areas that had recently been important feeding and refuelling sites for waders. No new intertidal regions with large (> 10,000) wader populations were found. In Saemangeum and the adjacent more natural Geum estuaries, the numbers of Great Knot staging on northward migration appeared to be lower than in the two previous years (21,539 in 2008 vs 116,139 in 2006). Certainly in Saemangeum, the number of Great Knot from late April to early May were much fewer than the previous estimates before the closure of the seawall (2,769 in 2008 vs 83,404 in 2006).



The view NE from the intertidal flats west of Simpo in Saemangeum showing an island with a restaurant that was only able to be visited by boat before the sea wall closure. The hill behind the island over 2 km in the distance was the former shoreline.

Seeing our migratory waders in their full breeding plumage was a magnificent sight. We had plenty of opportunities to see all the species of wader regularly visiting Moreton Bay during our summer plus other species that do not reach Australia such as Dunlin, Little Ringed Plover, Kentish Plover, Ruff, Spotted Redshank, Eurasian Curlew, Eurasian Oystercatcher, Pied Avocet, Green Sandpiper and more!

Saemangeum and the Geum are two of the best places left to see such rare and unusual waders as the Spoon-billed Sandpiper and Nordmann's Greenshank. Most counters had views of both species at one or more sites. A maximum of seven Spoon-billed Sandpipers and 45 Nordmann's Greenshank were seen by Nial Moores from Birds Korea during a single spring tide count on one of the best roosts in the Geum estuary in early May. These birds were mixed among an estimated 50,000 waders of 16 other species being counted at the same time. Now that the Saemangeum estuary has been reclaimed, the Geum estuary is the most important estuary for migratory shorebirds in Korea. The Korean government has been considering reclaiming the Geum but this has been put on hold for the moment.

While we were very impressed at seeing rare waders and the spectacular site of thousands of waders, these experiences would once have been common. People like Nial and Danny Rogers can remember similar big flocks in other bays that have now been reclaimed. The importance now of keeping the Geum estuary has reached a critical point. The Ramsar Conference will be in Korea in October and November this year. It will be very important for the Australian government to make the Korean Government aware of the needs of keeping the last important shorebird site in Korea.

During the neap tides, counters visited different parts of the Saemangeum and Geum systems to search for leg flags and Spoon-billed Sandpipers. During these visits, we saw several green Moreton Bay leg flags among the 100s of leg flagged birds identified. One of the most recently flagged Moreton Bay birds seen was a coded male Bar-tailed Godwit "CV" originally caught at Geoff Skinner Nature Reserve, Wellington Pt on 22 February 2008. This bird was seen in the Geum estuary in a large flock of over 5,000 roosting godwits and Grey Plover.

The visit to Korea was not all hard work and we spent a week on Eochong Is, 55 km offshore from Gunsan near the Geum estuary mouth. This island is one of three in Korea that appears to be on the main flight paths of migratory bush birds from China on their way north to their breeding grounds in Korea and Japan. During the week on Eochong, Sandra and I saw 130 species of bird including several buntings, flycatchers, thrushes, wagtails and warblers. Each day brought a fall of new migrants to the island. The birds seen varied daily as birds arrived, recovered and moved on to the mainland. Waders of interest included several Wood and Green Sandpipers in breeding plumage. We saw this migration in action when our ferry passed a Pale-legged Leaf-warbler (*Phylloscopus*) on our return to the mainland. The bird was flying strongly about 20 km east of the island heading for the Korean mainland.



Part of the Saemangeum Monitoring Program group at dinner in a local Korean restaurant after a hard day bush birding on Eochong Is. The bottle of Korean beer (Lite) and Korean rice wine Soju (green bottles) were popular for helping relax some participants. From the left are: QWSG members Ken Gosbell (AWSG chair), Ivell Whyte and Margaret Cameron, Birds Korea member Emily Styles, David Milton, Robin Newhope, Henry Brown, and Geoff Styles (obscured)

So, despite the obvious consequences of the Saemangeum reclamation, the three years of surveys have brought world and Korean attention to the large amount of intertidal being reclaimed in Korea and adjacent China. From these surveys and other in China, it is rather ironic that communist North Korea that lacks the economic imperative of its neighbours probably now supports the largest number of waders in the whole Yellow Sea during northward migration. Scientists believe that the Great Knot population passing through Saemangeum were mostly from eastern Australia. We will be monitoring our count data during the summer to see if we can detect any declines in returning Great Knot. Please look out !

David Milton and Sandra Harding

Count Programme by Linda Cross

I would like to remind everyone that the **National Winter Count** is on Saturday 5th July (1.81m at 11:09). If you are unable to do the count please let me know as soon as possible so that I can try and organise another counter to take your place. Can everyone also please send their counts in as soon as possible after the count.

I am happy to announce that we have added more counters to the count programme. The volunteers at Osprey House joined me on 13th February for an introduction on how to count the waders using the mudflats in the Pine River, which is in front of the education centre. As there is no high tide roost close by, the volunteers will be doing incoming, outgoing and low tide counts. The team of volunteers includes Graham and Brenda Smith, who are already regular counters at the Port of Brisbane Corporation counts we do each month, and are also heavily involved with the banding that QWSG do in Moreton Bay. Graham and Brenda are currently training the rest of the volunteers to identify the birds so that more counts can be done. Counts to date have come from Graham, Brenda and Ron Byrne, and it is hoped that the rest of the team will be supplying counts in the near future. We welcome Graham, Brenda, Ron and the volunteers from Osprey House to the count programme.

In the last newsletter I mentioned a report of just one **Double-banded Plover** being recorded on 21.02.08. Records from your count sheets since February now give us more sites where our Tasman visitors can be seen.

15 at Noosa River sandbanks on 22.04.08	5 at Dunwich, Nth Stradbroke on 16.04.08
1 at Shallow Bay, Tweed Heads on 11.04.08	5 at Horseshoe Bay on 08.04.08
11 at Mirrapool Beach, Moreton Island on 07.04.08	172 at Fisherman Island on 06.04.08
19 at Manly Boat Harbour on 05.04.08	6 at Inskip Point on 27.03.08
9 at Dux Creek, Bribie Island on 25.03.08	2 at Dux Creek, Bribie Island on 12.03.08
2 at Wave Break sand island on 11.03.08	1 at Horseshoe Bay on 25.02.08

Beach Stone-curlew

Although I listed sightings of this species at eleven sites in the last newsletter, I am amazed at the increase of records extracted from your counts. The birds have been recorded at 16 sites during the last few months. Having just come back from Fraser Island Bird Week and seeing ten individuals of this species within an hour (one less than the record in 2007), it is such a delight to know that there are more of them being seen. John Bell and Glen Hastie were very pleased to see one at their count site in Maaroom after an absence of eight years.

1 – Gables Point Rocks, Hervey Bay on 20.04.08
 2 – Mirrapool Beach, Moreton Island on 07.04.08
 3 – Finlayson's Point, north of Mackay on 03.04.08
 1 – Sunset Bay, Eimeo, Mackay on 03.04.08
 2 – Horseshoe Bay, Gold Coast on 11.03.08 and 3 on 08.04.08
 1 – Maaroom on 08.03.08 and 1 on 05.04.08
 2 – Dux Creek, Bribie Island on 07.03.08 and 2 on 12.03.08
 2 – Tweed River Entrance, Tweed Heads on 27.02.08 and 2 on 17.03.08
 3 – Jumpinpin, South Stradbroke Island on 25.02.08
 1 – Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island on 23.02.08
 2 – Noosa River sandbanks on 21.02.08 and 2 on 22.04.08
 2 – Inskip Point on 17.02.08
 2 – Cairns Esplanade on 09.02.08, 2 on 10.03.08 and 2 on 07.04.08
 2 – Seaforth Beach creek mouth, North of Mackay on 08.02.08 and 3 on 19.03.08
 2 – Ross River mouth, Townsville on 02.02.08
 2 – Pioneer River mouth, Mackay on 20.01.08

The **Black-tailed Godwit** is not as common as the Bar-tailed Godwit and harder to find. There are only two well known sites in Moreton Bay (Lytton and Deception Bay) where you can usually find them, and a few sometimes turn up at Toorbul. Phil and I have been monitoring the Deception Bay south (mangrove roost) site for 16 years now, and our best count of this species has been 379 in March 1996. You can imagine our delight when we saw and counted 506 birds (majority in breeding plumage) on 8th March 08. This is an all time record for this site during our count period. Even more of a surprise was counting 389 still on site on our next count day 5th April. However, on the May count, all Black-tailed Godwit had gone.

There have been a number of **Grey Plover** records turning up at a number of count sites. They include, Mirrapool Beach and Reeder's Point on Moreton Island, Manly Boat Harbour, Kakadu Beach roost and Dux Creek on Bribe Island, Cairns Esplanade, Jumpinpin on South Stradbroke Island, and Wave Break sand island on the Gold Coast. Most have been a single bird and a couple with up to five birds. The biggest number recorded from count sheets has been 194 at Inskip Point, counted by David Milton and Sandra Harding on 17.02.08.

Happy counting.
Linda Cross.

WADER WATCH Linda and Phil Cross, Joyce Harding

Can everyone please remember to use the 'Leg Flag Observation Report' form.

Can we also please ask people to carefully check which leg the flag is on. If you are not sure, or just see the colour, and do not know which leg it is, please do not make it up using the flag protocol. We do record the sighting on the database, even if we do not know which leg it was on. Recording information that you have not seen, or do not know creates extra work for Phil, I and other people who this information goes to. We would appreciate your cooperation on this issue.

In each Qld Wader issue there are quite a number of green leg flag sightings recorded within Moreton Bay, which is where the bird was banded originally. As we are now seeing more leg flag combinations from other states and countries, and have limited space available for sightings, we will not be listing each individual sighting of green flag records in Queensland unless there is a significant movement of the bird. Instead, we will list the number of flags for each species and the period in which they were seen.

Green leg flag sightings

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Sightings in Moreton Bay & Environs between 26.12.07 & 15.04.08

8 Eastern Curlew, 7 Whimbrel, 56 Bar-tailed Godwit, 21 Pied Oystercatcher, 2 Pacific Golden Plover, 14 Great Knot, 58 Grey-tailed Tattler, 13 Terek Sandpiper, 2 Ruddy Turnstone, 4 Greater Sand Plover, 6 Lesser Sand Plover, 9 Curlew Sandpiper, 1 Red-capped Plover & 7 Red-necked Stint.

The birds sighted above included some of the individually marked flags that QWSG have been fitting and I have listed them below.

Eastern Curlew - **AB, AR**

Whimbrel - **EL, EM**

Bar-tailed Godwit - **AE, AH, AK, AN, AR, AX, AZ, BF, BK, BP, BR, BS, BY, CC, CE, CF, CL, CP, CR, CS, CV, CY, DT, DY, FH**

Pied Oystercatcher - **AA, AC, AE, AF, AH, AK, AL, AM, AR, AS, BN**

Pacific Golden Plover - **EZ**

Great Knot - **EF, EP, ER, ES, EV**

Grey-tailed Tattler - **AB, AC, AE, AV, AX, BB, BE, BK, BN, BP, BR, BT, BU, BV, BX, CK, CL, CV, CX, DM, DN, DT, DV, DX, ED, EE, EJ, EM, ER, ES, EU, EY, FC, FI, HD, HK**

Terek Sandpiper - **AK, AP, AU, AV, AY, BB, BK, CK, CL**

Ruddy Turnstone - **BC, BD**

Curlew Sandpiper - **AN, AP, BN, BT, BU, BV,**

Red-capped Plover - **AL**

Red-necked Stint - **AV**

Interstate & overseas Green leg flag sightings

1 Bar-tailed Godwit - Bell's Island, Waimea Inlet, Nelson, SI, New Zealand - David Melville - 19.03.08

1 Bar-tailed Godwit - Monaco, Tasman Bay, SI, New Zealand - Ingrid Hutzler - 02.03.08

1 Bar-tailed Godwit - Bell's Island, Waimea Inlet, Nelson, SI, New Zealand - David Melville - 27.02.08

1 Bar-tailed Godwit - Bell's Island, Waimea Inlet, Nelson, SI, New Zealand - David Melville - 29.01.08

1 Bar-tailed Godwit - Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Sth Auckland, NI, New Zealand - David Lawrie - 20.01.08

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Sth Auckland, NI, New Zealand – David Lawrie – 06.01.08
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Kaipara Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 24.11.07
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Sth Auckland, NI, New Zealand – J. Hensley – 24.11.07
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 07.11.07
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda Firth of Thames, Sth Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 04.11.07
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda Firth of Thames, Sth Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 28.10.07
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Will Perry – 22.10.07
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 22.10.07
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 11.10.07
1 Red Knot – Papakanui Spit, Kaipara Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 24.11.07
1 Red Knot – Clark's Bay, Manukau Harbour, Sth Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 27.10.07
1 Red Knot – Karaka Manukau Harbour, Sth Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 14.10.07
1 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Dry Creek Saltfields, Adelaide, South Australia – Colin Rogers – 07.02.08

Orange leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – Trevor & Kym Ford *et al* – 24.03.08
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – Esther Townsend – 27.01.08
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Eurong Village beach, Fraser Island – Judith Hewett – 15.10.07
1 Curlew Sandpiper – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 27.01.08

Yellow (North-west Australia) leg flag sightings

- 1 Red-necked Stint – yellow flag left tibia and metal band right tibia – Cairns Esplanade - Shigemi Oyama & Jun Matsui – 30.12.07

White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Wellington Point – Nicola Udy – 05.04.08

Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings

- 2 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly foreshore – David Milton – 12.04.08
1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and metal band right tibia – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 04.04.08
2 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 22.03.08
1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and metal band right tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Jun Matsui – 15.03.08
2 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton – 09.03.08
2 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Shoalwater east, Georges Creek – Andrew McDougall – 06.03.08
1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and metal band right tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 27.01.08
 All above birds flagged in Northern Japan
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – blue flag left tibia – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 04.04.08 (flagged Lake Furen, Hokkaido)
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – blue flag right tibia and white flag right tarsus – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 08.03.08 (flagged Central Japan)

Black over white/white over black (Shanghai, China) flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – black flag right tibia, white flag (E8) on right tarsus and metal band on left tibia – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 08.03.08
1 Great Knot – black flag over white flag right tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Jun Matsui – 14.04.08
1 Great Knot – black flag over white flag right tibia and metal band left tibia – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 22.03.08
1 Great Knot – black flag over white flag right tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Jun Matsui – 17.03.08
1 Greater Sand Plover – Fisherman Islands – David Milton – 24.02.08
1 Great Knot – black flag over white flag right tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Bob Cook – 08.12.06

Other wader leg flag sightings

- 1 Great Knot – blue flag right tibia – Buckley's Hole Sandbar – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 08.03.08
1 Great Knot – black flag right tibia – Buckley's Hole Sandbar – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 23.02.08
1 Greater Sand Plover – white flag above blue flag on left tibia, and metal band right tibia – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 08.03.08 (flagged Taipei, Taiwan)
1 Greater Sand Plover – white flag left tibia and blue flag left tarsus – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 21.02.08 (flagged Taipei, Taiwan)
1 Lesser Sand Plover – white flag left tibia and blue flag left tarsus – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 08.03.08 (flagged Taipei, Taiwan)
1 Curlew Sandpiper – blue over white flag right tibia – Fisherman Islands – Linda Cross – 24.02.08

Pied Oystercatcher 2 digit Yellow leg flag sightings

There has been 22 sightings of yellow flagged oystercatchers in our area. These are not birds flagged in North West Western Australia, as per the flagging protocol. They are another project being run from Victoria and New South Wales. Birds flagged in Victoria will have a yellow flag on the right tibia and inscribed with two digits. New South Wales birds will have the yellow flag on the left tibia and inscribed with two digits.

Interesting sightings

Please note these sightings are not authenticated records.

* = to be submitted to BQ RAC ** = to be submitted to BARC

5 Sanderling – Mirrapool Beach, Moreton Island – QWSG team – 07.04.08

3 Sanderling – Inskip Point – Jill Dening et al – 27.03.08

3 Red-kneed Dotterel – Pine Rivers Northside – David Edwards – 05.04.08

2 Wood Sandpiper – Nudgee Beach Rd, Boondall Wetlands – Jon Coleman – 21.03.08

3 Wood Sandpiper – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 03.02.08

15 Comb-crested Jacana – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight 09.03.08

2 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Fisherman Island – QWSG team – 09.03.08

13 Black-fronted Dotterel – King Street, Thornlands – Joyce Harding – 08.03.08

510 Eastern Curlew – Mangrove Point south claypan, River Heads – Bob & June Gleeson – 22.02.08

466 Eastern Curlew – Geoff Skinner Reserve east – Michele Burford – 23.02.08

419 Eastern Curlew – Swan Bay, Gold Coast – Terry Dillon et al – 08.02.08

17 Sooty Oystercatcher – Finlayson's Point, north of Mackay – Peggy Harding & Stella Mearns – 25.02.08

Some other interesting extracts from count sheets:-

610 Eastern Curlew at Mangrove Point south claypan, River Heads on 08.03.08

428 Whimbrel at Cairns Esplanade on 10.03.08

2003 Bar-tailed Godwit at Toorbul 1km north on 28.01.08

220 Pied Oystercatcher at Manly Boat Harbour on 23.02.08

153 Pied Oystercatcher at Dunwich, North Stradbroke Island on 21.04.08

145 Grey Plover at Fisherman Island on 09.03.08

303 Pacific Golden Plover at Fisherman Island on 09.03.08

190 Common Greenshank at Mathiesen Homestead, Hervey Bay on 09.03.08

666 Black-winged Stilt at Kedron Brook Wetlands on 06.04.08

357 Black-winged Stilt (25% juveniles) at Deception Bay south mangrove roost on 05.04.08

1850 Great Knot at Ross River mouth, Townsville on 02.02.08

55 Red Knot at Deception Bay mangrove roost on 08.03.08

137 Marsh Sandpiper at Luggage Point on 09.03.08

837 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at Luggage Point on 09.03.08

1126 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at Fisherman Island on 24.02.08

1200 Grey-tailed Tattler at Mathiesen Homestead, Hervey Bay on 09.03.08

1288 Grey-tailed Tattler at Fisherman Island on 24.02.08

500 Terek Sandpiper at Glass Mountain creek tree roost on 02.02.08

1855 Curlew Sandpiper at Fisherman Island on 24.02.08

954 Lesser Sand Plover at Fisherman Island on 24.02.08

280 Red-capped Plover at Inskip Point on 03.03.08

134 Red-capped Plover at Dux Creek, Bribie Island on 25.03.08

3242 Red-necked Stint at Luggage Point on 09.03.08

Nomination for 2008 Whitley Awards

CSIRO PUBLISHING is pleased to inform you that we have nominated *Shorebirds of Australia* for the 2008 Whitley Awards (<http://www.rzsnsw.org.au/whitleys.htm#Medal>).

The Whitley Awards are hosted by the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales and are a tribute to Gilbert Whitley, an eminent Australian ichthyologist. The awards are presented for outstanding publications that contain a significant amount of information relating to the fauna of the Australasian region.

We will wait with anticipation to see if this nomination is successful - please note that the awards ceremony does not take place till September 2008.

Congratulations on the nomination, from all the team at CSIRO PUBLISHING.

Best regards, Melinda Chandler - Sales & Marketing Coordinator, **CSIRO PUBLISHING**

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of
Queensland Wader Study Group

MEMBERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE QWSG

<u>CHAIRPERSON:</u>	Andrew Geering	(07) xxxx xxxx	
<u>TREASURER:</u>	Sheryl Keates	(08) xxxx xxxx	or xxxx@xxxx.com.au
<u>SECRETARY:</u>	Peter Rothlisberg	(07) xxxx xxxx	
<u>NEWSLETTER EDITOR:</u>	David Edwards	(07) xxxx xxxx	

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Dawn Beck	(07) xxxx xxxx	Vicki Campbell	(07) xxxx xxxx
Jon Coleman	(07) xxxx xxxx	Maureen Cooper	(07) xxxx xxxx
Ken Cowell	(07) xxxx xxxx	Joyce Harding	(07) xxxx xxxx
Sandra Harding	(07) xxxx xxxx	David Milton	(07) xxxx xxxx
Heather Smith	xxxx xxx xxx	Dez Wells	(07) xxxx xxxx
Ivell Whyte	(07) xxxx xxxx		

COUNT COORDINATOR: Linda Cross (07) xxxx xxxx

CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence to:
The QWSG Chairperson,
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx,
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
QLD 4xxx

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please notify the Treasurer as soon as possible of any change of address so that your Newsletter can be dispatched correctly.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual subscription rates:
Single: \$15:00
Student/Pensioner: \$10:00
Family \$25:00

Receipt will be forwarded with next edition of Queensland Wader.

Forward application to:

QWSG Treasurer,
xxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxx
NT 08xx

Members are reminded their membership expires on the date shown on the newsletter address label, and the membership joining/renewal form is now on the back page. Note that your subscription will fall due twelve (12) months after date of joining the QWSG or date of renewal. Only one further newsletter will be sent after expiry of your subscription.

Copy Deadline for the next issue of Queensland Wader is **August 18th 2008**

Contributions should be addressed to:

David Edwards, The QWSG Editor, xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Qld 4xxx
or E-mail to: xxxx@xxxx.com.au

Opinions expressed in Queensland Wader are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily those of the Queensland Waders Study Group, nor the Queensland Ornithological Society Inc.

Advertising Rates are \$20:00 for one quarter page and \$25:00 for a third of a page.

PRINTED BY: Mr Bob Durrington of J.R. Durrington & Sons Pty Ltd.

QWSG MERCHANDISE

Should you wish to purchase any of the QWSG Merchandise, items may be purchased at BQ Inc meetings held 1st Thursday of the month at the Royal Geographical Society Meeting Room, 237 Milton Road, Milton.

OR

Contact Dawn Beck Phone 07 xxxx xxxx or email xxxx@xxxx.com.au

Postage is not included in prices quoted.

BOOKS	\$45.00	Shorebirds of Australia
	\$19.80	Shorebird Conservation in the Asia-Pacific Region
	\$20.00	Status and Conservation of Shorebirds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.
CD	\$20.00	Bird Calls of the Broome Region (includes 42 Wader Species)
METAL BADGES	\$5.00	Metal QWSG logo badges.
CLOTH BADGES	\$8.00	QWSG logo on rectangular bottle-green or sand background
POLO SHIRTS	\$35.00.	

Our cotton polo shirts are finally available. The locally made shirts are plain bottle or sky with contrast collar in sand or tri-coloured sand/cocoa/sky and sand/cocoa/bottle. Sizes S – XXL in men's as well as XS and S in women's. Please bear in mind when ordering that sizes are extremely generous.



We are having more polo shirts made and there will be smaller sizes available again. So contact to place your order.

Other Conservation Activities of Interest



QWSG is a special interest group of the Birds Queensland Inc. whose object is: "To promote the scientific study and conservation of birds by all means possible, with particular reference to the birds of Queensland".

Separate membership is required. Contacts: President, Marianne Keller (07) xxxx xxxx; Secretary, Jim Sneddon (07) xxxx xxxx; Treasurer, Frank James (07) xxxx xxxx.

Monthly Meetings	Birds Queensland - 7.45pm 1 st Thursday each month except January, when there is no meeting. Royal Geographical Society Meeting Room, 237 Milton Road, Milton. Arrive after 7:15pm for a 7:45pm start.
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NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently :

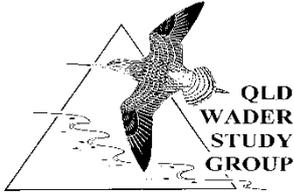
Jun Matsui

A reminder to members to please let the Treasurer know if you change your email address.

Many thanks too to those who have included a donation with their renewal or membership fee. This is greatly appreciated as such donations make on-going work possible.

WADER ID DAYS

At present we are having great difficulty in finding suitable times for Wader ID days. We hope to have times arranged for the next newsletter.



Count Activities 2008

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2008

Sat 17 th May	1.92m at 07:26		Sat 20 th Sep	2.18m at 12:54	
NO COUNT IN JUNE			Sat 4 th Oct	2.08m at 12:16	
Sat 5 th Jul	1.81m at 11:09	National Winter Count	Sat 1 st Nov	2.24m at 11:14	
Sat 23 rd Aug	2.02m at 14:07 (2:07pm)		Sat 6 th Dec	2.00m at 15:11 (3:11pm)	

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2008

Sun 18 th May	1.88m at 08:05	Meet 06:30	Sun 21 st Sep	2.13m at 13:53 (1:53pm)	Meet 12:05
Sun 22 nd Jun	1.72m at 11:31	Meet 09:40	Sun 5 th Oct	2.00m at 12:57	Meet 11:10
Sun 6 th Jul	1.82m at 11:57	Meet 10:10	Sun 2 nd Nov	2.17m at 11:49	Meet 10:00
Sun 24 th Aug	2.03m at 15:19	Meet 13:30 (1:30pm)	Sun 7 th Dec	1.95m at 16:12	Meet: 14:20 (2:20pm)

The Port of Brisbane is a work site and we are doing the survey for the Port and ourselves. Unfortunately we cannot accept people who turn up on the day for a bird watching day.

NOTE CHANGES FOR MARCH, AND CHANGE OF DAY FOR JULY PORT COUNT TO SUNDAY

PLEASE CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR RENEWAL IS DUE!

A reminder to members to please let the Treasurer know if you change your email address.



MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION

I / We wish to join / renew: (Single \$15; Family \$25; Student/Pensioner \$10)

Title..... First name: Surname Name:.....

Address:..... Membership: \$.....

..... Postcode:..... Donation: \$.....

..... Payment enclosed: \$.....

Phone: (Home) (Work)

Fax / e-mail:

TOTAL \$.....

How did you hear about QWSG

Are you a member of Birds Queensland?.....

What activities do you wish to participate in? (Please circle)

WADER COUNTS, FIELD TRIPS, SCIENTIFIC DATA COLLECTION, SURVEYS, CLERICAL,
OTHER (specify.....)

SIGNATURE: DATE:.....

Post to: QWSG Treasurer, xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, NT 08xx

Cheques to be made out to: Queensland Wader Study Group

For a direct credit, please use the following details.

Account name: Qld Wader Study Group
 Account number: xxxxxxxx
 Financial Institution: Uni Credit Union
 BSB: xxxxx

An email advice to Sheryl Keates xxxx@xxxx.com.au would be appreciated.