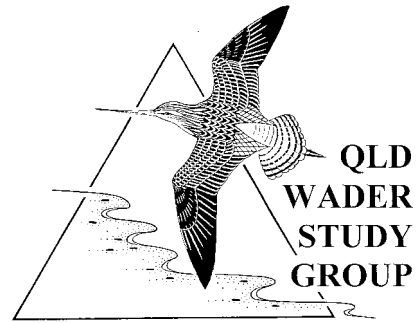


QUEENSLAND WADER



Issue number 055

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

SUMMARY OF QWSG ACTIVITIES IN 2005

Report presented at the AGM on Sat 3 December, 2005

The QWSG had another successful year in 2005 and the range of activities was again very diverse for such a small group of active members. We continue to be sought for advice and help on coastal development issues by state government agencies, semi-government Corporations and local councils. I think we have tried to present a balanced approach in our dealings with these management agencies and they appear to value our advice. There are a number of new proposals for QWSG participation in projects during 2006 that will ensure another busy year is ahead.

During 2005, the committee was again focused largely on trying to complete existing projects before we undertook any new ones. This was partly successful and significant progress has been made on several of the larger, and more challenging projects that should see them completed during 2006. In reading over my report from last year, I see that many of the projects and plans for 2005 failed to get completed as newer and seemingly "more urgent" issues pushed their way to the fore.

- **QWSG Book** – During the year, Andrew Geering again continued working hard in trying to get the text of the book ready for submission to a publisher. Sandra Harding and Andrew have successfully attracted the interest of CSIRO Publishing in the book and the text of the book has now been finalised and sent to CSIRO for review and assessment. There still remains the collection of photographs and illustrations for the book and any changes to the text following refereeing. However, the committee is now confident that the book will be finally published in 2006. Watch out for a notice or brochure in the newsletter next year.
- **Wader course** – The committee decided to defer a wader course for 2005 while Andrew Geering focussed on completing the text of the wader book. At the time, it was planned to hold the next course in the first half of 2006. Information about dates for the course should be in the newsletter early in 2006.
- **WWF Shorebird Project** –
 1. *Great Sandy Strait* – Almost 40 QWSG members, Qld Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) staff and interested locals participated in the wader count and mapping of high tide roosts in Great Sandy Strait in January 2006. Staff from Baymap used the plots of each roost to make a Geographic information System (GIS) layer of the roosts. This layer has been provided to the Maryborough City, Hervey Bay City and Cooloola Shire Council planning departments to be used in conjunction with existing cadastral maps and environmental value layers to make more informed planning decisions in coastal areas of the Great Sandy Strait.

2. *Southern Gulf of Carpentaria* – Sandra Harding and David Milton joined Russell Kelly from WWF and wetland ecologist Jim Tate on a two week tour of the southern Gulf of Carpentaria in May 2005. The group met with all pastoral and traditional landowners in the region from almost the NT border to 100 km NE of Karumba. During the trip, the group travelled over 2000 km visiting pastoral properties and traditional landowner communities. The aim of the visit was to raise awareness of wetlands, their management and use by waders. Sandra and David prepared information sheets on waders that used freshwater wetlands, simple identification kits and count sheets and gave several public talks to landholders, Burke Shire Council, traditional landowner groups and the Southern Gulf NRM Group based in Mt Isa. All properties visited gave a warm reception and were interested in waders and how their wetlands contributed to maintaining their populations. Jim Tate produced a 90 page report on wetland conditions in the region during our visit and Sandra and David contributed recommendations in relation to improving wetlands for migratory waders. The report will eventually be available on the Southern Gulf Catchment NRM Group website: www.southerngulfcatchments.com.au
- **Port of Brisbane** – QWSG continued the monthly count program at the Port Of Brisbane with 12 counts in 2005. These counts are coordinated by Michele Burford continue to be well attended, with many members attending for one or more counts and enjoying the hospitality of Wayne Young with the BBQs on site after several counts.
 - **Newsletter and website** – The QWSG published four newsletters during 2005 and they continue to receive positive comments from readers. I thank David Edwards for his continuing efforts as editor, making each issue informative and topical with excerpts and articles from across Australia and the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. The count program continues to be the backbone of the newsletter, with Linda Cross making a sterling effort to ensure all counts are recorded and passed on to Joyce Harding for data entry or Phil Cross for entry of the leg flag sightings. We also thank Ivell and Jim Whyte for their efforts in labelling and posting the newsletters to members and ensure they all arrive on time. The QWSG website has been off-line for 2005 while David and the committee grapple with the decisions about the style and content of the website and what its primary focus will be. These discussions will be finalised early in 2006 and we plan to shortly have a new look website up and operating at www.waders.com.au. In the meantime, members can look for information about coming QWSG events at the Birds Queensland website (<http://www.birdsqueensland.org.au>) and follow the link to their page about QWSG.
 - **Count program and ID days** – The QWSG count program continued successfully during 2005 under the dedicated guidance of Linda Cross. There were 11 monthly counts at regular roost sites and 12 counts at the Port of Brisbane that are also incorporated into the QWSG count database. Joyce Harding has continued in her role as data entry person and has shown continued dedication to ensure that the counts are entered quickly and accurately. During 2005, I undertook some preliminary analysis of the Moreton Bay counts that Michele Burford presented at a workshop for the Japanese visitors in October 2005 (see below for details). David Edwards and Linda Cross have continued to run a series of wader ID days for new and not so new members. Attendance in 2005 has not been as large as in previous years, but they do provide a valuable exercise and a way for newer wader watchers to gain advice and help from the “experts”.
 - **NRM and Library** – During 2005, Joyce Harding attended four meetings of the SEQ Natural Resource Management Group as a representative of QWSG. The NRM allocated \$20,000 to raise awareness of shorebirds and their habitats. Some of these funds have been used to fund a part-time resource teacher to take the QWSG education kit into Queensland schools. Other activities planned include making a short TV segment for Channel 7’s Brownie’s Coastwatch to highlight the linkage between water quality in Moreton Bay and healthy intertidal habitats where waders can feed. Michele Burford has agreed to help with this promotion and may even be the presenter. We are still waiting for more detail from SEQ NRM and Channel 7.
 - **Education project, posters and visit by Japanese birdwatchers** –Ivell Whyte has completed the NHT-funded Education Project and the education kit produced has been popular. This education kit comprises range of materials including a series of PowerPoint presentations, presenter’s notes and activity booklet. Ivell has had help from David Edwards, Joyce Harding, daughter Raelee Carter and Lesley Bradley in compiling the content and making sure it was relevant to the school curriculum. In 2005, the SEQ NRM has agreed to fund a part-time educator to take the kit and present it to interested schools. Other educators in Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania have also received copies of the kit and we hope this will encourage more public education on waders in Australia.

We also had a return visit by Hit Akotsu and 10 other Japanese birdwatchers from Yatsu Higata in October 2005. This year they asked if we could hold a workshop where Japanese delegates and QWSG members presented results of wader and wetland studies in each country. The POB Corporation kindly allowed the use of the seminar room at the Port Visitor Centre for the workshop. All participants agreed that the workshop was enjoyable and the mutual exchange of information was very beneficial. At present, there are plans for a similar workshop in October 2006. Once again, Ivell Whyte took a major role in helping ensure our visitors had a busy and productive visit. They all left having had a renewed appreciation of Australian waders and ways we have tried to manage threats to them.

- **Wader counts of southern Moreton Is** – Following a request from the EPA, QWSG has been sending a team of counters accompanied by Qld Parks and Wildlife staff to undertake counts on roosts on southern Moreton Is. QWSG has participated in counts in February, July and October 2005. These are the first counts from this important region since January 2002 after our founding chair, Peter Driscoll left Brisbane. This region is very important to Eastern Curlew and Bar-tailed Godwit and the total number of birds reaches over 5,000 birds at the three major roost sites. The EPA is keen to monitor wader disturbance at Mirapool, where vehicles regularly disturb the birds as they roost on the beaches. The new Moreton Is Management Plan expected to be gazetted in early 2006 has new regulations that try to reduce or eliminate this disturbance. The EPA would like QWSG to participate in monitoring this disturbance in order to assess effect of the new regulations.

I hope that members can see from this list of activities that the QWSG committee have had another busy and productive year. The profile of waders and QWSG is rising and lets all hope that this increase in public awareness will have direct benefits for the conservation of waders and their habitats in Queensland.

Looking ahead to 2006

We plan to undertake further roost mapping activities in 2006, like the ground-truthing of wader roosts in the Great Sandy Strait that happened in late January. This will be undertaken in collaboration with the Burnett-Mary NRM and the Qld Environmental Protection Agency Southern region staff based in Maryborough. To help shoulder the work load for organising and collating the information on this project, QWSG has sub-contracted Kirsty Balmer to help. Kirsty is a 4th Yr Science student from University of Queensland with an interest in community participation and project development. I hope that we can use Kirsty's interest and skills to improve the public awareness and interest in waders and their habitats in the region from Tannum Sands south to Hervey Bay. We believe activities such as this will have lasting benefits for the waders by getting information on waders included in the local government planning schemes and making more people aware of waders and their needs.

Happy and safe wader watching to all members in 2006 and I look forward to meeting more members during the planned survey activities in 2006. What your newsletter for details or contact me.

David Milton
Chairperson

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently :

Kirsty BALMER
Heather SMITH

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.

Committee Meeting

There is usually a committee meeting of the QWSG every two months, because arrangements for these meetings are made on an *ad hoc* basis after each meeting it is impossible to announce the times of these meetings in Queensland Wader.

For further information you can contact the QWSG Chairperson, David Milton, on (07) xxxx xxxx.

Burnett Mary shorebird mapping project

The Queensland Wader Study Group (QWSG) has been asked by the Burnett Mary Regional Group for Natural Resource Management (BMRG) to identify and map migratory and resident shorebird roost sites in the Burnett Mary Region. The project aims is to produce accurate maps and identify site risks in order to assist local government with natural resource management and planning. A further part of the project is to identify possible breeding resident shorebird sites on the mangrove islands in southern Great Sandy Straits and survey for shorebirds on the Fraser Is beach (north of Wathumba Ck on the west coast and the east coast south from Dilli Village to Hook Point).

Reconnaissance survey December 2005

David Milton and Sandra Harding surveyed the southern eastern coast of Fraser by vehicle at low tide and then returned on 2 Jan at high tide and counted birds at both North Spit and on the open beach at the navigational beacon near Hook Pt, where there were almost 1500 birds as well.

Don and Lesley Bradley took David and Sandra on their boat, 'Tern Loose' up the inside of Fraser Is on New Year's Day and where the birds were counted at high tide roosts all along the Platypus Bay beach from south of Wathumba Ck to past Rooney Pt. About a 1000 waders were counted along that beach as well as about 1000 terns. GPS fixes were taken for all the larger groupings of birds in both regions of the island. David and Sandra talked with Ivan Thrash, ranger on Fraser Is and saw his data on resident birds along the coast and counts of the North Spit roost.

The Queensland EPA provided funds for some aerial reconnaissance and we decided that this would be most efficiently done by helicopter. After discussion with the helicopter pilot, Kevin Whyte at MI Helicopters and a strategic assessment of the priority areas, it was decided to use the helicopter to identify roosts from 1770 south to Pt Vernon. This was manageable in just over 5 hrs flying time. About 35 roosts were identified in that region, up from the 10 or so known before the flights. Many are in inaccessible places from land and almost all will require boats to visit and map. As well, a new large roost of about 2500 birds was found, including many breeding Black-winged Stilts, on the dredge spoil ponds south of the Bundaberg port and NE (opposite) of the large sugar shed on Buss St. at Burnett Hds. This appears to be a new roost. Kevin provided a copy of all roost fixes on 1:100,000 topographic maps. He was a very good pilot and very helpful during the survey.

Field Surveys for the area from Point Vernon to Baffle Creek

The field surveys of the southern part of the Burnett Mary coastline will take place in February and October of 2005. The northern section from Baffle Creek to Tannum Sands will be included in the October survey only. The 1st weekend field survey is planned for Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th of February at the morning high tides. Species counts occur on the high tide when the birds are predominately still. This standard allows us to assume that we have not counted the same bird twice when counts of multiple coastal sites are done on the same day/tide.

To give an idea where we will be on the 25th and 26th the approximate locations are listed below. Depending on the location, high tides will be around 6:30am on Saturday and around 7:30 am on Sunday. The roost sites at these locations were identified through ground, sea, aerial reconnaissance and discussions with local bird enthusiasts. They are:

- Croonie Creek – Moore Park
- Skyring Estuary – Burnett Heads
- Bundaberg Port – Burnett Heads
- Elliot River – Elliot Heads
- Coonarr Creek – Coonarr
- Theodolite Creek – Woodgate
- Burrum River – Burrum Heads
- Toogoom Creek – Toogoom (Hervey Bay region)
- Dundowran Creek – Hervey Bay
- Eli Creek Hervey Bay



Roost 14 on the North Bank of the Burnett River looking northwest

QWSG is endeavouring to involve the local community, industry and government wherever possible. We aim to hold some public information evenings and are encouraging future roost counts (monthly, quarterly or yearly) by local volunteers to strengthen the data for the region. This is based on the premise that the more information we have for the authorities the better the outcomes will be for the birds.

There are other field surveys to be undertaken to complete the project particularly during southward migration in October. Please advise me or any committee members if you have time to assist with the field work.

Kirsty Balmer
 QWSG Project coordinator
 xxxx@xxxx.com.au
 07 xxxx xxxx

Flag Sighting From Mackay

The details of the Ruddy turnstone leg flag sighting as follows:

- **Flag:** Blue flag on upper left leg (angled cut), white flag on lower left leg (angled cut). Right lower leg metal band.
- **Location:** Dudgeon Point -21.24635; 149.25616 (on rocky/sandy shoreline adjacent to vehicle track running down to Dudgeon Point beach).
- **Date:** 02 Dec 2005
- **Time:** 1215
- **Counters:** Matt Bloor, Marj Andrews, Steve Bourke and Catherine Wheeldon (QPWS).

I did take a couple of digi-scope pictures, but they didn't work out unfortunately.

I am pleased to have the first Qld sighting of Ruddy Turnstone from Yatsu tidal flat. Pass on my regards to your Yatsu friends.

Kind regards,
 Matt

Matthew Bloor
 Mackay Whitsunday Coastal & Marine Program Coordinator
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 xxxx@xxxx.com.au
 MWNRM Group Inc
 www.mwnrm.org.au

Our First Japanese Exchange Visit Forum A Great Success!

QWSG's support of and participation in the wetlands affiliation agreement between Brisbane and Narashino City in Japan took a wonderful leap forward with the holding of a short forum on shorebird-related topics on October 16 last year. Hosted by QWSG, the forum afforded an opportunity for information exchange between community groups and others involved with the two very different sister wetlands of Boondall and the Yatsu-Higata.

While Boondall covers 1100-plus hectares and is part of the large Moreton Bay Ramsar site, the tiny Ramsar-listed Yatsu Higata is a 40ha cement-enclosed tidal wetlands within Narashino City itself. It was once part of Tokyo Bay, but as a result of reclamation is now 2km inland. Tidal exchange occurs via two canals from the Bay.

The Yatsu tidelands are a significant stopover point for around 10 000 shorebirds on annual migration within the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. Green leg-flagged waders from Moreton Bay are regularly recorded in the Yatsu during migration, an affirmation of the special link between the two wetlands.

The forum was held in conjunction with the annual visit to Brisbane by delegates from the Yatsu-Higata. Visitors on this occasion were all members of the Wild Bird Society of Japan, Chiba branch, including the president, Hideo Shimura, who was one of the key-note speakers. Shimura-san led the morning's session with an excellent PowerPoint presentation entitled "The Future of Man, Birds and Tokyo Bay" (see further comments in following article). The presentation was entirely translated into English as was the second presentation by Hit Akutsu on the growth of sea-lettuce in the Yatsu-Higata – a credit to the visitors and their dedication to the exchange.

Wayne Young from the Port of Brisbane Corporation followed with an informative talk on the Port expansion and the Corporation's Shorebird Management Plan. This comprehensive plan includes the 12Ha artificial high tide roost for shorebirds and two birdhides for public education purposes. The roost site had been visited during the planning stages by 10 of the Japanese participating this time and they were most impressed by its progress. The site was officially opened by the Minister for Environment on 4 November 2005.

Wayne explained that there's a provision within the plan ensuring at least two of the six settling ponds are available during the reclamation period as roosting and feeding areas for shorebirds. The effectiveness of this provision is borne out by the fact that the Port reclamation area is now the most significant high tide roost in Moreton Bay in terms of wader numbers.

Michele Burford and Ivell Whyte from QWSG finished off the forum with updates on what's happening with waders in Moreton Bay.

Peter Rothlisberg did an excellent job as MC and Brisbane speakers were grateful for the assistance of Koichi Hatanaka, who translated for us during our presentations. Koichi is Treasurer of WBSJ, Chiba and was the visiting group's interpreter this year. It has to be said, though, that the Japanese visitors' command of English was far superior to ours of Japanese.

The exchange of information was a great success and all involved with the affiliation agreement have expressed a desire to see the forum as a permanent facet of the exchange visits.

The Port of Brisbane Visitors' Centre proved to be a great venue. Our thanks to the Port of Brisbane Corporation for its generosity in providing the auditorium, plus morning tea and coffee before the start of proceedings. Our gratitude to Wayne Young for his wonderful assistance in ensuring everything ran smoothly for us.

And thank goodness QWSG decided to have the Eco Café cater lunch for us afterwards instead of picnicking by the lake! It poured rain, but we had the best time watching the birds from the café's viewing deck with our delighted visitors.

Editor's Note:

Because of the large important articles used in this issue, some regular items, eg ID Day reports, will be held over for Issue 056

WBSJ Chiba – a Kindred Spirit in Japan

Wader watchers are all alike – passionate about our birds and their protection, and a little eccentric – our country of origin matters little! This was the distinct impression one had during the October QWSG forum presentation by members of the Chiba branch of the Wild Bird Society of Japan. In Australia we spend hours with sandflies, mud and mangroves; in Japan they examine Scaup droppings at midnight on mudflats.

Retaining and protecting wader habitat is an ongoing concern for WBSJ members. For the Chiba branch, as with QWSG here, monitoring of bird populations, education and research are all part of the conservation process.

Hideo Shimura, key-note speaker at the forum and president of the Chiba branch, highlighted during his presentation the impacts of pollution on the benthos in Tokyo Bay. Oxygen-deficient water resulting from pollution (blue tides) diffusing over the shallows and mudflats of inner Tokyo Bay during summer can kill entire populations of bivalves overnight. Shimura-san showed graphic images of these as well as fish and crustaceans similarly affected.

In the Sanbanze, where there remain about 1200 ha of shallows and tidal flats, volunteers have transplanted eelgrass to areas from which it had been lost, to help counteract the effects of blue tides. Presence of good quantities of bivalves at the base of the transplanted eelgrass has been promising – a top result for seagrass watch in the Sanbanze!

According to Hit Akutsu, our second visiting presenter, the Yatsu-Higata is similarly affected by pollution. 80% of the tidelands are covered by sea-lettuce (*Ulva* sp.) growth and wader numbers in the Yatsu have decreased to 33% of the 1990 population. Research on feeding patterns has shown that the waders are 7 times more likely to be found on exposed mud than on areas covered by sea lettuce.

Currently, the *Ulva* is cleared manually at low tide and removed in sewage tankers, but this is very much a temporary situation. Growth of the sea lettuce is faster than removal.

Akutsu-san carried out experiments as part of an “*Ulva* project”, comparing growth in sea lettuce under normal conditions (in sea water) and in samples with 4 hours exposure to fresh water in a 24 hour period. Over a period of 12 weeks, it was found that the fresh water suppressed growth by 60%.

Inflow of fresh water to the Yatsu has decreased dramatically since 1993, when the drainage route was changed. WBSJ Chiba is proposing to the Ministry of the Environment redirecting fresh (reclaimed) water back into the tidelands.

As an addendum, Akihito Hasegawa, Vice Manager Dept of Environment, visited Brisbane with a Council delegation from Narashino during World Wetlands Day celebrations this year. He advised that a 3-year research program to solve the tidelands’ problems was forthcoming.

We’ll be following it with interest. Let’s hope it’s successful!



Shiofugai (a thin-shelled clam of the family Mactride, *Mactra reneriformis*) killed by a blue tide in Tokyo Bay
Photo: NPO Sanbanze

Mackay Survey Report – January 2006

The Australasian Wader Studies Group (AWSG) approached QWSG to undertake another survey in the Mackay region and Matt Bloor, the Mackay Whitsunday Coastal and Marine Program Co-ordinator (MWNRM Group Inc) agreed to facilitate.

The survey was undertaken to support the Monitoring Yellow Sea Migrants In Australia (MYSMA). The Australasian Wader Studies Group is carrying out this project with funding from DEH. The project has fairly broad objectives. It was prompted by the ongoing reclamation of Saemangeum in South Korea, a development that is likely to have substantial effects on flyway populations of a number of shorebird species; the Great Knot is of particular concern, as around 20% of the world population stages at Saemangeum when on northwards migration. There is a need to know if this reclamation will have detectable effects in Australia, and to do that there is a need to improve monitoring capacity, especially in northern Australia. Additional objectives of the project are to investigate field-based and analytical ways of increasing the sensitivity of population monitoring at specific sites, and to generally re-invigorate population monitoring in this country.

Much of the budget is being spent in north-western Australia, the non-breeding stronghold of Great Knot. However, there is also interest in monitoring other Great Knot sites, particularly as there is a school of thought that general flyway declines in a population will first be noticed at sites at the extremities of the range, or with smallish shorebird populations. With a Great Knot population of around 5,000 birds the Mackay region is important enough to Great Knots to be of considerable importance, yet small enough to potentially show quite different patterns of population change. This year is an important one, as it may be the last opportunity to get baseline data before closure of the Saemangeum sea wall is completed.

Thirteen QWSG members from Brisbane and Danny Rogers AWSG from Victoria were allocated sites for the weekend and as with previous surveys some changes took place prior to arriving in Mackay.

Some areas of Mackay had received good rains prior to our arrival, and forecast for strong winds on top of king tides for the weekend in the region meant our plans would again require amending. All these factors were somewhat reminiscent of our last survey of the region in February 2004.

Two of the group had flown up on Thursday morning, and were met at our accommodation (Padaminka) by two other members of the group, who had driven up to Mackay a few days earlier. After unloading our luggage and a quick change of clothes the four of us set off to survey Tedlands, which is a wetland area south of Sarina. It was overcast, for which we were grateful giving us cooler conditions to work under. We had been told that areas south of Sarina had received good rains, which was evident as we headed south viewing the full and overflowing dams on the way.

It was *deja vous* once again as we approached the wetland, but there was a bigger volume of water pouring over the causeway than in 2004. So, access past the causeway to survey the back section of the wetland was not possible. With the expansive water at the site we did not expect to see many waders and only picked up four species for a total of sixteen birds. On the far side of the wetland is a rookery used by a large number of Cattle Egret, some Little Egret and Little Black Cormorant, with many of the species busily going about their parental duty. After a lunch break we headed off to find the dam where in the past we had recorded good numbers of Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, but again, like 2004 it was full and there did not appear to be any birds present.

We headed back up the highway and decided to survey Lake Barfield, which is at Hay Point. The team doing Dudgeon Point on the weekend usually surveys this lake, but as it is quite large and extensive we decided to get a count that day in case the team did not have enough time on Saturday. The cloud was thickening and rain set in as we started the count. Only a total of thirty one waders all up, but good numbers of waterbirds, with high lights being the twelve Radjah Shelduck coming out of the water close by and perching in a dead tree in the lake, two adult Brolga with two young birds and six Glossy Ibis.

On Friday morning our group had increased to five and we set off to survey the Mackay Port wetlands. As we walked along the railway line to reach one of the sites swarms of small cicadas would fly off, which explained the numerous birds we encountered that were probably attracted to the feast. White-breasted Woodswallow, Welcome Swallow, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Torresian Crow and more Spangled Drongo than I have ever seen in one spot. By the time we finished the count the rain had set in and was quite heavy as we battled the local shoppers and car parking in the shopping centre to collect provisions for the weekend. Heavy showers were the order for the rest of the day.

On Friday evening the group got together for an update on worsening weather conditions. A low had formed off Calen (north of Mackay), and a deep low off Townsville was expected to form into a cyclone the next day producing rain and gale force winds along the coastline. The boats for the Saturday and Sunday counts were cancelled and Danny Rogers had made previous contact to advise that he had to pull out at the last minutes due to the increased bush fires Victoria was experiencing, that were potentially threatening his property. The site allocations changed once again, we returned to Padaminka for an early night. During the night some of us were woken by the very heavy showers (torrential at times), and we wondered just what tomorrow would bring.

To our surprise on Saturday morning the weather conditions did not look too bad. The low had formed into cyclone Jim, and was heading away from the coast. Although it was very windy, there were only a few showers for some teams. We all headed off early to try and get the counts before the king tides and the wind pushed the birds off the roosts. The Dudgeon Point team had made good time until they entered the private property and found a vehicle across the track blocking their way. During the night the strong winds had blown down a power line across the track and a small tree next to the track was supporting it. The driver of my team wanted to go under it, but I was not about to be zapped with 11,000 volts, so we waited for Ergon to turn off the power. It was forty minutes later when we finally got going again, but the delay gave us an opportunity to talk to the locals, which proved fruitful as we were told there was a very keen birdwatcher with a property backing onto Lake Barfield. Never letting a chance go by I arranged a meeting later in the day.

It was not just the Dudgeon team having a difficult count. It appears that the team doing Bakers Creek had to crawl on their bellies (combat style) through the mud to view and count the birds, and there was more to come. One of them had a brand new Swarovski high definition scope that blew over in the wind sending it into the sand zoom eyepiece first, while the other member of the team put their new expensive prescription glasses down somewhere in the dunes and lost them. A team of four spent the rest of the afternoon looking for them without success.

After the Dudgeon count the team headed to Hay Point in search of a possible new recruit, but the men (Dez & Phil) had other reasons for the visit. During our discussions with the locals earlier, and unbeknown to me, they had been told about some very tasty scones. We arrived at the property of Judy Halat and straight away we were offered a cup of tea or coffee, and yes, out came the homemade jam and scones topped with fresh cream. It appears that Judy's mum makes her own jam and scones and Judy had been to visit her that morning bringing some home. A special thank you to your mum Judy for the best tasting home made scones I have ever tasted, and thank you for your hospitality.

Judy also has quite a selection of bird photographs, with a couple of unidentified waders that we helped her identify. We then went for a walk through the property to the lake and saw immediately that we were looking at areas that are not visible from where the counts have been conducted. Judy has asked her husband to build a little hut on the edge of the lake, where she can spend some time viewing the birds, and we appreciate the fact that she has also agreed to conduct counts for us.

Saturday night the group joined Matt Bloor, Stuart Fyfe and Marj Andrews for an evening meal and to discuss any changes for the roosts north of Mackay to be surveyed on the Sunday. The weather forecast was for things to improve, but the boats were once again cancelled so arrangements were made for that team to try and access another site by vehicle. Thankfully the helicopter was going ahead with the survey as planned, which was important because the sites to be covered by helicopter are the ones with big numbers of Great Knot.

Once again the group was up early on Sunday to get to the roosts before the king tides pushed the birds off again. None of the teams had any dramas during their counts for the day. Floss and Ken helped me transport the rest of the team to the airport for their flights back to Brisbane and I headed back to Padaminka to do last minute clean up and a rest before getting the plane back to Brisbane the next morning.

A total of 37 sites were surveyed (9 sites fewer than February 2004). No leg flags were observed at any of the sites and the only possible breeding record was at the Mackay Port Authority wetlands when a Black-winged Stilt was doing a broken wing display.

A table with figures on the wader species (in taxonomic order) and numbers recorded during all the surveys of the Mackay region are included with this article. Waterbirds were also recorded using the sites, however, again due to lack of space in the newsletter, they are not printed. The nine sites not surveyed due to the strong winds possibly explain the lower wader totals than previous counts.

Some of the high counts were as follows: -

- 364 Whimbrel at Pioneer River
- 49 Common Greenshank at McEwans Beach Swamp
- 30 Ruddy Turnstone at O'Connell River Mouth
- 1880 Great Knot at O'Connell River Mouth
- 1314 Lesser Sand Plover at Pioneer River Mouth
- 503 Great Sand Plover at Deadman's Creek New Beach
- 177 Pied Oystercatcher at St. Helens Beach
- 19 Sooty Oystercatcher at Finlayson Point

A total of 10 Beach Stone-curlew was counted. 3 at Pioneer River, 1 south of Shellgrit creek, 2 at Dudgeon Point Claypan, 3 at Seaforth and 1 at Sand Bay.

Not waders, but of interest anyway:

- 12 Radjah Shelduck at Lake Barfield
- 1 Black-necked Stork at Shellgrit Creek
- 2 Adult Brolga with 2 young at Lake Barfield
- 1 Great Crested Grebe at Lake Barfield
- 6 Glossy Ibis at Lake Barfield
- 38 Wandering Whistling Duck at Tedlands
- 36 Plumed Whistling Duck at Mackay Port Wetland
- 6 Lesser Crested Tern at Seaforth

We would like to thank the following people for allowing survey teams onto or through their property to conduct the counts. Their cooperation is very much appreciated:

Joe & Phyllis Abela – owners of Habana Wharf

- Vic Welsh – owner of Tedlands
- Mackay Port Authority – Mackay Port Wetlands
- Brett Windsor – lessee Dudgeon Point owned by Qld Ports Corporation

We would like to sincerely thank the following people for their assistance with this survey:

Matt Bloor, Members of the Mackay Conservation Group and members of the Bird Observers Club of Australia Mackay branch. A special thank you to Maureen Cooper, who again supplied accommodation for the team at Padaminka and also for her generosity letting us use her two vehicles for the surveys. We thank them all for their continued support.

Our sincere thanks to everyone for his or her assistance.

The participants for this survey are listed below: -

QWSG Members: - Dawn Beck, Ken Cowell, Linda Cross, Phil Cross, David Edwards, Andrew Geering, Peggy Harding, Sandra Harding, David Milton, Peter Rothlisberg, Floss Wainwright, Dez Wells, Jim Whyte, Ivell Whyte.

MWNRM:- Matt Bloor

QPWS staff: - Barry Nolan.

Mackay City Council: - Stuart Fyfe

BOCA Mackay: - Marj Andrews.

Other helpers: - Faye Griffin, Stella Mearns, Desley Williams.

By Linda Cross.

Table of the waders seen on the Mackay Trip

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>Reconnoitre Nov 2002</u>	<u>Jan 2003</u>	<u>Apr 2003</u>	<u>Oct 2003</u>	<u>Feb 2004</u>	<u>Jan 2006</u>
Black-tailed Godwit	-	331	-	116	71	-
Bar-tailed Godwit	1242	4360	236	1530	2343	2854
Little Curlew	-	16	-	1	-	-
Whimbrel	332	813	1586	1647	975	1002
Eastern Curlew	546	1324	448	1235	294	422
Marsh Sandpiper	5	50	5	2	11	13
Common Greenshank	88	153	80	148	90	136
Terek Sandpiper	21	152	179	172	329	118
Common Sandpiper	-	2	-	-	-	-
Grey-tailed Tattler	46	417	1311	929	832	358
Ruddy Turnstone	-	61	98	10	38	53
Great Knot	447	5679	229	1935	6047	4407
Red Knot	-	31	29	251	7	8
Red-necked Stint	162	1995	844	1676	749	628
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	25	1030	4	1006	68	68
Curlew Sandpiper	40	90	13	191	5	44
Comb-crested Jacana	-	18	2	1	1	7
Bush Stone-curlew	-	12	5	3	4	1
Beach Stone-curlew	2	4	10	2	7	10
Pied Oystercatcher	134	662	477	223	539	357
Sooty Oystercatcher	10	40	33	20	35	51
Black-winged Stilt	15	268	39	8	56	86
Pacific Golden Plover	59	457	208	775	39	7
Grey Plover	91	113	89	39	175	81
Red-capped Plover	57	356	231	419	157	99
Double-banded Plover	-	-	1	-	-	-
Lesser Sand Plover	33	1817	895	499	1887	2637
Greater Sand Plover	14	493	170	1462	1078	817
Black-fronted Dotterel	4	20	2	19	1	6
Red-kneed Dotterel	-	4	-	3	-	-
Masked Lapwing	14	81	118	76	51	68
Australian Pratincole	-	4	-	-	-	-
Unidentified larger wader	-	-	21	-	1	-
Unidentified medium wader	60	53	108	202	-	-
Unidentified small wader	21	-	179	-	35	39
Unidentified Sand Plovers	-	714	140	-	-	-
Unidentified Tattler sp.	-	9	-	-	-	-
Unidentified Snipe sp.	-	-	-	1	-	-
Unidentified wader	-	-	200	150	-	-
Total migratory waders	3232	20160	7073	13977	25074	13692
Total resident waders	236	1469	917	774	851	685
Total waders	3468	21629	7990	14751	15925	14377
Total migratory species	15	20	18	20	18	17
Total resident species	7	11	9	10	9	9
Total species	22	31	27	30	27	26

WADER WATCH Linda and Phil Cross, Joyce Harding

Leg Flag Banding Legend (colour = where banded)

- Green = Brisbane/Queensland
- Orange = Victoria
- Yellow = Northern Western Australia
- White = New Zealand (some species banded in New South Wales)
- Blue = Japan

There are more leg flag sightings detailed in this newsletter.

Green leg flag sightings

In each Qld Wader issue there is 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 countries in Queensland, and have limited space available for sightings, we will not be listing each individual sighting of the 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.

The following green flag sightings were recorded in Moreton Bay and environs between 3.9.05 and 18.2.06
4 Eastern Curlew, 20 Bar-tailed Godwit, 9 Great Knot, 1 Ruddy Turnstone, 1 Grey-tailed Tattler & 2 Greater Sandplover

Interstate & overseas Green leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Sone Estuary & tidal flat, Kitakyushu, Fukuoke, Japan – Masafumi Takeshita – 9.4.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Papakanui Spit, Kaipara Harbour, Auckland, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 5.11.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Clarks Bay, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, New Zealand – Gillian Vaughan – 6.11.05
- 2 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 4.12.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, New Zealand – Ian Southley – 5.1.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Bells Island, Maimea Inlet, Nelson, New Zealand – Willie Cook – 12.1.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, New Zealand – David Lawrie & Tony Habraken – 14.1.06
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 3.12.05
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 1.1.06
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, New Zealand – David Lawrie & Tony Habraken – 14.1.06

Orange leg flag sightings

(*Errata*: the record of 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 17.10.05, which appeared in issue No 54 has the incorrect date. The date should be 9.10.05)

- 1 Whimbrel – Pine Rivers Wetland Reserve – Ken Cowell & Floss Wainwright – 11.2.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 8.10.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – Esther Townsend – 20.11.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island – David Edwards et al – 3.12.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 2.1.06
- 1 Red Knot – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 4.10.05
- 2 Red Knot – Deception Bay mangrove roost – Phil & Linda Cross – 11.2.06
- 1 Curlew Sandpiper – Fisherman Island – David Edwards – 17.12.05
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 20.11.05
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Fisherman Island – Andrew Geering & Linda Cross – 12.2.06

White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings

- 1 Curlew Sandpiper – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 5.11.05

Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings

- 1 Ruddy Turnstone – angle cut blue flag left tibia, angle cut white flag left tarsus, metal band right tarsus – Dudgeon Point, Mackay region – Matt Bloor & Marj Andrews – 2.12.05 (Yatsu Tidal Flats, central Japan)
- 1 Ruddy Turnstone – blue flag right tibia, white flag right tarsus – Fisherman Island – David Milton et al – 12.2.06 (Obitsu, central Japan)
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 24.10.05
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag right tibia – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 5 & 8.11.05

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia, metal band right tarsus – Wellington Point – Jon & Janet Coleman – 14.1.06 (the 3 sightings above are all Hokkaido, northern Japan)

Other wader leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – black flag right tibia – Shornecliffe – Stuart Chambers – 14.10.05 (unknown, possibly Alaska)
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – white flag right tibia and orange flag right tarsus – Acacia Street, Wellington Point – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 22.10.05 (Korean Peninsula)
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – etched white C9 on black flag right tarsus, metal band left tarsus and radio transmitter – Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island – Dez Wells et al – 3.12.05 (Alaska) *see article page 15*
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – green flag over orange flag left tibia and white flag right tibia – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 7.1.06 (Yalu Jiang Nature Reserve, Liaoning Province, China)
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – etched white C9 on black flag right tarsus, metal band left tarsus and radio transmitter – Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island – Frank Bigg, Lois MacRae & Michael Willis – 14.1.06 (Alaska)
- 1 Great Knot – white flag above black flag right tibia – Seaforth Beach, north of Mackay – Peggy Harding & Stella Mearns – 16.2.05 (Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China)
- 1 Great Knot – black flag right tibia – Toorbul wader id day – David Edwards et al – 18.2.06 (unknown)
- 1 Curlew Sandpiper – white flag above black flag right tibia – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Dez Wells – 20.11.05 (Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China)
- 1 Curlew Sandpiper – white flag above blue flag left tibia, metal band right tibia – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Dez Wells – 14.1.06 (Taipei-Kaohsjung, China. Taiwan)
- 1 Masked Lapwing chick – red band right tarsus – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 20.11.06

Other leg flag sightings and banded birds

(*Errata*: the record of 1 Little Tern with orange flag on right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 28.08.05, which appeared in issue No 54 has been recorded as the incorrect species. The species should be a Caspian Tern.)

- 2 Black-naped Tern – green flag left tarsus, metal band right tarsus – Wilson Island, Swains Reef, Great Barrier Reef – David Edwards – 8.9.06
- 2 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus, metal band left tarsus – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 1.11.05
- 1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus, metal band left tarsus – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight, Bill Gauld & Dumell McDonald – 5.11.05
- 1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Dez Wells – 18.12.05

Interesting sightings

Please note these sightings are not authenticated records.

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

- 5 Red-kneed Dotterel – Pine Rivers Northside – David Edwards – 22.10.05
- 6 Black-fronted Dotterel – Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – Barry Ellis – 9.11.05
- 8 Black-fronted Dotterel – Salt Works, Bowen – Jon Wren – 22.12.05
- 2 Latham's Snipe – Tin Can Bay Sewerage Works – Kelvin & Amelia Nielsen & Dorothy Pashniak – 6.11.05
- 9 Bush Stone-curlew – Pioneer River, Mackay – Les & Dawn Thyer – 14.11.05
- 2 Pied Oystercatcher (first record on site) – Pine Rivers Northside – David Edwards – 20.11.05
- 1 Grey Plover (unusual at this site) – Lytton – David Connolly – 20.11.05
- 2 Wood Sandpiper – Garnet's Lagoons – John Knight, Bill & Avis Gould – 28.11.05 (1 still onsite 7.1.06)
- 1 Wandering Tattler (most unusual at site) – Geoff Skinner Reserve, Wellington Point – Peter Rothlisberg – 18.12.05
- 1 Wandering Tattler (not common here) – Redcliffe – Rob & Alex Stogdale – 14.1.06
- 641 Black-winged Stilt (some nesting) – Luggage Point – Ivell & Jim Whyte – 11.2.06

Not waders but of interest anyway

- 17 Eastern Reef Egret (4 grey phase) – Wilson Island, Swains Reef – David Edwards – 8.9.05
- 16 Eastern Reef Egret – Bushy Island, off Mackay – Matt Bloor, Derek Ball et al – 14.12.05
- 50 Eastern Reef Egret – Redbill Islet, off Mackay – Matt Bloor, Derek Ball et al – 14.12.05
- 1 Pied Heron (south of range) – Garnet's Lagoons – John Knight – 27 & 28.11.05
- 2 Black-necked Stork – Saltworks, Bowen – Jon Wren – 22.12.05
- 8 Radjah Shelduck – Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – Barry Ellis et al – 11.2.06
- 1 Plum-headed Finch (escapee? with Chestnut-breasted) – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 18.12.05
- 2 Plumed Whistling Duck (with 5 ducklings) – Bishops Marsh – Dez Wells – 18.12.05
- Wandering Whistling Duck (3 ducklings) – Kingscliff Sewerage Plant – Ian Watson & Matthew Angus – 9.1.06
- Wandering Whistling Duck (3 young) – Banora Point, Tweed Heads – Ian Watson et al – 12.1.06

Chestnut Teal (with young) – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 14.1.06
1 Hoary-headed Grebe – Bishops Marsh – Dez Wells – 18.12.05

Ian Watson has a few wetland sites that he counts, and his January count sheet for Trutes Wetland at Tweed Heads had a total of 22 species recorded on it. Although there was only two wader species present (one being a Latham's Snipe) the water birds records would have been rewarding with 9 species listed as breeding records.

Count Programme by Linda Cross

Having written a report about the recent Mackay survey we undertook in January this year, which is quite lengthy, I am keeping the count programme as brief as possible, to allow other items to be placed in this issue of Qld Wader.

Thank you to everyone for the quick despatch of the national summer count sheet in January. There are only a couple outstanding, which are on the way. Myself, Joyce Harding and David Milton will now be able to process them for delivery to AWSG.

When your count sheets arrive I am always eager to see what species and numbers of birds are recorded, especially when we ourselves have some surprises during our own counts. There is so much good information, and I wish I could share it all with you here in the count programme, but I would need the whole issue of the newsletter just to cover it and the wader watch section.

January counts were quite eye opening with large numbers of species that one would expect to see around the end of February and early March. To have such numbers on the 14th January makes me think that some species have already started the northward migration. We were totally surprised to find 455 Black-tailed Godwits (one in 80% breeding plumage) and not one Bar-tailed at our Deception Bay site. The best counts we have had for this species are 327 in February 1996, peaking to 379 the following month of March. Also at the site was 43 Marsh Sandpiper, which again is unusually high for January.

I have listed below some of the highest counts extracted from the November, December, January and a few of the February count sheets (not all are here yet), but it should be noted that other sites also recorded high numbers of some of the species.

870 Eastern Curlew – Geoff Skinner Reserve, Wellington Point – 18.12.06 (895 on 11.2.06)

3493 Bar-tailed Godwit – Mirrapool Beach, Moreton Island – 13.2.06

2466 Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Boat Harbour – 5.1.06

263 Black-tailed Godwit – Deception Bay mangrove roost – 11.2.06

300 Whimbrel – Toorbul – 2.11.06

105 Common Greenshank – Acacia Street, Wellington Point – 11.2.06

3300 Great Knot – Ross River Mouth, Townsville – 18.12.05

1250 Grey-tailed Tattler – Mathieson Homestead – 17.12.05

801 Grey-tailed Tattler – Fisherman Island – 12.2.06

902 Pacific Golden Plover – Fisherman Island – 15.1.06 (498 on 12.2.06)

1100 Red Knot – Ross River Mouth, Townsville – 18.12.05

1500 Terek Sandpiper – Mathieson Homestead – 7.1.06

207 Ruddy Turnstone – Fisherman Island – 15.1.06 (198 on 12.2.06)

2289 Curlew Sandpiper – Fisherman Island – 15.1.06 (1194 on 12.2.06)

6163 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Luggage Point – 11.2.06

2078 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Fisherman Island – 15.1.06

350 Greater Sand Plover – Ross River Mouth, Townsville – 20.11.05

1100 Lesser Sand Plover – Ross River Mouth, Townsville – 20.11.05

3700 Red-necked Stint – Fisherman Island – 15.1.06 (5239 on 12.2.06)

Beach Stone-curlew

There have been quite a number of Beach Stone-curlew sightings during the last couple of months, which is good news, but no breeding records for this species, which is disappointing.

2 at Black Beach north Mackay – 6.10.05

2 at St Helens Beach north of Mackay – 12.10.05

1 at Dalrymple Point Bowen – 23.11.05 & 3 on 15.1.06

1 at Sandy Cape, Fraser Island – 4.12.05

1 close to Rooney Point, Fraser island – 4.12.05

3 at Pioneer River, Mackay – 7.12.05 & 2 on 13.12.05
 2 at One mile beach, North Stradbroke Island - 24.12.05
 1 at Tony's Island Tweed Heads – 14.1.06 This sighting caused great excitement for counters Marion Williams and Laurel Allsopp, as this species has not been seen on the Tweed for several years. In fact the last record was 1 bird at Tweed River Entrance on 21.12.02

Breeding records

Red-capped Plover nests and or chicks have been recorded from Fisherman Island, Seaforth Beach creek mouth, Bakers Creek, Mackay, St Helens Beach north of Mackay, Kakadu Beach Bribie Island, Sandy Cape Fraser Island and Young Avenue Kinka Beach Yeepoon between 19.11.05 to 18.12.05

Black-winged Stilt nest and or chicks have been recorded from Fisherman Island, Kedron Brook Wetlands and Deception Bay between 19.11.05 to 14.1.06

Masked Lapwing chicks have been recorded from Lota on 20.11.05 and Maaroom on 18.12.05

Interesting sighting

Michael Strong recorded an albinistic godwit (pale white with brown flecking) at Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island on 29.1.06. The bird was with a flock of 2000+ Bar-tailed and 78 Black-tailed.

Happy counting. Linda Cross.

Good news, bad news, and great news: satellite tagged Bar-tailed Godwits

As a prelude to the 2005 Beringian Shorebird Expedition to Alaska and studies of long-distance migrant waders, nine Bar-tailed Godwits were captured on their nests in early June on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta (YKD). Five females had new 22-g satellite transmitters (PTTs) surgically implanted in their abdominal cavities while four males had conventional, but long-lived VHF radios implanted under the skin on their backs. Each bird was marked with a black leg flag with a unique alpha/numeric code. This work was viewed foremost as a test to see if 1) shorebirds could adapt to the surgical implant procedure, and 2) a long-distance migrant like the godwit could prepare for, and complete, its migration while carrying an implanted PTT. At the time of capture this represented only the third time that a PTT had been used on a shorebird and the first time one had been implanted in a shorebird.

The PTTs were programmed to report for a brief period once every eight days until mid-August and then for an 8-hour period daily through early October.

The good news: all birds departed the nesting area and moved to intertidal flats along the coast where eight of the nine birds were eventually detected as far as 200km from their capture sites. One highly nomadic female with a PTT flew from the YKD to the Alaska Peninsula and back—a roundtrip of 1,000 km—over a 10-day period in early August.

The bad news: between 25 June and 18 August all PTTs stopped reporting signals.

The great news: to date four of the nine marked godwits are known to have completed their migration. Three were seen in New Zealand and one in Queensland, including different PTT-marked birds at each location. A fifth bird was possibly seen in northern Queensland but this has yet to be confirmed. The first of the marked birds was reported from Manukau Harbour, New Zealand, on 19 September with the most recent coming from Christchurch on 17 December. Interestingly, even some paired godwits—like some humans—take separate vacations. Two birds (**C8** and **C9**) were captured at the same nest, yet the female was seen in Queensland and the male in New Zealand.

The birds demonstrated, and the manufacturer has acknowledged, that the failure of the PTTs was not due to mortality of the birds but to technical problems with batteries. In 2006, a suite of Beringian-trained biologists will return to sites in western Alaska with plans to capture more nesting godwits and outfit them with both re-designed implantable PTTs and 9.5 g solar PTTs. On behalf of *Beringia 2005*, a hearty THANKS to the keen eyes in the southern hemisphere.

Bob Gill (xxxx@xxxx.gov)

WADER ID DAYS for 2006

Sunday 19th March 2006 at Toorbul

High tide at 11:54 (plus 40 mins later for Toorbul) of 1.91m. Meeting time will be at 11:00am.

Take the Bruce Highway north from Brisbane to the Donnybrook/Toorbul turn-off near the Big Fish. Turn off here and head east over the highway overpass. Continue on this road to Toorbul. Turn right at the T-junction then first left and then right, which brings you onto the Esplanade. Follow this road to the end (approximately 2kms), we will be on the left.

Please contact either Linda Cross 07 xxxx xxxx or David Edwards 07 xxxx xxxx if you have any questions

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of
Queensland Wader Study Group

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Ivell Whyte	

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xxxxxxxxxx
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.

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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 **May 18th 2006**

Contributions should be addressed to:

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

Computerised contributions should be in IBM Word, ASCII or Rich Text.

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.

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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, ; Secretary, ; Treasurer, Les Taylor (07) xxxx xxxx.

Monthly Meetings

Birds Queensland - 7.45pm

1st 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.

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 Rooms **OR**....

Contact Linda Cross on 07 xxxx xxxx or E-mail at xxxx@xxxx.net.au

Postage is not included in the prices quoted.

Polo Neck Shirts \$30:00 Limited stock.

Books \$19:80 Shorebird Conservation in the Asia-Pacific Region.
\$ 3:30 A Guide to Waders of Moreton Bay (through Birds Queensland)
\$24:00 Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds

No longer in stock: Birds of Bribie Island, Pumicestone Passage and Environs
Wildflowers of Bribie Island

However, can be obtained from BIEPA by contacting Kathleen Catalan on 07 xxxx xxxx

No longer in stock: A Birdwatcher's Guide to Redcliffe, Pine Rivers and Caboolture Shire.
However, can be obtained from WPSQ Caboolture branch by contacting Brian & Eileen Rigden on 07 xxxx xxxx

CD \$22:00 Bird calls of the Broome region (includes 42 Wader Species).

Cloth Badges \$8.00 We now have the new bottle green cloth badges, made to same design that appears on our Polo Shirts. They can be sewn onto your cap, hat, jacket, jumper & bag. If you are interested please contact Linda.

POLO SHIRTS, CLOTH BADGES & METAL BADGES

We are currently looking at organising new stock of polo shirts and badges from new suppliers and would like to hear from members who are interested in purchasing any of the two items mentioned. This will be particularly helpful for us when placing the order in relation to sizes, colour etc. People who contacted us previously with their choice of colour and size need to contact us again please as there will be colour changes.

The polo shirts will be two or three tones in colour and can be purchased with a pocket or without a pocket. At this point in time we do not have a costing for them and are therefore unable to give you a price. **We have 5 Polo Shirts left from previous stock (all are large size - 4 Beige and 1 Jade) and we are clearing them out at below cost price of \$15 + postage and handling. If anybody is interested please contact Linda.**

We have new metal QWSG logo badges available for sale. The badge has been made like the logo that appears on the front top right corner of this newsletter with pale grey for the sand, blue ocean/sky and the godwit is pale grey, black/brown with a little white. They are 3-½ cm in size and are very stylish. Price is \$5 + postage and handling.

Please contact Ivell Whyte on xxxx xxxx or Linda Cross on xxxx xxxx



Activities 2006

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2006

Sat 11th Mar 2.17m at 07:34
 Sat 1st Apr 2.03m at 11:25
 Sat 13th May 1.88m at 09:12

No count in June

Sat 15th Jul 1.88m at 12:46 **National Winter Count**
 Sat 12th Aug 2.03m at 11:38
 Sat 9th Sep 2.16m at 10:30
 Sat 7th Oct 2.25m at 09:24
 Sat 4th Nov 2.27m at 08:17
 Sat 9th Dec 2.29m at 12:25

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2006

Sun 12 th Mar	2.23m at 08:15	Meet 06:30
Sun 2nd Apr	1.83m at 12:04	Meet 10:15
Sun 14 th May	1.82m at 09:50	Meet 08:00
Sun 18 th Jun	1.81m at 15:07	Meet 13:20
Sun 16th Jul	1.90m at 13:41	Meet 11:50
Sun 13 th Aug	2.05m at 12:26	Meet 10:35
Sun 10 th Sep	2.22m at 11:16	Meet 09:25
Sun 8th Oct	2.35m at 10:09	Meet 08:20
Sun 5 ^h Nov	2.40m at 09:03	Meet 07:15
Sun 10 th Dec	2.18m at 13:06	Meet 11:15

PLEASE CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR RENEWAL IS DUE!



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, xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, NT 0xxx
 Cheques to be made out to: Queensland Wader Study Group