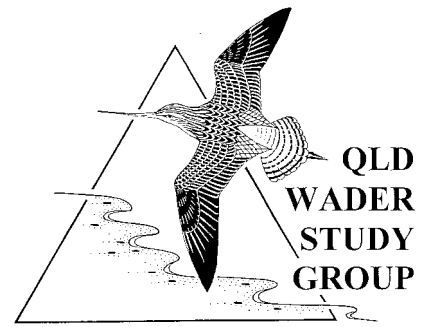


# QUEENSLAND WADER



Issue number 060

June, July, August 2007

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

## Port of Brisbane Corporation Count Results - 2006

The QWSG has just completed its fourth year of thorough monthly counts for the Port of Brisbane Corporation (PBC) at Fisherman Islands, and again, 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 2006 the overall count was 73,033 waders and 17,809 waterbirds, which does not include the figures for the Visitors Centre Lake (89 waders and 4,808 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 (12,323), the highest one-day count over the last four years. This figure was probably attributed to the new additional reclamation ponds that were formed in the extension. The overall count in 2006 is quite a significant increase on the highest total recorded in 2003.

2006	2005	2004	2003
73033	51416	56124	57302

Continual works and changes at the PBC reclamation area were noted during our monthly visits and two sites (**S1 and J Paddocks**) were deleted from the counts as they had been filled in.

**S2** – the small portion that was left of this 18-hectare site was finally filled in by June, but has a breeding record for Black-winged Stilt in January. A total of 1057 Red-necked Stint was recorded on the site in February.

**S3A** – this 18-hectare site was reduced in size during the year and by the end of 2006 no longer existed. The site has breeding records for Black-winged Stilt in January and Chestnut Teal in January, February, and April. In June 261 Red-necked Avocets were counted on the site.

**S3B** – although the site is only 10 hectares it still continually supports good wader numbers and species. The site is particularly favoured by Pacific Golden Plover and high numbers were recorded for seven out of the 12 months. The best figures being 795 in January and 885 in March. A total of 2058 Red-necked Stint was also counted in November.

**Area 5** – the 12 hectare protected roost that has been built for the shorebirds is still not attracting many migratory waders, but the potential to hold a large number of them is there when the time comes. In the meantime it is a favoured by Chestnut Teal. One lone Red-kneed Dotterel was recorded on the site in March.

**R1** – a 20-hectare site that has had a lot of work done on it providing a large area of broken ground making it a nightmare to count, because a large variety and numbers use the site and the smaller waders roost down in the rubble. Some good figures include 54 Grey Plover and 1410 Curlew Sandpiper in January, 2600 Red-

necked Stint and 1132 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in February, 96 Double-banded Plover in May and 1 Broad-billed Sandpiper in December.

**R2** – 1 smaller 17-hectare site, which is less attractive to the waders, although 755 Lesser Sand Plover and 105 Ruddy Turnstone were recorded in January, and 2 Broad-billed Sandpiper in December.

**C1** – for the first five months of 2006 this was a large 33-hectare site before being split into two sites, which added C2 to the count sheets in June. Now it is 17-hectares in size. An interesting sighting of 1 Bush-stone Curlew was recorded in January, 4 Broad-billed Sandpiper in February, 108 Ruddy Turnstone and 2 Broad-billed Sandpiper in April and 261 Red-necked Avocet in October.

**C2** – split from the main C1 site in June, this is a 16-hectare site, which to date has not attracted many waders. The best figures are 567 Grey-tailed Tattlers in August and 941 Red-necked Stint in December.

**FPE BS** – known as Bayside, this is 26-hectares in size, but only a small number of waders use it. However, something attracted Little Black Cormorant to the site in July when 750 were recorded, and 1858 in August. One Red-kneed Dotterel was seen in June.

**FPE Outer** – the largest area, (122-hectares) to count on the outer section of the expansion, which is done by driving around it. Grey-tailed Tattler and Ruddy Turnstone particularly like roosting around the bund walls. Tattler numbers recorded were 656 in February, 670 in September, 600 in October, 700 in November and 959 in December. Two of the highest totals for Turnstone were 119 in February and 133 in December.

**Claypan** – a very large area to count that was difficult to get accurate figures for because of size, access and trees obscuring views. During the year it was possible to get on the other side of the trees, which meant we could get better views, but will always be impossible to count the whole site. A variety of species use the site, but in smaller numbers, with the exception of Eastern Curlew and Whimbrel. The highest Eastern Curlew count was 260 in December, and the highest Whimbrel count was 221 in March.

**Visitors Centre** – the only wader species recorded at the site in 2006 was Masked Lapwing and Black-winged Stilt, both in small numbers. The site is still a very good waterbird area and Chestnut Teal, Dusky Moorhen, Black Swan and Australasian Grebe have bred there this year. A Nankeen Night Heron was seen in January and a Buff-banded Rail in October.

### Flagged birds were seen as follows:

<b>February</b>	Green flags on Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Grey-tailed Tattler (1) and Ruddy Turnstone (1). Orange flag on Red-necked Stint (1). Blue and white flag on Ruddy Turnstone (1).
<b>March</b>	Green flags on Bar-tailed Godwit (3) and Great Knot (1).
<b>May</b>	Two blue flags and a metal band on Red-necked Stint (1).
<b>August</b>	Orange flag on Caspian Tern (1).
<b>September</b>	Orange flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Red-necked Stint (1) and Caspian Tern (1). Blue flag on Red-necked Stint (1).
<b>October</b>	Green flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Orange flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Yellow flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (1) White flag, yellow/blue and yellow/red bands on Bar-tailed Godwit (1).
<b>November</b>	Green flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (2).
<b>December</b>	Green flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (4) and Lesser Sand Plover (1). Blue flag on Grey-tailed Tattler (1).

### Breeding records:

Red-capped Plover species were recorded at R2 in January (nesting), C1 in January (1 chick) and C1 in September (nest with one egg).

Black-winged Stilt species were recorded at S2 in January (2 chicks) and S3A in January (2 chicks plus a nest with 3 eggs).

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

<b>January</b>	15 Chestnut Teal chicks and 392 Silver Gull S3A. 1217 Little Tern R2.
<b>February</b>	2 Chestnut Teal young S3A.
<b>March</b>	105 Little Pied Cormorant Area 5.
<b>April</b>	4 Chestnut Teal young S3A. 1 Brown Falcon and 660 Little Tern C1.
<b>May</b>	132 Royal Spoonbill and 2 Great Cormorant Visitors Centre Lake.
<b>June</b>	207 Chestnut Teal and 1 Swamp Harrier Area 5.

<b>July</b>	89 Australian Pelican and 132 Royal Spoonbill Visitors Centre Lake.
<b>August</b>	4 Lesser Crested Tern R2. 1 Lesser Crested Tern C2.
<b>October</b>	1 Great Cormorant Visitors Centre Lake.
<b>November</b>	290 Chestnut Teal Area 5. 3 Whiskered Tern Visitors Centre Lake.
<b>December</b>	1032 Little Tern R2. 2 Whiskered Tern Outer FPE. 27 Whiskered Tern FPE BS.

Wader species (in taxonomic order) and numbers using the PBC sites during 2006 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. Very special thanks to Wayne Young for the continual sacrifice of his time on the weekends of 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, Michele Burford, Vicki Campbell, Lynn Cole, Phil Cole, Jon Coleman, Maureen Cooper, Ken Cowell, Linda Cross, Phil Cross, Andy Eacott, David Edwards, Andrew Geering, Joyce Harding, Sandra Harding, Martin Havlicek, Ron Hoff (USA), Dave Houghton, Barbara Main, Peter Main, Gay Maxwell, Renee McGlashan (PBC) David Milton, Dollyanne Myers (USA), Pete Nichols, Amber Perry, Anne Rasmussen, Bruce Rasmussen, Ralf Reiger, Virginia Ridgley, Danny Rogers (AWSG), Peter Rothlisberg, Martin Ryan, Rebecca Ryan, Kath Shurcliff, Brenda Smith, Graham Smith, Heather Smith, Pat Stockwell, Nicola Udy, Floss Wainwright, Ivell Whyte, Jim Whyte, Ted Wnorowski, Wayne Young (PBC).

We will be continuing our counts at the PBC in 2007 and will require a good support group to help us achieve this. Please feel free to contact us if you can help with the counts, as any assistance is a bonus. You will be surprised at what is behind the wire fence.

The dates and meeting times for the PBC counts are listed at the back of this newsletter. Please contact myself: Linda Cross email: xxxx@xxxx.net.au Home: xxxx xxxx

Or

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

By Linda Cross

## EMAIL- Subject: One Year after Sea-wall Closure: Saemangeum, South Korea

Dear All,  
Saemangeum Shorebird Monitoring Program 2007, Second Count Cycle Update

This is a draft summary of count data and habitat assessment from the second spring-tide cycle of this year's Saemangeum Shorebird Monitoring Program, a joint initiative of the domestic organization Birds Korea and the international Australasian Wader Studies Group. These data and information will be refined further, for publication in the SSMP 2007 Report and in other papers, and can be cited freely by others (with proper acknowledgement and caveats).

Between April 9th and April 19<sup>th</sup> 2007, a total of fifteen people counted or assisted counting shorebirds within the 40,100 ha Saemangeum reclamation area (until April 21st 2006, comprising the free-flowing estuaries of the Mangyeung and Dongin Estuaries), Gomso Bay and the Geum Estuary, three adjacent intertidal wetlands on the west coast of South Korea. In addition, two teams of observers also traveled north to Asan Bay (Gyeonggi Bay) on April 16<sup>th</sup> to locate and photograph (successfully) two Bar-tailed Godwits (E1 and E8) satellite tracked to Korea from New Zealand.

Data are here summarized from counts at Gomso Bay on April 19th; at the Geum Estuary on April 15th; and within Saemangeum, between April 15th and 18th (including boat-based counts on the 18th).

At Gomso Bay, two full counts were made, with the high tide count on April 19th producing 2,941 shorebirds, comprised largely of Great Knot (1664), Dunlin (720) and Far Eastern Curlew (315). This total compares with only a single shorebird found at the same site on April 15th 2006!

At the Geum Estuary, repeated counts at mainland sites were supplemented by simultaneous counts of both mainland and outer tidal-flat sites on April 15th. A total of 50,560 shorebirds were counted at this time, with most numerous being Great Knot (28,554), Dunlin (13,050), Bar-tailed Godwit (4029) and Far Eastern Curlew (1405), while 9 Nordmanns Greenshank (Endangered) were also recorded. This total compares with only 45,731 shorebirds counted in the same area on April 17th, 2006, with much of the difference made by the very greatly increased total of Great Knot (only 10,429 in 2006), and lower numbers of both Dunlin and Bar-tailed Godwit. A second day of research at Yubu Island during a very high tide of 6.7 m on April 18th produced a much larger estimate of 50,000 Great Knot and 9500 Bar-tailed Godwit, as well as 16 Nordmanns Greenshank and 50 Saunderss Gulls (Vulnerable). These latter counts are not included in the totals here, as they were not part of a simultaneous counting effort.

Within the Saemangeum area, land-based counts by four teams were supplemented by a boat-based count on April 18th. In total, 69,441 shorebirds were counted, with 29,801 at the Mangyeong and 39,640 at the Dongjin (this compares with a rather similar total of 71,709 shorebirds counted within the Saemangeum area between April 15th and 17<sup>th</sup> 2006). Most numerous were Great Knot (6188 at the Mangyeong and 25,727 at the Dongjin) and Dunlin (19,212 at the Mangyeong and 10,678 at the Dongjin). Based on leg-flag observations (including several birds flagged in northwest Australia and at Chongmin Dao in the Yangtze Estuary), it appears that some of this similarity in numbers year to year might be in part the result of Great Knot building in number here this spring earlier than in 2006 – possibly due to more favorable weather conditions during migration allowing birds to reach the Korean west coast earlier. The third count cycle, in early May, should be useful in confirming or refuting this.

While Saemangeum remains of considerable international importance to shorebirds, conditions within most of the reclamation area continue to deteriorate, with open expanses of desert-like dried-out sandflats and severe water quality conditions prevalent in many wet areas leading to red algal bloom puddles in muddy areas, dense gravy-brown waters in some bays, and thick scum and dried foam in creeks and channels. The recent tidal range is estimated at only 17cm, and only one significant area of tidal-flat (lying far out in the Dongjin) appeared relatively healthy, supporting 18,820 Great Knot and 2745 Dunlin on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Many other areas used by shorebirds in 2006 and in March and early April 2007 are becoming narrower and drier, and some such areas supported significantly fewer shorebirds between the first and second count cycles this year.

While it remains too early to predict how the shorebirds now staging and arriving within the area will fare this spring, it does appear that we are now recording significant displacement of birds from the Saemangeum reclamation area to neighbouring (and possibly other) sites. In the case of Gomso Bay, the near complete absence of Great Knot using the site in 2006 (or in earlier years) suggests that the area will likely be unable to support long-term significant concentrations of the same species in 2007 and beyond. At the Geum, frequent skirmishes between feeding Great Knot have already been observed (including pecking at legs and attempted stealing of food items), as well as foraging in among tide-line garbage (possibly on stranded shellfish). Both suggest that many Great Knot might find it very difficult to acquire the necessary weight and body condition to migrate and breed successfully – especially as it is believed that the species migrates more or less direct to breeding areas from this region in the second half of May.

Considering the region's extreme importance to waterbirds, and the obligations held by South Korea under the Ramsar Convention and under the Bilateral Migratory Bird Agreement signed by Korea and Australia, it is absolutely apparent that the sea-gates must be opened further to restore greater tidal exchange, to reduce water quality problems and to maintain the few remaining areas of healthy tidal-flats (even more so as, one year after seawall completion, there still remains no end-use for any land made by this disastrous project.) We aim to continue our awareness-raising efforts through mailings to media (domestic and international) and interested parties; through interview (e.g. with a documentary team from the domestic MBC TV on 19<sup>th</sup>); and through other activities, including a symposium at the local Wonkwang University (Iksan) on May 4<sup>th</sup>, and an informal display at the same university between May 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.

Note: Participants of the SSMP on dates between April 10<sup>th</sup> to April 19<sup>th</sup> included: Geoff Styles, Tony Crocker, Andrew Patrick, Keith Metzner, Park Jong-Gil, Nial Moores, Peter de Haas, Jeong Sun-Gu, Han Sung-Ho, Han Hyun-Jin, Kim Tea-Kyun, Peter Nebel, Danny Rogers, Sarah Dawkins and Sajahan Sorder.

Nial Moores, Birds Korea, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007. [Http://www.birdskorea.org](http://www.birdskorea.org) [Http://www.birdskorea.or.kr](http://www.birdskorea.or.kr)

## QWSG Ramps Up the Leg Flagging of Waders in Moreton Bay

As most of our migratory waders head north for their breeding season, the potential for new and exciting sightings of our increasing number of individually-flagged birds in other parts of the flyway will increase. QWSG has flagged 173 birds at three sites in Moreton Bay since the new flagging program began in September 2006. The majority of the birds have been caught at the Manly Boat Harbour roost (see Table 1). Fifteen species of wader have been caught and the most commonly caught species were Grey-tailed Tattler and Lesser sand Plover. Queensland has the largest population of these two species during their non-breeding season. Much less is known about their migrations as they are infrequently caught in Victoria and north-western Australia where the large flagging projects have now been run for up to 32 years. We hope that putting individually-coded flags on these species will give us additional insight into their migration patterns and important stopover sites as they fly to and from their breeding grounds.

**Table 1:** The number of birds of each age for each wader species caught at the three sites where QWSG has mist netted between September 2006 and April 2007.

Species name	Capture site	Age	N
Bar-tailed Godwit	Manly Boat Harbour	1	6
Bar-tailed Godwit		2+	10
Curlew Sandpiper		2+	4
Eastern Curlew		2+	1
Greater Sand Plover		2+	5
Greater Sand Plover		1	2
Grey-tailed Tattler		2+	37
Grey-tailed Tattler		1	23
Lesser Sand Plover		2+	26
Lesser Sand Plover		1	3
Masked Lapwing		1+	2
Pacific Golden Plover		1	1
Red Knot		1+	3
Red-capped Plover		1	1
Red-capped Plover		2+	2
Red-necked Stint		1	2
Red-necked Stint		2+	14
Ruddy Turnstone		1+	7
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper		2+	4
Terek Sandpiper		2+	3
Terek Sandpiper	1	1	
Whimbrel	2+	5	
Whimbrel	1	4	
Curlew Sandpiper	Port of Brisbane	2+	1
Red-capped Plover		2+	1
Red-necked Stint		2+	3
Silver Gull	Geoff Skinner Reserve	1+	1
Curlew Sandpiper		2+	1
Red-necked Stint		2+	1
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>173</b>

The coded flags have already provided a large number of re-sightings, mostly at Manly, but a few elsewhere in Moreton Bay (see Table 2 below). These re-sightings show that individual birds of some species are faithful to the same roost as long as feeding conditions remain good nearby. The most exciting recapture was of a 12+ year old Lesser Sand Plover that had been originally flagged at the Port of Brisbane by Peter Driscoll in October 1997. This bird was recaptured at Manly in January 2007 with its plain green leg flag still in good condition.

The flagging has focussed more attention on looking for flags during the regular monthly counts. At the count at Manly on 31 March, 2007, an amazing 19 flags were seen. This was after many birds had already begun their migrations, so the large number of flags was even more surprising. One of the consequences of this increased flag sighting rate is that Phil Cross now has a lot more work to do entering the flag sightings into the database.

**Table 2:** The number of each age of each species seen (or recaptured) at different locations to 22 April 2007. These recaptures/re-sightings include multiple sightings of the same birds.

<b>Species name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Recapture site</b>	<b>N</b>
Bar-tailed Godwit	1	Manly Boat Harbour	1
Bar-tailed Godwit	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	26
Curlew Sandpiper	1+	Manly Boat Harbour	2
Eastern Curlew	10+	Manly Boat Harbour	14
Eastern Curlew	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	1
Great Knot	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	1
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	Manly Boat Harbour	3
Grey-tailed Tattler	2+	Lytton roost	1
Grey-tailed Tattler	2+	Toorbul roost	1
Grey-tailed Tattler	2+	Cleveland Point	1
Grey-tailed Tattler	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	26
Grey-tailed Tattler	2+	Manly Ck	1
Lesser Sand Plover	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	5
Lesser Sand Plover	12+	Manly Boat Harbour	1
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	1
Terek Sandpiper	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	3
Whimbrel	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	7
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>94</b>

The flagging team led by Jon Coleman has also expanded as the summer progressed. What started out as an intrepid group of three, now has five other regular members. This has allowed the team to increase the catching effort and try new sites. The QWSG committee is considering a proposal from Jon to make the wader flagging program a regular part of the QWSG activities. Over time, the proposal being considered will see regular notices of the flagging activities being put in the "Queensland Wader" and interested members will be able to get involved. As the skill levels in the group increase, this will allow the flagging program to expand and take in more sites. This increase emphasis on flagging will be a new direction for the QWSG and a return to one of the original core activities when the QWSG was formed. We hope members will support this new activity as we try to increase our understanding of the local and regional movement patterns of the birds. Improved understanding of high and low tide habitat use by individual birds will help us provide better advice to local and state governments and thus lead to better conservation of the birds and their habitats.

*By David Milton*

## An effective national wader Population Monitoring Program (PMP) is nearing reality

David Milton attended a 2 day meeting in Melbourne in early April 2007 with participants from Birds Australia (BA), Australasian Wader Study Group (AWSG) and the federal Department of Environment and Water Resources (DEWR). The aim of the meeting was to discuss how the national wader PMP run by AWSG could be made more effective. The meeting was held at Birds Australia and was chaired by their Research manager, Dr Mike Weston. The agenda covered a broad range of issues from site definition, site selection and mapping, resident species, count methods and frequency, analytical methods and training. It focussed on the broad range of issues that are faced when trying to coordinate the difficult and challenging task of providing a suitable annual index of the numbers of each migratory wader species that spend their non-breeding season in Australia. Australia has 36 species of migratory wader that regularly spend their non-breeding season here. They occur in an enormous range of habitats across our large country. I think the meeting recognised it will be almost impossible to develop one approach that can count a substantial proportion of each of these species' population.

The current AWSG PMP has 23 sites across all states that have been counted fairly regularly since the program began in 1981. As part of this program, a single summer and winter count is made at each site on a designated day. There are 6 sites counted in Queensland (Tweed Heads, Moreton Bay, Mackay, Bowen, Townsville and Cairns) and of these, only Moreton Bay has been counted each year since the program began. In recent years, there have been no counts from Townsville or Cairns as the counters have either moved or become involved in other activities. Considerable time in the meeting was spent discussing the advantages and disadvantages of this twice-yearly count approach. How could these counts be analysed to provide an index of population size that we can be confident is representative? One of the methods available to analyse these single counts was discussed at the meeting.

If adopted, the approach will require some changes to the way most people currently count their waders. Any additional training of observers will be done as part of the new PMP. As the revised PMP takes shape, further information will become available. Things are happening and BA and AWSG hope to be able to make some public announcements within the next few months about the new PMP and how it will operate.

Unlike the AWSG PMP, the QWSG count program gets observers to count birds at individual roosts at monthly intervals throughout the year. The aim of making such frequent counts is to use the variation between these counts and measurements of the environmental conditions at the time to get an average population estimate for each roost across the non-breeding season (summer). These estimates can be standardised for differences in weather, observer and tide height and in theory provide a more realistic index of bird numbers. This is the most practical approach in Queensland where the AWSG "sites" (closed systems of multiple roosts) are often large (eg. Moreton Bay). To make complete counts of these "sites" usually requires boats and a large team of volunteers. QWSG plans to try and undertake the first complete count of waders in Moreton Bay during summer 2007/08. Stay tuned to further announcements in "Queensland Wader". We could be moving into exciting new times with a new higher profile national wader PMP in which QWSG members will play an important part.

By *David Milton*

## **E-Mail: Subject: Effects of Loss of Wader Habitat**

From: Roz Jessop [xxxx@xxxx.net.au]

I've just come across a publication which may be of interest to everyone as it concerns the effects - predicted and actual - of the loss of a wader habitat (in this case by reclamation). I attach a copy of a summary of the results which appeared in the March 2007 edition of "British Birds" and a copy of the paper itself (which Danny Rogers was able to obtain) from a 2006 volume of "Ecological Applications".

For a long time we have tended to assume that when waders are displaced from a habitat, by some major change which makes it unsuitable, they redistribute themselves in other adjacent habitats. We also assumed that overall numbers would gradually be reduced due to consequent higher mortality and/or lower breeding success, so that in the end the net effect was a loss to the world population equivalent to the number of birds displaced from the lost habitat. Also, in some actual or proposed habitat changes, proposals have been made for creating or managing other areas in a way which would partially, or completely, offset the expected negative effects.

This new publication details the development of an earlier model which was used to try and predict the effects of habitat change on populations of Oystercatchers in the UK. John Goss-Custard and his team have now tested the new model using data on Redshank displaced from Cardiff Bay in South Wales when a controversial barrage was completed in 1999. This resulted in a loss of inter-tidal feeding habitat that had been regularly used by 200 Redshank. Almost all the birds in this population had been previously marked with individual colour band combinations.

After reclamation all the birds moved to an adjacent area of mudflats, where the population rose from 300 to 500. The model predicted that the mortality rate of the combined population would increase by 3.65%. Monitoring over subsequent years showed that it actually increased by 3.17%, very similar to the predicted level. Further simulations helped to demonstrate that mortality was density dependent and that it had risen both as a result of increased interference between feeding birds and because of the reduced amount of available prey in the mudflats.

Another interesting finding was that if a proposed offset area, equivalent to only 10% of the area of lost mud flats in Cardiff Bay, had been created and managed appropriately (with tidal dwell times) it could have provided enough food for all the birds displaced from Cardiff Bay and ultimately lost to the world population.

This predictive model and proof that it is realistic is going to be of considerable value in helping to mount future cases against destruction of important wader habitats. I'm sure that those involved, for example, in the Saemangeum lost battle and now fighting the new Geum Estuary proposed reclamation in South Korea will be utilizing this new information to the full. And it allows us to more confidently say that the net long-term effect of the loss of feeding habitat for waders is a loss to the world population equivalent to those birds which were occupying that habitat. Whilst in the example quoted here it was thought to be mainly due to increased mortality it is more likely that at key stopover locations (such as the Yellow Sea) much of the loss may be caused via reduced breeding success.

## Aberrant plumages in some migratory waders in Australia

An abstract from the Wader Study Group Bulletin 107 August 2005

There are few published records of aberrant plumages in waders (shorebirds) in Australia. In an extensive literature survey to December 1986, Lepschi (1990) found that melanism was considerably less frequently reported in Australian birds than albinism. He lists 13 records of melanism in 10 species from 10 families, but none is a wader, and 298 records of albinism in 95 species from 45 families, 13 of which relate to waders of seven species. These results are similar to those reported by Sage (1963a) who analysed 3,134 reports of aberrant plumages in birds in Britain.

Of the 13 records of aberrant plumage in waders reported by Lepschi, ten relate to species that are resident in Australia: one record each for Bush Thick-knee *Burhinus magnirostris*, Sooty Oystercatcher *Haematopus fuliginosus* and Red-capped Plover *Charadrius ruficapillus* and seven records for Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*. The remaining three records relate to migratory waders of three species and only these will be discussed here. Each report is very brief: (i) a white "Jack" Snipe (presumably Latham's) *Gallinago hardwickii*, shot in the Murray River area, New South Wales (NSW) (Chisholm 1956); (ii) a white Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*, with red legs and reddishbrown bill, seen on the Swan River estuary, Western Australia (WA) (Lindgren 1956); and (iii) a Double-banded Plover *Charadrius bicinctus*, with dull white plumage except for the bands above the lores and throat which were lighter than normal and the black and chestnut breast bands which were normal, seen at the Illawarra Entrance, NSW (McGill 1976). This species breeds in New Zealand and migrates to SE Australia, including Tasmania, for the non-breeding season.

Following the terminology of Sage (1962, 1963a,b), Lepschi (1990) used "albino" and "albinism" in a wide sense to refer to "any individual that is completely or partially white, irrespective of the colour of the soft parts" and including "the similar albinistic plumage variants of leucism and schizochroism" described by Harrison (1963a). We have decided to adopt the rather strict definitions originally set out by Rensch (1925), quoted by Harrison (1963b) stated by Sage (1962), and reiterated by Buckley (1982), and Davis & Recher (1996). These are as follows:

**Albino/albinism:** An individual in which there is no coloured pigment in any plumage or soft parts, the feet, legs and bill generally appear yellowish-white or pinkish and the eye/irides always appear pink.

**Leucino/leucism:** A bird whose whole plumage or part thereof is white due to loss of pigment in feathers, but with soft parts of normal colour, including the irides which are usually black (Harrison 1963b, Buckley 1982). This condition may be complete or partial, symmetrical or asymmetrical and the criteria have been widened to include those birds with soft parts that are abnormally coloured (Buckley 1982).

**Schizochroic/schizochroism:** Another generally recognised colour variation that occurs when the frequently occurring browns and blacks of the feathers are altered by the absence of one of the two melanins responsible for the original colour (Buckley 1982, Harrison 1985).

**Dilution:** A rare condition in which there is an even reduction in the quantity of all pigments rendering colours paler than normal (Buckley 1982, Harrison 1963b, 1985).

**Melanic/melanism** is due to the excessive deposition of the black pigment melanin (Sage 1962, Buckley 1982).

More than one of these aberrant plumages can occur in the same individual, except for melanism which is usually found throughout all feathers (Harrison 1963a). In the light of these strict definitions, which are now generally accepted, it is unfortunate that the colour of the irides was not documented in any of the reports of migratory waders cited by Lepschi. It is therefore possible that neither the snipe nor the Curlew Sandpiper he reported was albino, though each was certainly leucino. The Double-banded Plover showed more than one type of aberrant plumage, the dull white back and wings being leucistic, while the bands around the head being paler than normal could be classified as diluted, and the breast bands were normal.

Since Lepschi's review, there have been only two published reports of waders seen in Australia with aberrant plumage.

## Wader Information Day, Hervey Bay

On Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2007 34 people gathered at the Hervey Bay Sports and Leisure Centre to hear about the waders that visit the Hervey Bay and Mary River region during their annual migrations. This information day was conducted to promote knowledge of waders and to inform people about a current project on waders. The Queensland Wader Study Group is undertaking an extensive survey of the Burnett Mary coast to document important roost sites as an aid for their protection. The project is funded by the Burnett Mary Regional Group for Natural Resource Management and is supported by the Hervey Bay Birdwatchers.



The talks were given by Linda Cross, David Edwards and David Milton. The meeting was followed by barbecue lunch and bird identification information at Gables Point, Point Vernon.

A general talk about waders provided a sound overview for people in the audience who were new to waders. Detailed information was also presented on the identification of waders, the dangers they face and conservation needs to help them on their migration, particularly when they are in Australia during the non-breeding period.

It was good to see the level of interest in the residents of the area. The need to protect roost sites is increasingly important as coastal developments threaten more roost sites. Thank you to everyone who assisted on the day. The efforts of locals who are pushing Councils to conserve the coastal environment for protection of migratory waders are fantastic.

*Joyce Harding*

## Bar-tailed Godwits Arrive back in Alaska

At least four of the Bar-tailed Godwits being tracked by satellite have reached their breeding grounds in Alaska after stopping in the Yellow Sea to put on extra fat for the final journey and establishment. As you can see from the Google Earth image (below) employing satellite tracking data, these birds have completed some mammoth flights from New Zealand to the northern end of the Yellow Sea non-stop. The incredible thing is that these Olympians of the air flew over extensive areas of intertidal mudflats in the southern part of the Yellow Sea but chose to continue on to their chosen locations in various parts of China and Korea.

If you have Google Earth on your computer, visit <http://www.werc.usgs.gov/sattrack/shorebirds/overall.html>. The site has instructions for downloading a link to Google Earth which displays the journey locations as overlays.

A summary of the birds' movements up until 8 May 2007, as reported by Phil Battley:

- During the third week of March, 10 of 14 satellite-tagged Bar-tailed Godwits departed from New Zealand on their northbound migration.
- During the first week in April, 3 more birds departed from New Zealand.
- Six of the birds arrived at coastal staging sites in South Korea, China, and Japan after completing a very long (>10,000 km) transoceanic flight in just over 7 days.
- One bird (32919) migrated north in a few shorter flights. This bird stopped at Yap, Micronesia for a month, then travelled to Okinawa, Japan for a week, and now is on the coast west of Yalu Jiang, China. Members of the Okinawa Wild Bird Society were able to locate and photograph the bird during its stay on Okinawa.
- Only 1 bird (40158) is still in New Zealand and it is at Golden Bay on the South Island. This bird continues to use the same roosting sites on Farewell Spit and feeding areas on the central mudflats of Golden Bay.
- Starting on 1 May, four birds departed from coastal staging sites in Asia (40157 from Asan Bay, South Korea and 40015, 40156 and 40155 from Yalu Jiang, China) and embarked on >5,000 km migration flight to breeding grounds in Alaska.
- 40156 first made landfall in Alaska at Cinder River lagoon on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula. The next day this bird flew to the north shore of Kvichak Bay and is now just inland of the bay.
- 40015 landed in the interior Yukon Delta near a lake north of Baird Inlet.
- 40157 is just south of Baird Inlet on the Yukon Delta.
- 40155 is currently stopping over at Mud Bay on the south side of Port Moller on the Alaska Peninsula.
- 40160 remains at Asan Bay where it was observed and photographed (along with 40157) on 16 April during a survey by the Saemanguem Shorebird Monitoring Programme. Check out their website <http://www.birdskorea.org>
- 40159 remains at Suncheon Bay, South Korea where it went after first stopping over at Tshushima Island, Japan.
- The transmitter on 36119 stopped working at Baong Island, Papua New Guinea on 10 April, but fortunately this bird was recently seen and photographed by in Queensland, Australia. It is astonishing that 4 of these 14 birds have been observed by people at locations 100s to 1000s of km from their banding sites! We are very grateful to everyone who has sent us information about these birds.
-

- The transmitter on 36118 stopped working when the bird was in the southern Philippines, and we do not currently know the fate of this individual.
  - Another bird (32920) stopped for a few days on the southern coast of Papua New Guinea before turning back to Queensland, Australia.
  - An additional three birds (39590, 36117, 40161) were on their way to the Yellow Sea area when their transmitters stopped functioning. We will have to wait for visual observations of these birds to determine their fate.
- Data courtesy of Lee Tibbitts

## WADER WATCH Linda and Phil Cross, Joyce Harding

We would like to remind all members and counters to continue to look for leg flags during counts, or when just doing general observation at wader sites. There are a number of flagging projects currently underway, which requires making observations and recording very important. **Please remember to look carefully if it is a flag or band as this makes it easier to trace where the bird has been flagged.**

The flagging protocol has become quite large and a number of projects underway are using colours that are designated to different areas. One of these is a Victorian and New South Wales flagging project of oystercatchers using a yellow flag (also used by North West Western Australia) with a 2 digit inscription. Victoria is placing the flag on the right tibia and New South Wales is putting it on the left tibia. Both have the 2 digit inscription.

There is also a New Zealand/Alaska project that has fitted transmitters and a large black flag with a 2 digit inscription to Bar-tailed Godwits. Some of the transmitters have been implanted (Alaska), and others had a harness placed on them, which is meant to fall off after a short period of time. It is important to advise if the transmitter is also seen during the sighting.

The QWSG is also now using etched flags, so please try to look if there is a 2 digit inscription on all flags when making the observation.

**We have also reminded everyone to please advise Phil or myself of any flag sighting seen in Queensland.** Phil processes the details and informs the relevant states/countries. We have in the past put this information in the newsletter before, but somehow it appears to get missed or forgotten. We would really appreciate your co-operation with this request

### 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 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.

Sighted in Moreton Bay & Environs between 29.01.07 and 28.04.07

5 Eastern Curlew, 3 Whimbrel, 18 Bar-tailed Godwit, 1 Pacific Golden Plover, 7 Great Knot, 1 Ruddy Turnstone, 22 Grey-tailed Tattler, 1 Greater Sand Plover, 3 Lesser Sand Plover & 1 Red-necked Stint.

Not included in the above list are the first sightings of green flagged waders with etched letters away from the Manly Boat Harbour (where they were flagged).

**We have our first etched flag overseas sighting reported (see next section).**

- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – green flag etched **AP** – Lytton roost – Deborah Metters – 18.02.07  
 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – green flag etched **AE** – Toorbul – Linda Cross, David Milton et al – 10.03.07  
 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – green flag etched **AE** – Toorbul – Linda Cross – 04.04.07  
 1 Terek Sandpiper – green flag etched **AB** – Queens Esplanade, Thornside – Harry Briggs – 22.03.07  
 2 Bar-tailed Godwit – green flag etched **AB & AK** – Queens Esplanade, Thornside – Harry Briggs – 22.03.07

**Interstate & overseas Green leg flag sightings**

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit (**AL**) – Namdangri, Hongsung, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Ui-soon Park & Hae-soon Lee – 16.04.074  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Yalu Jiang site 2, China – Chris Hassell – 17.04.07  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Yalu Jiang site 15, China – Chris Hassell – 15.04.07  
 2 Bar-tailed Godwit – Yalu Jiang site 2, China – Chris Hassell, Zhang Guangming & Wang Tao – 09.04.07  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Bells Island, Waimea Inlet, near Nelson, SI, New Zealand – David Melville, Willie Cook, Don Cooker, Jan van de Kam & Jan Lewis – 24.03.07  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, Firth of Thames, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 25.02.07  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 24.02.07  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Mangere Sewage Ponds, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 14.02.07  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Pakawau, Golden Bay, SI, New Zealand – Rob Schuckard, Bob Gill & Nils Warnock – 31.01.07  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Farewell Spit, Gobi, near Nelson, SI, New Zealand – Rob Schuckard, Willie Cook, Bob Gill & Nils Warnock – 31.01.07  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Clifton Beach, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 18.01.07  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Farewell Spit, Gobi near Nelson, SI, New Zealand – David & Julia Melville – 22.12.06  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Motueka Sandspit, near Nelson, SI, New Zealand – David Melville – 09.12.06  
 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken et al – 03.12.06  
 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 17.02.07  
 2 Red Knot – Clarks Bay, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 04.02.07  
 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 04.02.07  
 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 27.01.07  
 1 Red Knot – Miranda, Firth of Thames, NI, New Zealand – E Stanyard – 19.01.07  
 1 Red Knot – Clifton Beach, Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken & K Bond – 17.01.07  
 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Adrian Riegen & D Taylor – 17.01.07  
 2 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 05.01.07  
 1 Red Knot – Clarks Bay, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 05.01.07  
 1 Red Knot – Mangere Sewage Ponds, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – E Stanyard – 03.01.07  
 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 23.12.06  
 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Ian Southley – 04.12.06  
 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 11.11.06  
 1 Lesser Sand Plover – Beidaihe, Qinhuangdao City, Hebei Province, People's Republic of China – Guus van Duin – 29.04.07

**Orange leg flag sightings**

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 02.03.07  
 1 Red Knot – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross – 22.03.07  
 1 Curlew Sandpiper – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 25.02.07  
 1 Red-necked Stint – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 17.03.07  
 1 Red-necked Stint – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 31.03.07  
 1 Red-necked Stint – Toorbul – Phil Cross et al – 10.03.07  
 1 Red-necked Stint – Toorbul – Esther Townsend – 04.03.07

**Yellow leg flag sightings**

**The following sightings of yellow flagged oystercatchers 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.

- 1 Pied Oystercatcher – yellow flag left tibia etched **C3** – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 14.05.07 (This bird flagged in NSW)  
 1 Pied Oystercatcher – yellow flag right tibia – Point Halloran – Harry Briggs – 11.03.07 No etched digits reported. (Probably flagged in Victoria)

**White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings**

No white flag sightings

**A number of Bar-tailed Godwit were flagged and fitted with transmitters in New Zealand. Below is one of the birds that were sighted here in Queensland.**

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – black flag left tibia with etched **E3** on it and metal band right tibia – Norman Point, Tin Can Bay – Amelia & Kelvin Nielsen, Dorothy Pashniak & Judy Bannister – 29.04.07

**Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings**

2 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Jun Matsui – 21.04.07, and again on 25.04.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 31.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 31.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Geoff & Lyn Smith – 31.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Alan Gillanders et al – 25.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and metal band left tarsus – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross, David Milton & Sandra Harding – 23.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross, David Milton & Sandra Harding – 23.03.07

2 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross – 22.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and white flag left tarsus – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross – 22.03.07

3 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and metal band right tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross – 21.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 17.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Toorbul – Linda Cross et al – 10.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Wynnum Creek, Cleveland Point – Heather Smith – 09.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 04.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Toorbul 1km North – Esther Townsend – 04.03.07

(All above birds with blue flag left tibia were flagged in Hokkaido, Northern Japan)

(The one bird with blue flag left tibia and white flag left tarsus was flagged in Tokyo Bay, Central Japan)

**Other wader leg flag sightings**

1 Great Knot – black flag over white flag right tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Jun Matsui – 25 & 26.04.07.

The bird was also seen on 12.05.07

1 Great Knot – black flag over white flag right tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Alan Gillanders et al – 25.03.07

(Black over white and white over black flagged in Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China)

**Other leg flag sightings and banded birds**

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Toorbul Sandfly Bay roost – Roy Sonnenburg – 25.04.07

1 Caspian Tern – orange band right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 31.03.07

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus and metal band on left tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 04.02.07

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 31.12.06

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight et al – 03.11.06

1 Crested Tern – coloured band (half silver half orange) left tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 31.03.07

1 Little Tern – orange flag over yellow flag left tibia and metal band right tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 31.03.07

**Interesting sightings**

**Please note these sightings are not authenticated records.**

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

16 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Fisherman Island – Wayne Young, David Edwards, Phil & Linda Cross – 03.03.07

2 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 18.02.07

749 Eastern Curlew – West Geoff Skinner Reserve – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 04.03.07

105 Marsh Sandpiper – Maaroom – John Bell & Glen Hastie – 31.03.07

130 Common Greenshank – Maaroom – John Bell & Glen Hastie – 31.03.07  
58 Ruddy Turnstone – Pioneer River Mouth, Mackay – Les & Dawn Thyer – 01.04.07  
16 Bush Stone-curlew – Pioneer River Mouth, Mackay – Les Thyer, Marj Andrews & Alexandra Ferguson – 02.03.07  
1900 Grey-tailed Tattler – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight et al – 31.03.07  
1050 Great Knot – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight et al – 31.03.07  
19 Common Sandpiper – Pine Rivers Wetland Reserve – Ken Cowell & Floss Wainwright – 04.02.07  
1 Sanderling – Buckley's Hole Sandbar – Michael Strong – 18.03.07

#### **Not waders but of interest anyway**

53 White-faced Heron – Geoff Skinner Reserve East – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 31.03.07  
5 Brown Quail – King Street, Thornside – Joyce Harding – 28.04.07  
250 White-winged Black Tern – Noosa River Sandbanks – Jill Denning – 15.01.07  
1350 Common Tern – Noosa River Sandbanks – Jill Denning – 15.01.07  
2 Chestnut Teal (first record on site) – Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island – Frank Bigg & Michael Willis – 28.04.07  
232 Chestnut Teal – Gold Coast Treatment Plant – Terry Dillon – 05.03.07  
2 Pink-eared Duck – Visitors Centre Lake, Fisherman Island – Vicki Campbell – 29.04.07  
1 Black-necked Stork – Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – Barry Ellis – 30.04.07

#### **Last newsletter Issue 059 information that was missed out.**

##### **Interesting sightings**

700 Eastern Curlew – Geoff Skinner Reserve – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 04.02.07  
696 Eastern Curlew – Mirapool Beach, Moreton Island – QWSG – 05.02.07  
1 Common Sandpiper – Lamerough Creek, Pelican Waters, Caloundra – Jill Chamberlain – 06.02.07  
2 Common Sandpiper – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 09.12.06  
5000 Bar-tailed Godwit – Sandbank off Amity Point – David Milton – 06.11.06  
3002 Bar-tailed Godwit – Mirapool Beach, Moreton Island – QWSG – 05.02.07  
460 Black-tailed Godwit – Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island – Frank Bigg, Lois MacRae & Michael Willis – 04.02.07  
280 Black-tailed Godwit – Deception Bay Mangrove roost – Phil & Linda Cross – 04.02.07  
52 Marsh Sandpiper – Deception Bay Mangrove roost – Phil & Linda Cross – 04.02.07  
1 Wood Sandpiper – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Bill Gould & Lee Mason – 07.01.07  
1090 Pacific Golden Plover – Fisherman Island – QWSG – 06.01.07  
5 Sanderling – Ross River Mouth, Townsville – Peter Driscoll – 05.11.06  
1 Sanderling – Maroochy River, North Shore – Shirley Rooke, Jan Bedwell & Judy Hewitt – 08.12.06  
65 Sanderling – Rooney Point, Fraser Island – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 14.12.06  
1 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 04.11.06

##### **Not waders but of interest anyway**

1 Baillon's Crake – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Bill Gould & Lee Mason – 07.01.07  
1 Spotless Crake – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Bill Gould & Lee Mason – 07.01.07  
24 Glossy Ibis – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Bill Gould & Lee Mason – 07.01.07  
95 Whiskered Tern – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Bill Gould & Lee Mason – 07.01.07  
337 Pink-eared Duck – Lake Galletly, Gatton – Ivell & Jim Whyte – 06.01.07  
6 Wandering Whistling Duck (4 ducklings) – Buckley's Hole Lagoon, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 31.12.06  
3571 Little Tern – Sandy Cape, Fraser Island – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 16.12.06  
1420 Common Tern – Noosa River Sandbanks – Jill Denning – 15.12.06  
1 Brown Booby – Rooney Point, Fraser Island – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 14.12.06  
1 Australasian Bittern – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight et al – 03.11.06  
12 Australasian Shoveler – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 25.10.06  
1 female Blue-billed Duck with 1 duckling – Nielsen's Road, Carrara – Hans Beste (via Terry Dillon) – 03.10.06  
6 Buff-banded Rail (2 adults & 4 young) – Cobaki Retirement Village Wetland, Tweed Heads – Ian Watson & Mathew Angus – 17.01.07

There was lots of other good wader numbers and sightings that I wish could be placed in the newsletter, but unfortunately there is not enough room to fit them all in.

## Count Programme by Linda Cross

Unfortunately due to the lack of space in this issue of the newsletter the count programme will be reduced. This is partly due to the large amount of leg flag sightings and the Port of Brisbane Corporation report for 2006.

**Could I please ask all members and counters to read the forward message in the Wader Watch section of this newsletter. It is very important that you are aware of the flagging projects.**

**Could I also remind counters that the National Winter Count is set down for the Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> July. A high of 1.71m at 10:01am.** No count in June, however we will be counting at the Port Of Brisbane Corporation on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June. We will be meeting at 09:10am if you would like to join us.

In July watch for the breeding plumage becoming evident on our visitors from New Zealand, (Double-banded Plover). They have been recorded at Kakadu Beach roost at Bribie Island, Sandbank No.1 & 2 at Caloundra, Geoff Skinner Reserve East & West, Manly Boat Harbour, Fisherman Island, Shallow Bay at Tweed Heads and South Stradbroke Island. The largest count being 50 at Geoff Skinner Reserve East on 28.04.07

### **Breeding records – just the one**

Beach-stone Curlew – a juvenile bird was seen with two adults at Bowen on 08.01.07 by Jon Wren & Cliff Sexton.

### **Interesting snippet from count sheet**

During the monthly wader count at Maaroom on 28<sup>th</sup> April John Bell and Glen Hastie watched an Australian Hobby swoop down and take a Red-capped Plover.

*Editor's Note:- Linda do we count the wader on our list if this happens to us!!*

Happy counting. - Linda Cross.

## Migratory waterbirds: early warning system for climate change

### **From Wetlands International**

Climate change is the theme of this year's World Migratory Bird Day, 12 May 2007. Among the migratory birds, waterbirds are among the clearest 'early warners' for climate change. Waterbirds are very vulnerable to even small increases in sea level, loss of Arctic tundra and inter-tidal habitats and increases or decreases in water levels of freshwater lakes.

Wetlands International sets the global standard for research into waterbird numbers and distribution at continental scales, and the role of waterbirds as indicators of climate change is an increasingly important element of this work.

Most waterbird species disperse widely during the summer breeding season in Europe, but on migration and in winter, they often congregate in high numbers at a relatively small number of sites. In the African-Eurasian Flyway, a frequent pattern is for waterbirds to breed in vast numbers but at low density in the tundra zone of northern Russia, from where they migrate to winter destinations such as the Inner Niger Delta and lake Chad in West Africa. En route they stop at vital "refuelling stations" such as the Dutch-German Danish Wadden Sea, where they fatten up on a rich diversity of invertebrate prey which will sustain them on the next leg of their journey. Most species are dependent on a chain of such sites between their breeding areas and their wintering areas, and damage or destruction of just one link in the chain can have disastrous effects on waterbird survival.

**Climate change is predicted to disrupt this pattern in a number of ways.** The thawing of the tundra zone and its northward shift into the Arctic Ocean are likely to greatly reduce both the extent and quality of these breeding habitats. Sea level rise will reduce the extent of intertidal areas such as the Wadden Sea, reducing possibilities for waterbirds to feed. Finally, drought is expected to alter flooding regimes at enormous floodplains in Africa such as the Inner Niger Delta and Lake Chad, reducing areas suitable for waterbirds at the end of their great migrations.

An increase in severity and intensity of droughts at wetlands in arid and semi arid regions will also have adverse effects - many waterbirds are dependent on wetlands in these regions during their annual migration and during nesting.

## QWSG CONTACTS

### QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of  
Queensland Wader Study Group

#### MEMBERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE QWSG

<u>CHAIRPERSON:</u>	David Milton	(07) xxxx xxxx	
<u>TREASURER:</u>	Sheryl Keates	(08) xxxx xxxx	or <a href="mailto:xxxx@xxxx.com.au">xxxx@xxxx.com.au</a>
<u>SECRETARY:</u>	Peter Rothlisberg	(07) xxxx xxxx	
<u>NEWSLETTER EDITOR:</u>	David Edwards	(07) xxxx xxxx	

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Dawn Beck	(07) xxxx xxxx	Maureen Cooper (Mackay)
Ken Cowell	(07) xxxx xxxx	Andrew Geering (07) xxxx xxxx
Joyce Harding	(07) xxxx xxxx	Sandra Harding (07) xxxx xxxx
Des Wells		Ivell Whyte

COUNT COORDINATOR: Linda Cross (07) xxxx xxxx

CORRESPONDENCE All correspondence to:  
The QWSG Chairperson,  
XXXXXXXXXX ,  
XXXXXXXXXX  
QLD XXXX

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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 **August 18<sup>th</sup> 2007**

Contributions should be addressed to:

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

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## QWSG MERCHANDISE

Should you wish to purchase any of the QWSG Merchandise, items may be purchased at BQ Inc meetings held 1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:xxxx@xxxx.com.au)

Postage is not included in prices quoted.

<b>BOOKS</b>	\$19.80	Shorebird Conservation in the Asia-Pacific Region
	\$20.00	Status and Conservation of Shorebirds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.
	\$15.00	Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds
<b>CD</b>	\$20.00	Bird Calls of the Broome Region (includes 42 Wader Species)
<b>METAL BADGES</b>	\$5.00	Metal QWSG logo badges.
<b>CLOTH BADGES</b>	\$8.00	QWSG logo on rectangular bottle-green background

### POLO SHIRTS

QWSG's new 100% cotton polo shirts have been ordered and should be available within the next few weeks. The locally made shirts will be in tri-coloured sand/cocoa/sky or sand/cocoa/bottle as well as plain bottle or sky with contrast collar. Price is expected to be around \$35.00.

## 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, David Niland (07) xxxx xxxx; Secretary, John Holt (07) xxxx xxxx; Treasurer, Les Taylor (07) xxxx xxxx.

Monthly Meetings      Birds Queensland - 7.45pm  
 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently :  
**Vicki CAMPBELL   Kim HERBERT   Jim & Susan SNEDDON**

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.

The latest newsletter of the South Coast NSW Shorebird Recovery Program is now available online

[http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/shorebird\\_newsletter\\_mar\\_2007.pdf](http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/shorebird_newsletter_mar_2007.pdf)

A total of 13 Hooded Plover fledglings were added to the NSW population of less than 50 birds. Little Tern fledglings from the south coast numbered 135 after an eventful breeding season.

**Enjoy**





**Count Activities 2007**

**QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2007**

**NO COUNT IN JUNE**

Sun 15 <sup>th</sup> Jul	1.71m at 10:01	<b>National Winter Count</b>
Sat 4 <sup>th</sup> August	1.98m at 13:25	
Sat 15 <sup>th</sup> Sep	2.03m at 11:31	
Sat 13 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2.17m at 10:31	
Sat 10 <sup>th</sup> Nov	2.26m at 09:35	
Sat 8 <sup>th</sup> Dec	2.27m at 08:40	

**Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2007**

Sun 17 <sup>th</sup> Jun	1.68m at 11:00	Meet 09:10
Sat 14 <sup>th</sup> Jul	1.68m at 09:14	Meet 07:25
Sun 5 <sup>th</sup> Aug	1.99m at 14:23	Meet 12:30
Sun 16 <sup>th</sup> Sep	2.00m at 12:06	Meet 10:15
Sun 14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2.16m at 11:03	Meet 09:15
Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> Nov	2.27m at 10:09	Meet 08:20
Sun 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	2.32m at 09:16	Meet 07:25

**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, xxxxxxxxxxxx, NT 0xxx**  
**Cheques to be made out to: Queensland Wader Study Group**  
 For a direct credit, please use the following details. An email advice to Sheryl Keates xxx@xxx.com.au would be appreciated.

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

