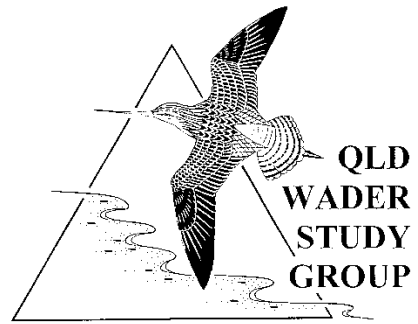


# QUEENSLAND WADER



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

[www.waders.com.au](http://www.waders.com.au)

## Scientific Bird Names

In scientific nomenclature in zoology, including ornithology, each species is given a unique two-part name comprising the name of the genus (a noun) followed by a name identifying the species within the genus (an adjective or specific epithet). For example, the scientific name of the Little Kingfisher is a perfect match for its scientific name *Alcedo pusilla* made up of the Latin words *Alcedo* meaning kingfisher and *pusilla* meaning tiny. However, the meaning of the scientific name of a species does not always match its common name. In the case of the Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*, its scientific name means white-fronted tern. The Little Tern does in fact have a white forehead in breeding plumage but the translation of its scientific name matches the common name of another tern species.

The volumes of HANZAB containing the species accounts of waders reveals the sources of their scientific names fall into the categories of appearance, people's names, geographical names, habitat and behaviour.

### Appearance

This is the largest category, used in generic or specific names, in which the plumage, colours and physical characteristics of waders is described. Often a combination is used.

The Australian Pied Oystercatcher's generic name *Haematopus* is derived from the Greek *haima*, blood-red (as in haemoglobin) and *pous*, the foot, while the specific epithet *longirostris* is made up of the Latin *longus*, long and *rostrum*, the bill, literally translating as long-billed blood foot. Similarly, the Sooty Oystercatcher's specific epithet *fuliginosus* is late Latin for sooty and so its scientific name literally translates as sooty blood foot. The Red-kneed Dotterel (*Erythrogonys cinctus*) is another good example derived from both Greek and Latin. Its generic name is made up of the Greek *eruthros*, red and *gonu*, the knee and its specific epithet *cinctus* is Latin meaning girdled referring to the broad black breast band.

Colours are commonly used in specific epithets, generally attached to a physical feature. For example:

- Pacific Golden Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) – Latin *fulva*, yellowish-brown
- Red-necked Stint (*Calidris ruficollis*) – Latin *rufus*, red and *collaris*, of the neck
- Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) – Latin *ferruginous*, for iron rust referring to the red breeding plumage
- Red-capped Plover (*Charadrius ruficapillus*) – Latin *rufus*, red and *capillus*, capped
- Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) – Latin *albus*, white referring to the predominant white underparts
- Banded Stilt (*Cladorhynchus leucocephalus*) – Latin *leucocephalus*, white headed
- Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*) – Greek *hupo*, beneath and *leukos*, white
- Terek Sandpiper (*Xenus cinereus*) – Latin *cinereus*, for ash colour of upperparts
- Wandering Tattler (*Tringa incana*) – Latin *incanus*, grey
- Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) – Latin *nebula*, mist or cloud and *arius*, possessing, referring to the grey and spangled upperparts.

There are species in which the plumage pattern is described. For example, the Double-banded Plover's specific epithet *bicinctus* is Latin made up of *bi*, two or double and *cinctus*, girdled. Also, the Tundra Plovers, Pacific Golden and Grey Plovers are of the genus *Pluvialis* which relates to rain as in the plumage dappled as if with raindrops.

Of the physical features, not surprisingly, the bill of waders is used in the following generic and specific names:

#### Genus

- Australian Painted Snipe (*Rostratula australis*) – Latin *rostratus*, large billed
- Red-necked Avocet (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*) – Latin *recurvus*, bent, curved back and *rostris* bill)
- Banded Stilt (*Cladorhynchus leucocephalus*) – Greek *klados*, thin and *rhunkhos*, the bill
- Little Curlew (*Numenius minutus*) – Greek *noumenios* traditionally associated with curlews because of their crescent-shaped bill (*neos* new, *mene* the moon)

#### Specific epithets

- Beach Stone-curlew (*Esacus magnirostris*) – Latin *magnus*, great and *rostris*, billed
- Great Knot (*Calidris tenuirostris*) – Latin *tenuis*, slender and *rostris*, from *rostrum* the bill (although not a particularly slender bill, the Great Knot was originally considered to be allied to redshanks and its bill was more slender than those of that group)
- Broad-billed Sandpiper *Calidris falcinellus* – Latin *falcis*, a sickle referring to the decurved bill tip.

The legs of waders is another obvious physical feature used to describe them. Leg length is used in the specific epithet of the Bush Stone-curlew, *grallarius*, Latin for stilt and also the Grey-tailed Tattler *brevipes* being made up of the Latin *brevis*, short and *pes*, foot. Similarly, the legs of the Black-winged Stilt are described by its specific name *himantopus* which is made up of the Greek *himantos*, a strap and *pous*, a foot, implying slender legs. The Greek *phaios*, grey-brown and *pous*, the foot refer to the greenish-grey colour of the legs of the Whimbrel.

The bird's size is the subject of the specific epithet of the Swinhoe's Snipe (*Gallinago megala*), *megalos* being Greek for great and also the Little Curlew (*Numenius minutus*) *minutus* being Latin for little.

The Latin *miles*, meaning a soldier, is the specific epithet of the Masked Lapwing whose wings armed with sharp carpal spurs give it an armed appearance.

### People's names

Charles Hardwicke a collector in Tasmania and discoverer of the Latham's Snipe *Gallinago hardwickii* is recognised in its specific name. The Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultia* is named after Leschenault de la Tour, the French botanist and collector in Australia. The Red Knot *Calidris canutus* is named after King Canute who, in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century, reigned over England, Denmark and Norway and who, according to legend, regarded the Red Knot as a delicacy. The Black-fronted Dotterel (*Elseyronis melanops*) gets its generic name from Joseph Elsey, an English explorer and naturalist, and the Greek *ornis* a bird.

### Geographical names

Geographical epithets are assigned reflecting the origins of discoveries, designating a continent, part of a continent or a region or type of locality. In this category, examples include *australis* (the south) as in the Australian Painted Snipe (*Rostratula australis*) and Inland Dotterel (*Charadrius australis*), the Lesser Sand Plover (formerly known as Mongolian Sand Plover) *Charadrius mongolus* after Mongolia, *lapponica* (Lapland) as in the Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* and *novaehollandiae* (New Holland) as in the Red-necked Avocet (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*).

Interestingly, the specific epithet of the Eastern Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*) is a reference to the island of Madagascar but it is obviously an error intended to be *macassarensis* after the port of Makassar, Sulawesi.



## **Habitat**

The habitat of some species gives it part of its scientific name. For example, the specific epithet of the Marsh Sandpiper, *stagnatilis* literally translates as belonging to pools or marshes and the godwits get their generic name from the Latin *Limosus* meaning mud, a reference to their feeding habitat.

## **Behaviour**

The best example of this is the display behaviour of the Ruff. The generic (Greek) and specific (Latin) names for the Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* give a tautological example essentially meaning a combative combatant, a reference to the males gathering in leks to dance and to fight one another. Another example of behavioural names includes the *Tringa* species which is Greek for white-rumped wading bird that bobs its tail.

For further reading about how the rules of zoological nomenclature came into being and explanations for the meanings of scientific names of birds, an excellent book is *A Dictionary of Scientific Bird Names* by James Jobling, published by Oxford University Press (1991).

## **Tuamotu Sandpiper on Morane**

Thomas Ghestemme

Most of the world's sandpiper species migrate thousands of kilometers between arctic breeding grounds and subtropical wintering grounds, but in the not-too distant evolutionary past, one group gave up this habit and went native in French Polynesia.

The Endangered Tuamotu Sandpiper, *Prosobonia cancellata*, known locally as the Titi, is the only surviving representative of a group of at least six species which became full time residents in this region. The other species were extirpated with the arrival of first Polynesians, and later Europeans, and their small mammal associates. Approximately 1,000 Titi remain, limited to four rat-free or partially rat-free atolls.



Tuamotu Sandpiper, *Prosobonia cancellata*,

In 2008, Marie-Helene Burle, from Simon Fraser University, aided by the Ornithological Society of French Polynesia (SOP-MANU – BirdLife in French Polynesia), began an intensive graduate research project on this previously unstudied species, working largely in isolation on uninhabited atolls. Her first five month field season was followed by a second in 2010, and she currently halfway through a lengthy third, which began as she joined a SOP-Manu organized expedition to visit two of the additional three atolls where Titi remain.

Marie and her collaborators have discovered remarkable adaptations of this bird to its tropical lifestyle. In sharp contrast to similar-sized migrant shorebirds such as Wandering Tattler, which share the same atolls when not breeding, the Titi is not a bird of the beach or rocky intertidal areas, favoring instead semi-open vegetated areas.

“One reason for this is their reliance on feeding on nectar from flowers, a unique food source for a member of this group”, said Marie-Helene Burle. “Functional morphologists have shown that the bird’s tongue is forked, which may allow it to obtain nectar more efficiently”.

Marie captured and marked nearly all of the birds on two atolls, and documented their social system. Breeding birds live in pairs on quite small territories (e.g. 20x30m). Marie's work has sparked others to make observations of the species, and Francis Gazeau discovered that Titi sometimes nest in trees as well as on the ground, in contrast to their arctic-breeding relatives. Females lay 2 eggs per clutch, rather than the 4 laid by arctic-breeding sandpipers. Many eggs disappear, at least some taken by coconut crabs, as caught on video.

Marie took the first photographs ever taken of newly hatched chicks, which had never previously been described. Sadly, the chicks have extremely low survival – most starve to death.

"We speculate that overcrowding in the very few areas where the birds can breed has led to food shortages and low fledging success", said Marie.

Towards the end of Marie's second field season, during a very dry season, a wind-driven swell event caused salt water to overwash parts of her atolls. About a month later, she realized that many of her birds were dying, as were other landbirds such as Spotted Crake. She believes that saltwater intrusion and a lack of rain stressed vegetation, resulting in starvation. About half the birds at her main study site died, and a year later, there has not been a rebound of the population.

The high mortality associated with a local swell event highlights the vulnerability of local populations, which would also be threatened should black rats establish themselves on their four remaining refuges.

Marie Helene also helped to eradicate rodents from a small islet within an atoll, which holds rats. "We are waiting to learn whether Titi are now breeding on this rat free site", said Marie. "For the longer term, however, the species' future relies on reintroducing it to more distant sites where independent populations can thrive".

Marie and colleagues are preparing a survey of potential reintroduction sites. Their experience working with the birds, and the knowledge they have obtained about their feeding and breeding ecology and predators provide a sound basis for translocation planning. Building on the success of groups that have removed rats from several islands or atolls, we believe that for this one species at least, meaningful conservation measures can be taken at modest additional cost, to substantially decrease the likelihood of its extinction.

"We are hopeful that we will help ensure the presence of Titi forever", concluded Marie.

Marie Helene Burle is a doctoral student at Simon Fraser University, working under the supervision of David B. Lank, and assisted by the staff of Society of Polynesian Ornithologists (SOP-MANU). The Titi work has been funded by French Polynesia's Environment Department (DIREN), the Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund, Island Conservation, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Research and Engineering Council of Canada, and Simon Fraser University. We thank the landowners of Tahanea, the Mayor of Aana, Claude Serra of the DIREN, Rick Lanctot of the US Fish and Wildlife Service for their absolutely essential and generous support.

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank.

## **VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL COUNTERS.**

**Could all counters please read the first paragraph of the Count Programme, page 11, regarding sending counts by email in October and November.**



## Adventures in Mongolia – looking beyond the coast

Tucked away between China and Russia in central Asia, Mongolia is not widely known to Australians, including people interested in migratory waders. Most of us think that almost all waders that fly to Australia migrate down the coast of Russia, Japan, Korea and China. But we may be wrong!

Sandra and I had an opportunity to visit Mongolia from 9 – 16<sup>th</sup> August as part of a 5-person team (2 Koreans and 3 Australians) that undertook the first Mongolian Shorebird Training Workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to train postgraduate students from the Mongolian National University. Funding for the visit came from the Korean Ministry of Environment and the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership.

The overall aims of the visit were to (1) provide two days of formal classroom-based training in different aspects of wader ecology, catching and marking methods and discuss conservation issues for waders in Mongolia; (2) undertake fieldwork to catch, band and flag waders (Blue over Green on left tibia) of species that visit Australia and (3) undertake surveys of all wetlands visited and count the birds. During the planning stages of the visit, we found out to our surprise that Internationally-significant (> 1% of Flyway population) numbers of 30 species of wader stage through Mongolia on northward and southward migration. We were further surprised to find out that there had been 24 sightings of Australian-flagged waders (23 Red-necked Stint and 1 Asian Dowitcher) in Mongolia. The Red-necked Stints were mostly birds flagged in Victoria, with a few from North-western Australia. These sightings had all been from eastern Mongolia, with the exception of one sighting of a Victorian Red-necked Stint in western Mongolia. Some waders had previously been banded in Mongolia, but very little is known about the important sites for waders, the actual numbers of each species or their threats.

Our visit was intended to be the start of what is hoped to be a longer-term collaboration between Australian, Korean and Mongolian scientists and conservationists to understand and better protect the waders that pass through Mongolia.

We arrived in the capital, Ulaanbaatar from Seoul at midnight and were met by our cheerful and friendly host, Professor Sundev Gomboobaatar (Gomboo) from the Mongolian National University. The next day, the workshop was opened by Tsogtsaikhan Purev from the Ministry of Nature, Environment and Tourism. A series of informal talks and break-out discussions followed over the next two days. The students showed a surprising grasp of the conservation issues for waders in Mongolia and many good ideas for follow-up activities and projects were identified. Gomboo talked about breeding Greater Sand Plover and Oriental Plover in Mongolia. The majority of the Flyway population of both these species spend their non-breeding season in Australia. Greater Sand Plover numbers in northern Australia have declined alarmingly and we found out that this may be due to the increases in livestock usage of their breeding habitat on the open steppe grasslands interfering with nesting. It will be an issue we hope to explore further as the collaboration develops.



**A Wood Sandpiper with its new Mongolian leg flags.**

Day 3 started fine and warm as we climbed into our convoy of 3 vehicles, including what looked like a typical grey Russian 4WD from WWII. With all the gear and people on board, we headed westwards out of the city towards Dachinchilen and Tsagaan Lake. This would be our base for the next 3 days of fieldwork catching, flagging and counting waders. The drive took until mid-afternoon, including several birding stops for such spectacular species as Cinereous Vulture, Demoiselle Crane and Upland Buzzard. The summer rains had been above average and Tsagaan Lake was quite full and covered in waterbirds when we arrived. Subsequent counts during our visit totalled over 7,000 waders of 33 species and an additional 10,000 waterbirds of another 25 species. The abundance and diversity of species was much greater than we expected or had previously experienced on inland wetlands in Australia. We saw geese, swans, ducks, cranes, coots, sandpipers, plovers, phalaropes, avocets, snipe and all the possible curlew species (Eurasian, Eastern, Little and Whimbrel).

We set 20 mist nets in a range of areas around the lake and on the nearby marsh and creek. Catching was slow during the day as the slight breeze and sunny conditions made the nets highly visible. However, we caught a steady stream of swallows that allowed the students experience in handling, measuring and ageing birds. As evening approached each day, the catches of waders increased, with several Common Redshank and Wood Sandpiper being the numerous species caught. In all, we caught 25 birds of 10 species of wader, including species that could potentially migrate to Australia, such as Curlew Sandpiper, Wood and Common Sandpiper, Swinhoe's Snipe and Long-toed Stint. Most of these are obviously unlikely to make it to Moreton Bay, but could be seen in northern Australia. So look out for birds with a blue over green leg flag combination. There will be much celebration in Mongolia after the first resighting !

David Milton and Sandra Harding

## Bohai Update

Chris Hassell, Matt Slaymaker, Adrian Boyle and Ginny Chan

Is this the greyest place in the world? It must be close, especially at this time of year when the grey polluted sky merges with the murky grey mudflats in the shadow of a noisy grey oil refinery. Fortunately, from our favourite scanning position on the grey sea wall, just in front of the grey salt pans, we can see plenty of shorebirds adding splashes of colour to an otherwise bleak landscape!

As a further introduction for anyone not aware of the issues here, let us take a paragraph to briefly sum up why we are in Bohai Bay. We are back for another season on the northern shores of Bohai Bay in NE China, where, throughout the spring migration, our small team has been collecting observations from this vitally important shorebird staging site. The northern shores of Bohai Bay are significant for many species, notably Red Knot and Curlew Sandpiper, with large numbers stopping here on route to their northern breeding grounds.

Unfortunately it is also an excellent example of the threats that the entire Yellow Sea faces with large scale habitat destruction being the most obvious. Our work here involves studying shorebirds using the site throughout the season, with particular emphasis on searching for flags and colour-bands.

It seems that news about the importance of this area is getting out, as this year we had a string of visitors keen to see the area for themselves. Doug Watkins and Lv Yong from Wetlands International dropped in for a couple of days, fortunately just missing the fog. Nick Murray from Queensland University stopped off on his tour of the Yellow Sea as part of his project mapping and quantifying the decline in intertidal areas in East Asia. A presentation of his work only confirmed what is widely known and that some serious changes need to be implemented for the shorebirds to have any future. Two film crews interviewed Chris, Matt, Theunis Piersma, David Melville and Yan Hong Yan so hopefully the message will reach the Chinese public.

Things seemed to be happening a little earlier this year with Ruddy Turnstone, Curlew Sandpiper and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper among the species seen in the first few days in the field, all 4-5 days earlier than in 2011. Both species of Knot were present in good numbers as well, with a few thousand of each species present when we first arrived on site (April 12th) and numbers of Red Knot growing steadily ever since.

The first Asian Dowitcher of the year was at Nanpu on April 15th and the first Nordmann's Greenshank was on exactly the same small patch of mud the following day.

Scanning for leg flags was productive with many highlights. We recorded 4,512 flag and band sightings from 16 banding studies in the EAAF on 13 species.

Red Knot numbers continued to rise through late April until mid-May but the peak was much lower than last year 35,000 as compared to 65,000 in 2011. This does not seem to be a loss of birds from the population as the numbers of colour-bands and flags were at very similar ratios. The birds were definitely using the adjacent Salt Ponds for foraging and this area is all but impossible to census so we need to analyse the colour-band resightings to work out the turn-over of birds on the mud, in the ponds and in the whole area. In mid-May numbers of Red Knot began to decline as the *rogersi* subspecies headed off to their breeding grounds in Chukotka leaving about 30,000 *piersmai* Red Knot behind in the latter stages of May. Over 90% of the world population of that subspecies in 2 flocks on 2 km of mudflat!

That's why we think it's an important site!

The area also hosts some rarities that all shorebirders like to hear about; up to 10 Nordmann's Greenshank were being sighted daily at Nanpu until Mid-May, and the Asian Dowitcher flock peaked just short of 200 at Zuidong. A single Grey-tailed Tattler on the 5th May was an unusual record for this site as was Long-toed Stint. The enigmatic Spoon-billed Sandpiper was recorded in late May and seen at the same site for 4 days and then 5km away a day later.

Scanning for flags continued unabated come rain or shine, tide high or low, Knot or not for 52 days! 'Old friends' continued to be seen with the Thai Godwits, 'JE' the Victorian ELF Godwit and the Japanese Grey Plover all occasionally recorded. A Ruddy Turnstone with an ELF flag from Taiwan was the first bird from there recorded here in 4 years of scanning. It was initially seen in the afternoon in a Saltpan near the Prison but the following morning it was one of the first birds onto the mud as the tide receded. This shows how some birds wander around the area although this movement of just over 10km is nothing for a bird which can easily fly 1000s!

Red Knot numbers dropped suddenly in late May as we had a noticeable departure of the *rogersi* subspecies. Overall counts halved and our 'subspecies ratio scans' swung heavily in favour of *piersmai*. This was expected as many birds depart for the northern breeding grounds, less expected was a second peak in numbers.

Having dropped to less than 20 000, Red Knot numbers surged up to close to 30 000! Where did they come from? There had been birds feeding in the saltpans, perhaps they just come back to the mud for a final few days feeding before leaving? Every season is a bit different and the behaviour of the birds is changing from day-to-day ... there is still a lot to learn! With the influx of birds comes an influx of colour bands, including many new individuals seen for the first time this season. During this trip we surpassed our 2011 total for flags and band sightings.

A visiting birder reported a lonesome Spoon-billed sandpiper in the saltpans on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. We checked the area a little more frequently than usual but if it was still there we failed to pick it from the thousands of Red-knecked Stint present. On the 25<sup>th</sup> Chris was lucky enough to get great views of one feeding at very close range on the receding tide at Zuidong. The rest of the team were a few kilometres away at Nanpu and with no Knot to scan we made our way over to Chris to take a look. The bird flew off just before we arrived so Matt got out to scan and check through some other birds on the way. This turned out to be a bad decision as he was the only team member to not see it when it came back, albeit briefly, to the original spot! Spoon-billed Sandpiper is among the most threatened birds in the world and certainly one of the most high profile. This is the first we have seen here in our 8 solid months of field work over 4 years, but it seems reasonable to assume that they occur annually and can easily be missed in amongst the large numbers of stint present, especially when we are looking primarily at the Knots! We are unable to be upbeat about the sighting though as presumably it is not an expanding population but declining habitat that has led this bird to be in our study site.

With all the attention the Bohai study site has been getting this season, from various visitors from varied organisations, hopes are high of a permanent solution to the threat of the site becoming another industrial zone. Just like last year, WWF have taken a huge interest in the site and have provided much support, not least of which is financial support in conjunction with WWF-Netherlands and Beijing Normal University, that has made much of our work here possible.

A conference organised by WWF was held on the 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> in nearby Tangshan to offer an opportunity for interested parties to meet, discuss the problems and raise awareness about the issues. The first afternoon was very entertaining with various speakers including our own Professor Piersma. The second day included a field trip to the mudflats where participants were able to see the site as well as a large flock of Red Knot. Overall it seemed to be a success and with the media attention that was received anything that can raise the profile of the site can only be a good thing. However, exploration of a former favourite scanning area at the east-end of Zuidong brought home the reality of how quickly and radically the coastline can be changed. In previous years we have recorded thousands of birds and many flags on the Zuidong mudflats, but over just a few years most of the mudflats have gone, a 6-lane highway has been built and preparation of the area for construction is well underway. Zuidong, the small fishing village, is being systematically destroyed as a series of apartment blocks take shape behind. As things stand at the moment it seems this is the destiny of the rest of the coastline in this area. So let's hope that the super-biodiverse mudflats at Nanpu can escape that fate.

A sobering end, as ever, when discussing shoebirds and the Yellow Sea.

For more information visit [www.globalflywaynetwork.com.au](http://www.globalflywaynetwork.com.au)

From Shorebirds 2020 Newsletter

## **Conservation, Community Benefits and a New Ramsar Site: Ten Years of Conservation in Western Madagascar.**

Madagascar has recently designated Lake Kinkony as a Ramsar Site (Wetland of International Importance). Lake Kinkony is a permanent freshwater lake situated within the new Protected Area of the Mahavavy-Kinkony Complex, in western Madagascar, where BirdLife Partner, Asity Madagascar has been undertaking important conservation work for the last ten years. Ramsar designation for the site is a highly significant achievement in terms of international recognition of the ecological, economic, cultural, scientific and recreational importance of the lake and the wetlands.

The Mahavavy-Kinkony Complex consists of marshes, rivers, lakes, coastal zones, mangroves, palm savannah, dry forests and even caves. The site is home to a large number of threatened species including the Critically Endangered Madagascar Fish-eagle *Haliaeetus vociferoides*, the Endangered Sakalava Rail *Amauornis olivieri*, Madagascar Heron *Ardea humbloti*, Madagascar Pond-heron *Ardeola idea*, and Madagascar Sacred Ibis, *Threskiornis bernieri* as well as the Vulnerable Madagascar Plover *Charadrius thoracicus*; Critically Endangered endemic fish are also present. The site is also highly important to the Malagasy people for fishing, hunting and agriculture. However, the wetlands' wildlife has been threatened by over-exploitation, habitat loss and sedimentation; forest areas have suffered from illegal timber extraction and unsustainable shifting agriculture.

In 2007, the Mahavavy-Kinkony Complex was granted temporary protection status by the Government of Madagascar. A management plan is now in place; local community based organisations have been created to regulate fishing and agricultural activities, ensure sustainable management and to conserve the complex's resources and biodiversity. Permanent protection should be approved in the near future. The Ramsar designation is a further demonstration of commitment to conserving the country's wetlands.

The established community based management of Lake Kinkony's resources is an example of Asity Madagascar's successful conservation of natural resources through empowering local people to develop the capacity to protect them and benefit from their sustainable use. Since temporary protection was granted, this has been possible thanks to the invaluable support of the Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondiale (FFEM), Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation, Conservation International Madagascar, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ Programme Germano-Malgache pour l'Environnement), Arcadia Foundation and Fondation pour les Aires Protégées et la Biodiversité de Madagascar.

In Madagascar, national law enables local community associations to acquire rights to control the management of natural resources, ensuring continued benefits for the local people who depend on them. Helping these communities to claim these rights and strengthening the community associations is one of the key conservation strategies of Asity Madagascar.



Local laws known as *Dina*, developed and implemented by local people and authorities, complete the process of community empowerment for conservation and resource management.



Wetlands are an important resource for the Malagasy people (Marc Rabenandrasana; BirdLife)

Vony Raminoarisoa, Coordinator of Asity Madagascar said, "Local communities have always known the richness of their environment, but the development of mutual trust and close collaboration between different stakeholders are the foundation for successful conservation in countries like Madagascar, where much of the population depends on natural resources."

Finally, because current rates of natural resource use are unsustainable, small income generation projects have also been developed to provide alternatives and strengthen the independence of local communities. Such activities include sustainable fishing, tourism, and rice and honey production. Livestock rearing and beekeeping activities, along with infrastructure development for low impact tourism, are already being implemented.

From BirdLife

## Mackay Region Shorebird Survey to be held on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> November 2012

The QWSG conducts surveys in the Mackay region every couple of years to monitor shorebird populations. All members are invited to participate in the survey. About 16 people will be needed. Flights and accommodation will be provided if needed considering where you live. You should have wader counting experience (telescope required) and be available to fly to Mackay on the Friday night if leaving from Brisbane. Counts will be done on both the Saturday and Sunday. Return flights will be in the evening on the Sunday.

Members interested in being involved should contact David Milton or Sandra Harding on 07 3390 2179 or email: [pitta@gil.com.au](mailto:pitta@gil.com.au) to register their interest. If interested please reply by 14 September 2012.

## WADER WATCH Phil Cross

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

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

### **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.

### **Sightings in Moreton Bay & Environs between 12.05.12 and 22.07.12.**

1 Eastern Curlew, 10 Bar-tailed Godwit, 2 Pied Oystercatcher, 13 Black-winged Stilt, 6 Grey-tailed Tattler, and 1 Red-capped Plover.

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

Bar-tailed Godwit – **JE, JM, AAE, AAK.**

Pied Oystercatcher – **AAD, AAK.**

Black-winged Stilt – **BB, EA, KE, RD, AAN, AAZ.**

Grey-tailed Tattler – **C3, AAZ, ACD, ACN, ACR.**

Red-capped Plover – **LM.**

### **Interstate & overseas Green leg flag sightings**

2 Bar-tailed Godwit – Aphae Island (north), South Korea – Andreas Kim – 09.05.12.

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Aphae Island (south), South Korea – Andreas Kim – 13.05.12.

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Aphae Island (south), South Korea – Andreas Kim – 16.05.12.

1 Grey-tailed Tattler (engraved JN) – Yatsu Tidal Flat, Narashino, Chiba, Japan – Fumiko Oyama – 31.07.12.

### **Orange (Victoria) leg flag sightings**

1 Eastern Curlew – O'Reagans Creek eastside, Burnett Mary region – Marilyn Sweetnam – 21.07.12.

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Maaroom – Bill Price – 19.05.12.

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

No sightings.

### **Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings – use four combinations**

No sightings.

### **Black over white or white over black (Shanghai, China) leg flag sightings**

No sightings.

### **Other wader leg flag sightings**

1 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – blue flag over yellow flag right tibia, metal band left tibia – Bundaberg Port – Chris Barnes – 07.04.12 (flagged at Cangzhou, China).

### **Pied Oystercatcher 2 digit 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.

Only one bird seen on four occasions:

**K3** – Wynnum Esplanade – Tony Cotter – 12.05.12, 03.06.12, 17.06.12 & 07.07.12.

**Other leg flag sightings and banded birds**

- 1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus, metal band left tarsus – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 21.07.12.  
 1 Caspian Tern – orange flag (**engraved 39**) on right tarsus and metal band on left tarsus – Bishop (Fisherman Island) – Linda Cross – 06.05.12 (flagged December 2011 in Victoria).  
 1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus – Manly Harbour – Sandra Harding – 05.05.12.  
 1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus, metal band left tarsus – Toorbul – Sarah Beavis – 30.04.12.  
 1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus, metal band left tarsus – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 06.04.12.  
 1 Little Tern – green over white flag left tarsus, faded blue over metal band right tarsus – Phil & Linda Cross & Graham Smith – Bishop (Fisherman) Island – 06.05.12 (flagged 1998 in NSW).

**Interesting wader sightings**

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

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

- 2 Banded Lapwing – Lytton claypan – 21.07.12  
 1 Common Sandpiper – Endeavour River mouth, Cooktown – 20.07.12  
 2 Bush-stone Curlew – Mirrapool Beach, Moreton Island – 23.07.12  
 2 Bush-stone Curlew – Shellgrit Creek, Mackay – 22.07.12  
 3 Wood Sandpiper – Bundaberg Port – 07.04.12

**Not waders but of interest anyway**

- 2 Australasian Shoveler – Lytton claypan – 21.07.12  
 2 Australasian Shoveler – Kedron Brook Wetlands – 06.05.12  
 12 Pink-eared Duck – Kedron Brook Wetlands – 09.06.12  
 582 Chestnut Teal – Luggage Point – 21.07.12  
 60 Plumed-Whistling Duck – Bishops Marsh – 21.07.12  
 845 Black Swan – on water in front of Toorbul roost – 05.05.12  
 1 Black Kite – Caboolture River mouth – 21.07.12  
 1 Spotted Harrier – Kedron Brook Wetlands – 06.05.12 & 09.06.12  
 1 Spotted Harrier – Bundaberg Port – 07.04.12  
 1 Swamp Harrier – Nathan Road, Redcliffe – 04.06.12  
 1 Buff-banded Rail – Toorbul – 02.06.12  
 2 Glossy Ibis – Nathan Road, Redcliffe – 04.06.12  
 2 Glossy Ibis – Redcliffe Airport northside – 04.06.12  
 527 Little Black Cormorant – Bishop (Fisherman) Island – 22.07.12  
 2 Lesser Crested Tern – Bishop (Fisherman) Island – 06.05.12  
 1 Yellow-billed Spoonbill – Kedron Brook Wetlands – 09.06.12 & 22.07.12  
 74 White-faced Heron – Trutes Bay, Tweed Heads – 14.05.12  
 1 White-necked Heron – Trutes Bay, Tweed Heads – 14.05.12  
 8 Nankeen Night Heron – in Mango tree adjacent to Toorbul roost – 21.07.12  
 2 Black-necked Stork – Garnett's Lagoon No 1 – 21.07.12  
 1 Black-necked Stork – seen at four sites as follows:-  
     Bundaberg Port on 06.05.12,                      Kinka Wetlands on 21.07.12,  
     Endeavour River mouth on 20.07.12        Endeavour River claypan on 20.07.12

**Count Programme by Linda Cross**
**Important notice to all counters.**

**From 11<sup>th</sup> October to 20<sup>th</sup> November we will not have access to our home computer. This means that we will not be able to collect counts and leg flag sightings during this period. Could everyone who sends their counts and flag sightings to us by email please hold all counts and sightings for that period. This will mean that you will have to hold both October and November counts until after 20<sup>th</sup> November. If you want to print them out and send by snail mail instead of holding on to them that is ok. Our apologies for any inconvenience we will cause.**

Two new counters have sent in their first count sheet. Robert Westerman did a count at Wave Break sand Island on the Gold Coast in May. Robert is concerned about future development in this area of the Gold Coast and was informed that this site had not been counted for many years, and was advised that it would be beneficial to start counting the site again so that any current data could be used to help voice concerns over any issues. The other count came from Mary Boyce, who counted Inskip Point in July. Although Mary has been trained to count the terns at that site, and submitting count sheets which include those species and waterbirds.

We are hopeful that Mary will in time get hooked on the waders of the site too and find that she won't be able to resist including them in the future. We welcome both Robert and Mary to the count programme.

Thank you to everyone for getting the National Winter Count sheets to me in record time. They have been checked and gone off for processing. While migratory species numbers at sites were low (expected for July), there were a couple of interesting records. At Mathieson Homestead in Hervey Bay there was 1700 Bar-tailed Godwit on 21.07.12 and 1560 at Mirrapool Beach, Moreton Island on 23.07.12. At Toorbul Sandfly Bay roost 162 Eastern Curlew were observed on 21.07.12 and one lone Grey Plover was recorded at Shellgrit Creek entrance in Mackay on the same day.

The southward migration will be in full swing shortly, (some Eastern Curlew are back already) so give those scopes a good clean in readiness for all the leg flag sightings you will be recording during your counts. Please also don't forget to do a count of the juvenile birds of particular species and mark on your count sheet. This will give us an indication of the breeding success.

Our cross Tasman visitor (Double-banded Plover) were still recorded at 17 sites (Gold Coast to Mackay) from May through to 23<sup>rd</sup> July. While numbers at sites were single figures, eight sites recorded them in double figures and a large group of 84 were recorded at Wave Break sand Island, Gold Coast on 23.05.12. Breeding plumage was noted on some count sheets in July, and by now this should be extensive on all of them that will have made their way back to New Zealand shores. A couple of early August count sheets have come in and Maroochy River North Shore, Noosa River sandbanks and Inskip Point still have this species on site up to 16.08.12.



With very little migratory waders around during the winter months, it has been good to at least have some of our resident nomadic waders continuing to frequent count sites, and a few of them in fairly good numbers.

Of particular interest two Banded Lapwing were recorded and photographed at Lytton claypan during the national winter count on 21.07.12

Twelve sites recorded Black-fronted Plover during July in small numbers, but Bundaberg Port had a large group of 54 during their count on 22.07.12. Red-kneed Dotterel are less common, but Bundaberg Port played host to 11 of them on the same count day. Pine Rivers north side had four of the same species on 05.05.12, and Redcliffe Airport north side recorded eight of them on 04.06.12.

Black-winged Stilt numbers have been very good, although we cannot ascertain how good their breeding success has been because only a few counters record the number of immature in the flock they count.

By counting the number of younger birds in the flock gives us a good indication on how good their breeding season has been. Ten sites recorded this species in good numbers, but there were a few standouts as follows:-



440 at Bishop (Fisherman) Island on 06.05.12  
335 at Kedron Brook Wetlands on 06.05.12  
289 at Redcliffe Airport northside on 21.07.12  
234 (included 44 immature) at Deception Bay south on 21.07.12  
682 at Thoolara south east (Pumicestone Passage) on 05.07.12  
415 at Maaroom on 21.07.12  
297 at Toorbul Sandfly Bay on 21.07.12  
214 at Trutes Bay Tweed Heads on 18.06.12

During the July counts Red-necked Avocet have also been recorded at five sites. A total of 302 at Bishop (Fisherman) Island on 22.07.12 – 248 at Redcliffe Airport north side on 21.07.12 – 18 at Trutes Bay, Tweed Heads on 09.07.12 – and 4 each at Maaroom and King Street mudflats on 21.07.12.

Other wader sightings can be found in the 'Interesting wader sightings' section of this newsletter.

### **Breeding records.**

Masked Lapwing – two nests (3 eggs and 4 eggs), both sitting at Maaroom on 21.07.12 – nesting at Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island on 22.07.12

Black-winged Stilt – young at Bundaberg Port on 06.05.12

Red-capped Plover – two small chicks at Bundaberg Port on 06.05.12 – one chick and two runners at Bishop (Fisherman) Island on 06.05.12 – sitting on two eggs (third attempt) at Seaforth Beach creek mouth on 20.07.12

**Please send counts to me at our new email address as follows:** [xenus69@bigpond.com](mailto:xenus69@bigpond.com)

Snail mail: 40 Thompson Road, Bellmere. Qld 4510 Phone: 5495 2758

Send leg flag sightings to Phil Cross using either of the two above methods.

Happy counting.

Linda Cross.

## **Wader ID Days**

### **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September at Toorbul**

High tide at 9:52 a.m (plus 30 minutes later for Toorbul 10:22 a.m.) of 2.05 m. Meeting time 9:00 am

Take the Bruce Highway north from Brisbane to the Donnybrook/Toorbul exit. 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.

Bring water, food and a chair. It is a good idea to have a hat, sunscreen and insect repellent. Most importantly bring your binoculars or telescopes. Hopefully we can provide the answers to all your questions.

Please contact us if you have any questions. Phil & Linda Cross 5495 2758.

## **Australasian Shorebird Conference, 29-30 September 2012**

The 8th Australasian Shorebird Conference in Adelaide will be held on 29<sup>th</sup>–30<sup>th</sup> September, with the theme of the 'Role of Science in the Conservation of Shorebirds'.

Australasian Shorebird Conferences focus on local issues and provide opportunities for attendees to see shorebirds at key sites with local experts, and hear about the latest research and developments. This year's Conference will be held in the Napier Building at the University of Adelaide.

The conference organisers endeavour to encourage researchers from other countries in the Flyway. However opportunities for financial assistance to attend the ASC is limited and is available only to students, or researchers in South East Asia, that demonstrate a need for financial assistance after a the receipt of an abstract.

See: <http://www.birdlife.org.au/projects/shorebirds-2020/latest-news-sb>

## QWSG CONTACTS

### QUEENSLAND WADER

[www.waders.org.au](http://www.waders.org.au)

The Official Quarterly Publication of  
Queensland Wader Study Group

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<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>	All correspondence to:		

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SHAILER PARK  
QLD 4128

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

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A receipt will be forwarded if required.

Forward application to:  
Dierdre Chrzescijanski  
QWSG Treasurer  
39 Barrinia Street,  
MANLY  
Qld 4179

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, and only one further newsletter will be sent after expiry of your subscription.

Copy Deadline for the next issue of Queensland Wader is **November 18<sup>th</sup> 2012**

Contributions should be addressed to:

David Edwards, The QWSG Editor, 54 Elliott Street, Clayfield, Qld 4011  
or E-mail to: [gouldian@ozemail.com.au](mailto:gouldian@ozemail.com.au)

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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 Rooms, 237 Milton Rd, Milton.

**OR**

Contact Vicki Campbell Phone 07 3378 2964 or email [vicki.campbell@cogentia.com.au](mailto:vicki.campbell@cogentia.com.au)

Postage is not included in prices quoted.

### **Note price reduction on “Shorebirds of Australia”**

BOOKS	\$35.00	Shorebirds of Australia
METAL BADGES	\$5.00	Metal QWSG logo badges.
CLOTH BADGES	\$8.00	QWSG logo on rectangular bottle-green or sand background

POLO SHIRTS            \$42.00.

Our cotton polo shirts are now available.  
The locally made shirts are plain bottle or sky  
with contrast collar in sand, or tri-coloured  
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Men's sizes: SM - XL

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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, Richard Noske [president@birdsqueensland.org.au](mailto:president@birdsqueensland.org.au)

Secretary, Rae Clark [secretary@birdsqueensland.org.au](mailto:secretary@birdsqueensland.org.au)

Treasurer, Colleen Lock [treasurer@birdsqueensland.org.au](mailto:treasurer@birdsqueensland.org.au)

Monthly Meetings

Birds Queensland

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 7:30pm start.

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently:

Mr Garry BRENNAN

Dr Golo MAURER

Mr Athol NELSON

Miss Caragh NELSON

Dr Nadine WISEMAN

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

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

## Electronic Newsletter ??

Are you interested in receiving your “Queensland Wader” by email?

If you are interested email me on [gouldian@ozemail.com.au](mailto:gouldian@ozemail.com.au). Please could you use the subject line as  
“Electronic Newsletter”? Editor



## Count Activities – 2012

### QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Program – 2012

Sat 15<sup>th</sup> Sep 2.03m at 08:43  
 Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Oct 2.02m at 07:34  
 Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov 2.19m at 11:54  
 Sat 1<sup>st</sup> Dec 2.33m at 10:58

### Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2012

Sun 16<sup>th</sup> Sep 2.14m at 09:26 Meet 07:35  
 Sun 14<sup>th</sup> Oct 2.18m at 08:20 Meet 06:30  
 Sun 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 2.13m at 12:33 Meet 10:40  
 Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec 2.29m at 11:34 Meet 09:45

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

## PLEASE CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR RENEWAL IS DUE!

**A reminder to members:** please let the Treasurer know if you change your contact details.



## 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: \$.....  
 Do you require a receipt? Yes / No  
 Phone: (Home) ..... (Work) .....  
 Fax / e-mail: .....  
 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.....)  
 Would you like to receive your newsletter (colour version) by E-mail.....

SIGNATURE: ..... DATE:.....

**Please post this form to: QWSG Treasurer, 39 Barrinia St., Manly Qld 4179**

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BSB: 313 140

Account number: 08305297

Please email this form to: [treasurer@waders.org.au](mailto:treasurer@waders.org.au)