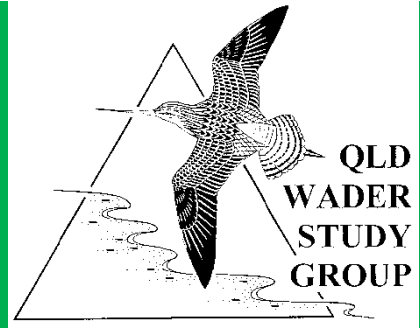


QUEENSLAND WADER



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Shorebird surveys in the SE Gulf of Carpentaria during Southward Migration

by Arthur Keates

In March 2013, I took part in the first shorebird surveys in the south-east of the Gulf of Carpentaria in northern Queensland since 1999. This vast area, extending about 350km along the Gulf coast from Tarrant Point in the west to Point Burrows in the east, is one of the most important areas of international importance for shorebirds in Australia along with Roebuck Bay and Eighty Mile Beach in Western Australia. The estimated total numbers of different species indicate there are 16 migratory shorebird species using the area that have internationally significant numbers (>1% of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway population).

Data obtained from the 2013 surveys, and previous surveys, were used to support the nomination of part of the area with the highest densities of migratory shorebirds, from just north of Karumba Point township to the mouth of the Smithburne River 43km to the north, to be included in the Flyway Site Network. In December 2014, after consultations with the traditional owners, the Kurtijar people, and other stakeholders, the Flyway Partnership designated the site as Australia's 20th Flyway Network Site, the 6th in Queensland.¹

In late August and early September 2015, Peter Driscoll and I conducted aerial and ground surveys of shorebirds and other waterbirds from our base in Burketown. Peter's light aircraft, an Aeroprakt 22, again proved to be ideal for aerial surveys of the roost sites and, having the added advantage of being able to land and take off from the dry salt pans behind the coastal roost sites, enabled us to conduct some ground counts.

On our first day, 29 August, we conducted aerial surveys of roost sites from Gore Point to Tarrant Point finishing with a total of just under 11,500 migratory shorebirds. After flying over the sites, we landed on a salt pan and walked to a roost site just west of the Albert River to conduct a ground count. The total shorebird count was over 5,100 shorebirds, predominantly Black-tailed Godwit (550), Great Knot (2,610), Red Knot (290), Red-necked Stint (710) and Greater Sand Plover (500).

On our second day, we departed Burketown aerodrome at sunrise to conduct aerial surveys of roost sites from Gore Point to the mouth of the Norman River and on to Pelican Island at the northern boundary of the recently designated Flyway Network Site.

Having seen from the air a big flock of birds at The Oaks, a roost site about 10 km to the west of the mouth of the Norman River, we returned to conduct a ground count. We landed on a salt pan and then managed to find our way through the almost impenetrable rubber vine (*Cryptostegia grandiflora*) to access the beach. Here we spent about 3 hours counting the birds, reaching an imposing total of 13,280 shorebirds, including 4 of the species reaching their flyway 1% threshold, Black-tailed Godwit (4,400), Great Knot (3,325) and Red Knot (1,075). In addition, we recorded significant numbers of the recently declared critically endangered species, Eastern Curlew (215) and Curlew Sandpiper (455). In addition to shorebirds, 93 terns of 3 species and 795 waterbirds, including 700 Grey and Chestnut Teal added to the impressive sight.

When we finished the count as the tide receded, we scanned the flocks for leg flags, picking up 4 Victorian flagged birds (2 Red Knot and 2 Curlew Sandpiper), a Red-necked Stint banded in Bohai Bay, China, a Black-tailed Godwit sporting leg flag and colour bands from NW Australia and a SE Qld flagged Curlew Sandpiper.



The next day, we planned a couple of ground counts depending on where the birds were roosting and access to the sites. The sight of about 4,000 shorebirds on a large sandbank just to the west of Gore Point was tempting but difficult to access so we decided to count the birds at the Point. Of a total of just over 2,400 birds, in contrast to other sites, the Red Knot (435) outnumbered the Great Knot (15). Other species recorded included Eastern Curlew (286), Whimbrel (76) and Beach Stone-curlew (3).

At the most westerly roost site, Black-tailed Godwit (1,100) again was the most abundant species of the 1,779 shorebirds counted. Over 100 Gull-billed Tern included some birds of the migratory race, *affinis*, also seen among flocks of the species at other sites.



On our last day, 1 September, we were joined by 8 of the local indigenous rangers when we went back to the roost site we counted on our first day, west of the Albert River. Even more shorebirds greeted us as we walked out onto the foreshore: over 7,000, mostly in 3 large flocks. The migratory species were mainly made up of Black-tailed Godwit (644), Great Knot (4,338), Red Knot (482), Red-necked Stint (400) and Sand Plover species (800). The highlights for the rangers were 2 Great Knot with black and white leg flags having been banded at Chongming Dao, China. Also, 2 Asian Dowitcher were picked out among the knots and godwits.

Taking care not to disturb the birds, our group approached the largest flock to within 30m. The birds seemed content to continue to rest, many of them sitting on the wet sand as the tide receded rather than feeding. This may well be a sign of their being exhausted after long flights but also of course with only one high tide each day in the Gulf, the birds had more time available to feed.

When planning the surveys, we wondered whether we would be too early for the southern migration but it seems our visit coincided with early arrivals of some species. Interestingly, data from our aerial surveys reveal 80% of the migratory shorebirds (<35,000) were observed on the western side of the Norman River in contrast to the surveys in 2013 during northward migration. This data and data from previous surveys show the distribution of shorebirds from Tarrant Point to Point Burrows differs early in the season to that after the southward migration when relatively more birds are found closer to the Norman River in the east than to the Albert River in the west. From this, one could speculate the birds make first landfall along that part of the coast explaining the high numbers of migratory shorebirds there and over time work their way eastward and southward.

Thanks to QWSG for covering the fuel and accommodation costs for the trip. My special thanks go to Peter Driscoll; without his unwavering efforts and immeasurable skills, we just would not have been able to conduct the surveys and gain very good data.

Red List Reveals Europe's Farmland Wading Birds in Crisis

The latest update of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species is out – and it's sounding alarm bells for some of Europe's most charismatic and cherished shorebirds (also known as wading birds).

The list highlights sharp declines in most farmland wader species across much of Europe in recent decades. In some cases, these falls are so steep that they're pushing some species closer towards extinction. Increased conservation efforts are now urgently required.

In this latest assessment, which has been carried out by BirdLife International for IUCN, the Northern Lapwing and Eurasian Oystercatcher have now been classified as globally Near Threatened with extinction. They join the Eurasian Curlew and the Black-tailed Godwit that have already previously been categorised as Near Threatened. These additions mean farmland waders are now one of the most threatened group of birds in Europe.



Eurasian Oystercatcher - Photo: © Zhang Ming

Their group name refers to the fact they breed in habitats strongly influenced by farming activities, such as grazing, mowing and drainage. For a long time, many species have been provided with a safe home in farmland across Northern Europe for breeding, before the birds migrate to estuaries and mudflats in winter months.

Research is now showing the loss and fragmentation of breeding habitats as being key factors in the decline of these species. Among the causes of loss and break-up of habitats are issues with drainage and associated intensification of grasslands. Additionally, farming practices could also be having a direct impact, for example by machinery unintentionally destroying nests and chicks. Threatened populations are now also suffering more from the presence of native and non-native predators, making a difficult situation even worse.

But the picture is not entirely gloomy. Some conservation efforts are already being undertaken in many European countries to try and save these important populations. Examples includes farmers receiving payments to delay mowing their grasslands and the reinstating of wetland features in order to safeguard habitats

The declines and worsening global statuses seen in this Red List update do show, however, that conservation efforts need to be increased. Measures must be targeted more accurately and cover a greater area of the species' ranges. Co-ordinating activities better would also do a great deal, so that successes in one part of Europe can be shared across the continent and indeed even further afield. Many of these species are long-distance migrants that fly all the way to Africa and the Middle East in order to escape harsh European winters.

Two conservation plans for Eurasian Curlew and Black-tailed Godwit have been created under the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) in response to this urgent need. On top of this, the European Union, through the LIFE financial instrument, is funding the EuroSAP project (European Species Action Plan), which will see governments, experts and industry from across Europe work together to produce a protection multi-species action plan for the eight most threatened European species; Northern Lapwing, Eurasian Oystercatcher, Eurasian Curlew, Black-tailed Godwit, Common Snipe, Common Redshank, 'Baltic' Dunlin and Ruff. The project recognises that many of the species share similar habitats and face many of the same threats – meaning similar, if not the same, conservation solutions can be developed for all of them.

It's hoped the species now under threat can avoid suffering the same fate as two of their nearest relatives. The Canary Oystercatcher disappeared from Europe in the 1940s and the Slender-billed Curlew, which hasn't been seen since 1995, is also increasingly looking like it may also become extinct. By working on projects such as EuroSAP, BirdLife and Partners aim to stop these important and much-treasured birds from disappearing altogether.

The MSAP (Multi-Species Action Plan) for farmland wading birds will be coordinated by BirdLife's German partner, NABU, with support from RSPB (BirdLife in the UK), SOF (BirdLife in Sweden) and VBN (BirdLife in the Netherlands). It forms part of the LIFE EuroSAP project, which is co-ordinated by BirdLife International and funded with the contribution of the European Union's LIFE financial instrument and the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA).

This article was first published by BirdLife International on 28 Oct 2015.

Manly Shorebird Roost

Many members are aware of the high tide shorebird roost at Manly Harbour but not many will be aware of QWSG's long involvement in the site or the current status of the site.

In late 1989, the then Port of Brisbane Authority was given approval to reclaim an area of 9.299 ha in Manly Harbour. On completion of the reclamation, shorebirds found the area to provide suitable roosting habitat. In 1992 QWSG started regular monthly shorebird counts and, following the loss of habitat at Raby Bay, it was soon realised this was critical shorebird habitat.

In the mid to late 1990s, the Manly Harbour User's Group (MHUG) representing various boating organisations using the harbour approached the Port of Brisbane Corporation (PBC) about dredging the harbour and dumping the dredge spoil (some of it contaminated) on the reclamation area.

QWSG, and other environmentally focused groups, opposed the dumping of dredge spoil on the reclamation area because it was shorebird habitat of national and international significance. At the same time, QWSG entered into consultations with stakeholders, including PBC, the Environmental Protection Agency and MHUG as well as making submissions to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment seeking intervention to ensure its long-term protection.

Ultimately, a compromise position was reached. An environmental authority was issued in March 2001 for the dredging of the harbour and use the southern part of the reclamation area for dredge spoil on condition that the northern part be set aside as a shorebird roost.

QWSG was consulted on the design and construction of the roost which started in late August 2001. By late October 2001, construction of the roost had been completed and afterwards MHUG maintained the whole area for several years.

Under arrangements with MHUG, QWSG members continued to access the site for regular surveys and banding activities using the key to the gate at the southern perimeter fence. Unfortunately, dog walkers and fishers ignored the signage prohibiting entry and walked around the fence or cut their way through the fence, causing regular disturbance to the birds.

On 16 December 2005, the reclamation area was dedicated under the *Land Act 1994* as a reserve for strategic land management and environmental purposes under the control of PBC as trustee. In June 2010, the trusteeship was allocated to the Chief Executive of the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR). Since that time, there seems to have been far less unlawful access to the site and as a result less disturbance to the birds, thanks largely to the stronger perimeter fence at the southern end.

In early 2013, extreme weather conditions resulted in substantial damage to the rock retaining wall around the reclamation area. In June of that year, QWSG raised this and concerns about other maintenance issues with TMR and the long-term protection of the roost. However, the perimeter sea wall was subjected to further damage in severe weather and QWSG wrote to TMR on 5th January 2015. As a result, the recent major remedial works were carried out during the breeding season to minimise disturbance to the birds.

In March this year, to formalise QWSG's ongoing access to the reclamation area, TMR proposed granting QWSG a non-exclusive license over the reclamation area. In less than 4 months after negotiations started, a license was finalised at no cost to QWSG and importantly no ongoing costs to QWSG. While the permitted use under the license is stated to be the "scientific study of birds and associated activities", TMR is aware this includes:

- regular surveys of birds
- banding shorebirds
- education and information sessions for members of QWSG and Birds Queensland.

Recently, QWSG was approached by Birds Queensland and QWSG members requesting access to the roost for a twitchathon. While at first glance this may not appear unreasonable, clearly access by twitchathon participants does not fall within the permitted use under the license and accordingly could not be sanctioned. Some people may have felt disgruntled by the situation, but in reality, the species of birds at the roost are readily seen at other places with a little bit more time and effort; all participants were in the same situation. In any event, the welfare of the birds is paramount.

The license carries with it some obligations for QWSG, notably to keep the roost site free of noxious weeds and rubbish. This is not seen as particularly onerous and as part of compliance QWSG may need to have a working bee from time to time.

QWSG intends to continue to hold wader identification days for QWSG and BQ members at the roost site. There are of course some conditions on entry to the area. Members will be given a safety brief before entry and be required to sign an acknowledgment relating to safety issues.

QWSG has acted in the best interests of the birds and continues to work to ensure the long-term protection of the roost site. Much has been achieved over the years, particularly its status moving from unallocated State land to a reserve for environmental purposes. More recently QWSG has enhanced its relationship with government by establishing a good working relationship with TMR officers.

Having a recognised interest in the roost site places QWSG in a good position to achieve its objectives. So where to from here? Even though the roost site is now part of a reserve, consideration needs to be given to it being given a higher, and more permanent, level of protection as a protected area under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* or perhaps included as a conservation zone in the Moreton Bay Marine Park

New Agreement for the Conservation of South Korea's Top Coastal Wetland

Geum Estuary is an important site for Far-eastern Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*) Credit Li Zai-ju
By Mike Crosby, Tue, 10/11/2015

BirdLife International and the Government of Seocheon County have signed a new Memorandum of Understanding on the conservation of the Geum Estuary in the Republic of Korea. The MoU was signed by Mr Pakrae Noh, the Governor of Seocheon County, and Patricia Zurita, BirdLife's Chief Executive at the BirdLife office in Cambridge, UK on 9th November 2015.



Through the MOU, BirdLife and Seocheon County have agreed to work together to safeguard the biodiversity of the Geum Estuary. The county government has pursued enlightened policies based around nature-based sustainable development. The BirdLife Partnership will support this through the provision of technical expertise on migratory bird conservation.

The Geum Estuary is now the most important wetland in the Republic of Korea for migrating shorebirds, following the reclamation of the extensive mudflats at nearby Saemangeum. It supports internationally important numbers of 16 shorebird species, including the Critically Endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper.

"We are delighted to sign this agreement with Seocheon County Government to work collaboratively for the conservation and sustainable development of the Geum Estuary," said Patricia Zurita. "Protecting this site and properly managing the coastal wetlands in the Yellow Sea is vital to maintain the East Asian Australasian Flyway alive. Shorebirds like the Great Knot and Far Eastern Curlew depend on healthy tidal mudflats to recharge and continue their voyage".

"We are grateful to have the support of a great partner as BirdLife, an organisation that recognises the importance and value of Yubu-do," said Mr Pakrae Noh. "We look forward to further collaboration with BirdLife in protecting biodiversity and especially the migratory birds that need Geum Estuary. We will strive to strengthen eco-tourism in Seocheon County, with the further support of BirdLife's expertise".

The Geum Estuary is of outstanding importance for Great Knot and Far Eastern Curlew. These species have both been upgraded from Vulnerable to Endangered on the 2015 Red List because of the rapid loss of the intertidal wetlands in the Yellow Sea region of East Asia which they rely on to refuel on their long migrations from the breeding grounds in Eastern Russia to South-East Asia and Australasia. In addition to its rich wetlands and biodiversity, Seocheon County has a distinctive local cuisine, in particular excellent seafood and the best rice wine in Korea, and a rural village lifestyle. BirdLife is working with the government to developing nature and culture-based tourism in the county.

Spike Millington, Chief Executive of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership said "I congratulate the

Government of Seocheon County and Birdlife International for signing this MOU to extend their cooperation at this internationally important site, which offers a different perspective on development than the rapid infrastructure expansion model typically associated with the Republic of Korea”.

During their visit to the UK, the mayor and his colleagues from Seocheon County will visit RSPB's Titchwell and Rainham Marshes Nature Reserves, where staff from the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK) will showcase the restoration and management of the wetlands, and the benefits of the reserve to visitors and the local community.



The Geum Estuary is a very important wetland for migratory birds (and for birdwatching!). Photo: Mike Crosby / BirdLife International

Wading Birds Declining in the UK

The magical wildlife spectacle of hundreds of thousands of wading birds converging on British estuaries could be under threat as research shows big declines in some of the most familiar species. Results from the Wetland Bird Survey reveals that ringed plovers, oystercatchers, redshank and dunlin are among the eight most abundant species overwintering on UK estuaries to suffer significant and consistent population drops over 10 years.



Ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) on a pebble beach. Isle of Barra, Scotland, July . Photograph: Fergus Gill/Alamy

Conservationists believe several factors are responsible, including climate change forcing the birds to areas outside the UK, and say collaborative international research is imperative. Examinations of the traditional sites, the largest of which include the Wash, Morecambe Bay and Thames Estuary, are also required to determine if there are site-specific issues.

Ringed plovers have suffered a decline of 39% in 10 years in over-wintering birds and those breeding in the UK. Redshank have fallen by 26% and Dunlin by 23%. Curlew have fallen by 17% and oystercatchers by 15% in the 10 years to June 2012. Knot have dropped by 7% and the bar-tailed godwit by 10%. Grey plover are down by 21%, according to the data collected by thousands of volunteers.

Chas Holt of the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), who coordinated the survey, said: "I think we should be quite alarmed because the declines for many of these species are pretty consistent. Species like the ringed plover, redshank and dunlin, their decline has been consistent for 10 to 20 years now. And there is no obvious change happening, so in 10 years time we could be well down on numbers. It is hard to get a handle on exactly what is going on. When you see declines like this, it could be one of two or three main reasons."

"The overall population of the species as a whole could be in decline. These birds are breeding in the Arctic then wintering much further south in a flyway that runs right from north-west Europe down into Africa. So they are wintering over a large area. So, is the whole population in decline? Are they producing more young but is the survival rate lower? Or are they just slightly shifting distribution? Such consistent declines, mean we certainly have to take stock and understand what is going on".

Research by Wetland International has shown winter populations of some of the species have recently shifted away from the UK to Dutch and German coasts, possibly in response to milder winters. Another possibility is fewer young waders being successfully reared in the Arctic, which is experiencing rapid warming.

Waders produce spectacular shows during the peak period from November to January. The Wash, the largest in terms of overall numbers, holds a minimum of 350,000 birds at a time, not just waders but also ducks including widgeon and pintail, and geese such as the dark-bellied Brent Goose. It has been estimated that around 2million birds throughout each year use the Wash, where Norfolk meets Lincolnshire, attracted by its vast sandbanks and salt marshes.

Richard Hearn, head of species monitoring at the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT), said: "The declines in waders and other wintering waterbirds in the UK over the past decade or more, as revealed by the Wetland Bird Survey, are indicative of wider concerns about the state of our environment. They demonstrate the unprecedented period of change that these waterbirds are undergoing, and highlight the need for a step change in monitoring and relevant conservation action if we are to avert continued biodiversity loss."

The Wetland Bird Survey, a partnership between the BTO, the government's advisory joint nature conservation committee and the RSPB, in association with WWT, monitors birds at more than 2,000 wetland sites from estuaries to ponds across the UK.

Whimbrel Agonistic Behaviour

by Arthur Keates

Recently at Rose Bay, Manly, I witnessed agonistic behaviour of two Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*) in an apparent territorial dispute while foraging on the exposed mudflat. The encounters occurred about 3.5 hours before high tide and continued for almost an hour when the incoming tide covered the mudflat forcing the birds to fly to a nearby roost.

While scanning the mudflat, my attention was drawn to the antagonists when I saw one peck at the surface and the other rush at it with raised and outstretched wings. However, the first bird did not capture prey but instead had merely picked up a bit of vegetation and the aggressor walked away to forage closer to the shore in the area it had been.

On a closer look at the aggressor, I noticed it had a green engraved leg flag (that I was unable to read) attached to its right tibia, indicating it had been banded by the QWSG banding team. This made it easier to distinguish between the two birds.

For several minutes, both birds foraged a distance of about 50 m apart without interaction. Meanwhile, a short distance away an Eastern Curlew and a Bar-tailed Godwit were probing the mud in shallow water while a Striated Heron cryptically fed in its typical crouched style. None of those species had any interaction with the Whimbrel. While foraging apart, I only saw the flagged Whimbrel actually capture and eat prey (a small crab) without any reaction by the other bird although it may not have seen the outcome.

As the incoming tide brought the Whimbrel closer together, the agonistic behaviour resumed with intensity. Walking quickly or running parallel to each other about 1-2 m apart for about 20 m from the water's edge towards the shore, and then back, the birds were seemingly patrolling the unmarked border of their territories. On several occasions, one bird pecked at vegetation on the surface of the mudflat. In immediate response, the other bird aggressively rushed at the first bird with wings raised followed by both birds flapping and showing the underside of their wings (image 1). After making brief physical contact with their wings, the aggressor turned its back and quickly walked or ran away (image 2) closely followed by the other bird. Once, when close to the water's edge, one of the birds ran sidewise towards the other flapping its raised wings before retreating, after which the birds resumed the apparent patrol of their territory until again one initiated an attack in response to the other pecking at vegetation. This behaviour continued almost unabated until, after about 20 minutes, one flew off to a nearby high tide roost. On no occasion did either bird actually capture prey with the pecking, it was always vegetation it pecked.

Interestingly, during the whole time I observed the birds, neither bird called nor did either bird use, or attempt to use, its bill to jab or bite the other. While both birds displayed the aggressive behaviour, the flagged bird appeared to initiate more encounters and it was the last bird to leave for the roost site when the mudflat was almost covered by the incoming tide.



Image 1 - A Whimbrel standoff as the birds flap and show the underside of their wings



Image 2 - The aggressor turns its back, lowers wings and starts to walk away

Savvy Bar-tailed Godwit Equipped for Climate Change

The bird world's long-distance champion is probably savvy enough to cope with climate change, researchers believe. The Bar-tailed Godwit makes the biggest no-stop migration, flying 11,000km from Alaska to New Zealand every autumn.

It relies on the right type of winds to make this epic journey – winds that computer models indicate could become less favourable in the future. But scientists say the godwit's ability to judge weather conditions means it should rise to the challenge.



Bar-tailed Godwit – Photo by Tsutomu Adachi

“They are very adept and savvy about when to leave Alaska, in being able to pick times when the atmospheric conditions are favourable for the journey to New Zealand – when there are good tailwinds,” explained David Douglas, a wildlife biologist with the United States Geological Survey in Anchorage.

“We don't feel that we see enough change that we should be concerned that they won't have the opportunities to complete the migration as magnificently as they do now. We can raise other questions about the quality of their feeding grounds and things that they need to fuel on to make the migration – are they going to be intact and available? Those are entirely different kinds of questions. But as far as atmospheric circulation is concerned, at least in terms of the winds, we don't see a train wreck coming.” Mr Douglas was speaking in San Francisco at the American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting, the world's largest annual gathering of Earth scientists.

He has been investigating the future prospects for the Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica baueri*), famed for its extraordinary annual odyssey.

The bird leaves New Zealand in March to fly some 10,000km to feeding grounds in China and the Koreas. And then in May, the godwit undertakes a 6,000km trip to western Alaska to breed and nest, before returning directly to New Zealand across the Pacific in August/September.

It is this final leg that amazes biologists. One celebrated godwit, known as E7, was recorded by satellite tag in 2007 to have covered 11,500km in eight days.

But Mr Douglas has been wondering how the godwit might fare in a changed climate that also alters wind patterns in the Pacific. Working with colleagues at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, the team has modelled atmospheric circulation conditions towards the end of the century.

At the moment, the bird makes use of tailwinds on the backsides of low-pressure systems passing across the northern Pacific. The research found these systems in future will likely move more north, and that, on average, what the scientists call the net tailwind index will show some degradation. In other words, there will probably be fewer opportunities when conditions are optimum.

But tagging studies have demonstrated also that the godwit seems to have a knack of picking the optimum moment whenever it does arise.

“Our empirical studies have clearly shown that these birds don’t depart on random,” said Mr Douglas. “They’re very good at cuing in on when the conditions are just right. And so when we look at these modelled runs and the variability in the available windows, we see there are still ample opportunities for them to pick good windows of time to make this migration, despite the overall mean being reduced.”

The energy required to fly non-stop for thousands of kilometres is huge. This leads to the godwit taking on an enormous fat store before setting out on its marathons. And if there is concern about the bird’s current or future status, then it relates to this fueling phase and the fact that some of its feeding grounds are being diminished.

In China and South Korea, for example, recent years have seen increasing reclamation of the tidal mud flats where the bird forages.

This article was written by Jonathon Amos for BBC News Science and Environment.

The Day in the Life of an Attendee at the QWSG Wader Study Course 1st November 2015

On the morning after Halloween and the “say no more” Rugby World Cup Final, I joined 35 other people attending the Wader Study Course at Manly on Brisbane’s Bayside. There was a good cross section of young and old, men and women attending.

On arrival we were greeted by a very friendly Chairman, Jon Coleman outside the Manly NPRSR Office welcoming us to the Wader Study Course and once inside David Edwards steered us towards Sheryl Keates and Dierdre Chrzescijanski who were registering all attendees and handing out information kits. There was also a free ticket for everyone to go into the draw to win a very attractive picture of a Crimson Rosella.

First up an introduction to the conservation and educational work carried out by the QWSG was given by Jon Coleman.

On the conservation side Jon explained that the data gained from monthly wader counts and banding activities gets fed into research work which can then be used to develop conservation strategies and highlight the most important geographical areas that need protection into the future.

On the education side Jon introduced us to the innovative concept of ‘Doggie Breakfasts’ aimed at educating dog owners to keep their dogs on a leash while at the beach so as to not alarm shorebirds. Barbeques are set up in popular beachside dog walking areas and members use the iconic Aussie sausage sizzle as a way to connect with dog owners and explain to them the harm caused to waders when they are constantly put to flight by dogs running up and down the beach. Free leads are also handed out to dog owners. The Group have also developed an education program aimed at school children in the Bayside suburbs and a great deal of work has gone into that project this year. Colourful and informative educational material has also been developed. Wader ID days are held regularly to help educate birders and other interested people.

Taxonomy and Evolution was the next presentation by Andrew Geering. I thought this might be the ‘dry’ subject for the day but Andrew made it interesting when he popped in little snippets of information such as the existence of a direct relationship with the roundness of a wader’s wing to the distance that the bird travels on its migration. The more rounded the wing then the more sedentary (eg Masked Lapwing) the lifestyle of the bird. Andrew also interspersed his talk with some ‘eye candy’ which turned out to be gorgeous photos showcasing the diversity of waders.

Andrew’s second talk on Migration and Breeding Ecology covered such topics as temporary and summer residents, competitive displacement and site fidelity at the beginning and end of migration journeys. For example, of the Oystercatchers banded in Victoria it is the juveniles that turn up in Queensland rather than the adults. Double-banded Plovers migrate to Australia from New Zealand in winter but it seems that birds come here because all the available dispersal sites have already been taken in the South Island and other areas of NZ. The Double-banded Plover is the only east-west migrant (NZ to Australia) all the others migrate north-south using the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

Andrew explained the theories behind how birds navigate and I won't even try to reproduce any of that except to say that magnetic fields and cryptochrome (magnetic receptors) were mentioned and even though these clever little birds have this as part of their anatomy they still learn the geographic features of the world they fly over and modify their migration route accordingly.

Waders' breeding cycle is a rapid 6 weeks and they utilise different breeding systems to get the job done as efficiently as possible – monogamy, polygamy and sequential polyandry (double-clutches). They are also highly adaptable in that they change their food in their breeding habitat and will eat berries and freshwater insects whereas in Australia they mainly eat marine food. They undergo a full moult while in Australia but the juveniles do not migrate until they are sexually mature.

After Andrew's talk we broke for 'morning tea' – I think I would describe it as a 'mini feast' – morning tea does not do it justice.

Next Rob Clemens talked to us about Conservation issues and the importance of identifying threats so as to prioritise conservation efforts. Moreton Bay is one of **THE** significant sites for shorebirds (for 'shorebirds' read 'waders' and vice versa). Because shorebirds have to put on so much weight in preparation for their migration, disturbance is very detrimental to them. First up it is important to identify those beaches with lots of birds and lots of disturbance – so that greater results will be gained by targetting those area. The 'Doggie breakfasts' that we learned about earlier on are one of the clever strategies to try and manage this disturbance to shorebirds by persuading people to modify what they do when they take their dog for a walk.

Sadly, we were told the numbers of shorebirds are decreasing in all important areas because of declining habitat on their migration routes. During migration birds have to make refuelling stops and this refuelling marine habitat is disappearing. A gigantic sea wall was built in Saemangeum in South Korea which radically altered the marine environment and the birds that formerly used this area have sadly gone missing. Two-thirds of this marine habitat in China, Japan and South Korea has been lost over the last 50 years.

The level of impact varies from species to species as they move through the flyway in different ways. As habitats disappear the birds congregate in the places that are left. However, because shorebirds are so faithful to their refuelling and breeding places, if these places disappear it is catastrophic to the birds. Hunting and climate change are other very real threats.

Birding is becoming more popular in countries like China and Korea and as the profile of shorebirds grows that helps to increase conservation efforts. While Asian habitat loss is driving the overall decline in shorebird numbers, we can still do more to conserve areas in Queensland. For instance, Queensland is more important than any other part of Australia for the conservation of the beautiful little Curlew Sandpiper.

Jon Coleman then talked to us about banding of shorebirds. He made the point that banding changes a bird into an individual which in turn creates more of a bond both with the person banding the bird and all those people who record sightings of this individual bird into the future. I can personally speak about this as back in March last year I attended a Wader ID day at Toorbul when I acted as scribe to Arthur Keates as he recorded leg flags details from the waders present on the roost at that time. A few weeks later Arthur flew to China and counted waders in the area of the Yellow Sea and amazingly he again saw and recorded one of the Bar-tailed Godwits that I had noted down for him at Toorbul. I was really blown away when Arthur told me that he had sighted one of our birds from that day at Toorbul so many thousands of kilometres away at the Yalu Jiang National Nature Reserve in China just a few weeks later.

While banding activities create 'disturbance' for shorebirds, Jon said the QWSG seek to minimise the number of occasions they do this. The fact that so much information can be generated from information gathered through this activity means that it will always take place. Banding over many years means trends emerge over time.

Jon went on to tell us about geolocators. They only weigh about 2 grams and can be glued onto a wader's leg flag and, if and when retrieved, very accurate information can be downloaded about that bird's migration. Much more can be found out in a more unbiased way. However, out of 40 geolocators that have been fitted to shorebirds, so far only 3 have been retrieved using canon netting.

Jon explained that the high tide roost that we were to visit in the afternoon is an important site and in particular, for Grey-tailed Tattlers and that the feeding areas for the waders that use this roost are all located within 3 to 4 kilometres. Feeding areas are closely linked to roosting sites and so it is important to look at conserving both for the protection of waders.

An interesting fact to come out of the pool of knowledge gained from banding activities is that there is hardly any movement of waders between the Manly high tide roost and the Toorbul high tide roost. The birds remain faithful to one or the other.

Lunch was taken smorgasbord style on a balcony overlooking the boat harbour. After lunch the raffle was drawn. The winner was one of the Boondall Wetland volunteers who had travelled from Toowoomba to attend the course.

Then David Edwards gave his presentation on identification. Of all the birds that we see in Australia I've always found waders very difficult to identify. David made it sound easy (ha ha), he divided the task of identification into three parts:

1. Size and feather colour;
2. Length, colour and shape of bill, whether or not it is bi-coloured;
3. Colour and length of legs.

We learned that the Eastern Curlew could scratch its tail with its bill if it turns its head around, however the Whimbrel cannot. That Black-tailed Godwits (as opposed to the Bar-tailed Godwits) always look busy, they are a finer looking bird with a straighter bill. The Grey Plover has a small bill so it's a pecker or a hunter and not a prober like the waders with the large bills. David moved through the shorebirds we were hoping to see later in the afternoon at the roost site going from the largest to the smallest and then threw in the Lapwings, Dotterels, Avocets, Stilts, Oystercatchers and Stone-Curlews at the end. His coverage was very informative and very comprehensive given that he started a little behind schedule and was therefore 'under the pump' to get through his talk as quickly as possible so that our field trip to the high tide roost site could get started.

We entered the Manly roost as a group and then slowly, over the next couple of hours, moved northwards on the edge of the roost creeping closer to the larger groups of waders to get better looks. 'What bird is that' was a cry that I heard on a good few occasions.

We saw many of the birds that David had described in his talk on Wader Identification. From the diminutive Red-capped Plover to the amazing Eastern Curlew, the largest of our waders. The Bar-tailed Godwits bunched close together with the occasional Great Knot moving among them. The Grey-tailed Tattlers were seen on the furthest bank and among them the Terek Sandpipers could be identified by their bright yellow legs, it was too far away for me to get a good look at their bills but the legs certainly stood out. In his talk David explained that each species of Wader has identifiable differences and that was something to concentrate on to help distinguish one type from another. Yellow legs did it for me in this situation.

The Pacific Golden Plovers were not easily seen at first among the samphire on the far bank but once one was spotted then it was easier to see all the others. The Lesser Sand Plovers were at the end of the roost site, away from the water, lurking in the sandy areas. Every now and then they popped their heads up and could then be easily identified from the more numerous Red-capped Plovers. However, it was not so easy to say whether they were Lesser or Greater Sand Plovers. The Red-necked Stints were very busy moving up and down the edge of the water. However, on the way out we saw large numbers resting on the far bank and if they hadn't been pointed out by Arthur Keates they could have been dismissed as small grey rocks or stones. So, each species of waders was using different aspects of the roost site, they were each doing their own thing. The field trip certainly did help to highlight some of the facts we learned during the talks earlier in the day. It was definitely a special part of the day getting so close to the birds themselves.

It had been a day full of lots of interesting facts, beautiful photos, yummy food and an outing in the fresh air to cap it all off. I went home full of admiration and respect for this fantastic group of birds and for the people who are working so hard to give them a future.

Notable quotes from the day:

“Normal people collecting normal information which goes on to produce extraordinary things”

“Waders are true international ambassadors”

“Doing something that actually produces results.”

Diane Blewett
Brisbane
5 November 2015

Shorebird Education 2015

By Sheryl Keates

Continuing on from last year, Moreton Bay Environmental Education Centre (MBEEC), asked for volunteers to help show shorebirds to year 3 students. I co-ordinated rosters for members of QWSG, Birds Qld and BirdLife.

As an introduction to shorebirds, staff from MBEEC visit the schools where students take part in a play about disturbance. Students are introduced to words like 'roost', 'migration' and 'fly-way' so when they come to us, they are familiar with the concepts.

Students and teachers also visit the MBEEC at Stradbroke Ave, Wynnum, usually in the morning of the day they come to us. The students are challenged by some of the activities there, including trying to feed with spoons as a spoonbill would or trying to pick up a small food item with tongs.

In February, we had students from Guardian Angels State School, Wynnum and in March, Manly State School. Each school had 2 days with both schools using the Lytton roost. Unfortunately, the birds had become unreliable at this roost.

In September, it was decided that we use the Port of Brisbane artificial roost which has 2 bird hides. At the roost, students are divided into 2 groups, half for each hide and half again at each hide. While one group of students are studying the birds from inside the hide, others are asking questions of the volunteer outside. The groups then swap so all students have equal time at the hides. If time permits, students are encouraged to draw the birds that they see.

The first excursion for Wynnum West State School students went well. However, due to the forecast of stormy weather, the second day had to be rescheduled to the following day. Mid-October was the turn of students from Ormiston State School with students from Hilliard's State School, Alexandra Hills a week later.

Most of the students saw their target species – Far Eastern Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Red-necked Stint, White-headed Stilt, Pied Oystercatcher and Great Egret.

I sincerely thank all the volunteers who gave their time to help. I would also like to thank everyone from MBEEC who are working hard to provide environmental education to students, teachers and some parents.

As a thank you to all the volunteers, MBEEC are organising a boat trip on Moreton Bay, followed by lunch at Manly in December.

Wader Course Nov 2015

On 1 Nov, QWSG had another Wader Course with 36 enrolments, including 5 from BCC (Boondall Wetlands).

Andrew Geering, Rob Clemens and David Edwards kindly presented their PowerPoint presentations, while Vicki Campbell looked after the merchandise, Robert Bush did the display boards and Deirdre helped me with registrations. I would like to thank everyone involved to make it a successful day.

Thanks to Kristy Currie for providing and setting up the venue at the Manly NPRSR office and Jon's wife Janet who provided a wonderful gourmet lunch again this year. Last, but not least, thanks to everyone who helped with the field trip to the Manly roost. Your time and dedication are very much appreciated.

WADER WATCH - Phil Cross

Can everyone please remember to use the 'Leg Flag Observation Report' form. **Please email leg flag sightings to Phil on his new email address.**

Can we also please ask people to carefully check which leg the flag is on. If you are not sure, or just see the colour, and do not know which leg it is, please do not make it up. 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 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 are quite a number of green leg flag sightings recorded within Moreton Bay region, 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.

Sightings in the Moreton Bay region reported during the last three months totalled 711. They were reported by Sarah Beavis, Robert Bush, Ian Brown, Jill Brown, Tony Cotter, Linda Cross, Phil Cross, David Edwards, Finn Emerson, Mary Hines, Renate Hottmann-Schaefer, Arthur Keates, Sheryl Keates, Penn Lloyd, Paul Marty, Paul Maxwell, Niven McCrie, Peter Rothlisberg, Brian Russell, Michael Strong, Nicola Udy, Chris Walker and Dez Wells.

Arthur and Sheryl Keates gave us 265 records, Penn Lloyd over 150, Dez Wells 108 and Tony Cotter 101.

Species recorded and number of records:

Eastern Curlew 20, Bar-tailed Godwit 324, Double-banded Plover 4, Pied Oystercatcher 28, Black-winged Stilt 10, Great Knot 58, Grey-tailed Tattler 123, Curlew Sandpiper 12, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper 5, Terek Sandpiper 2, Lesser Sand Plover 3, Pacific Golden Plover 5, Red-capped Plover 3, Red-necked Stint 105, Ruddy Turnstone 4 and Whimbrel 5.

As 96% of the records are engraved flags there are too many to list in this article.

Green leg flag sightings in Qld other than Moreton Bay

There are 27 records for this period, 4 from Cairns, 3 of which were of Bar-tailed Godwit (BSV on flag) which was flagged in Gladstone in January 2015, the other was Red-necked Stint PS.

We had one sighting from the eastern side of the Gulf of Carpentaria, a Curlew Sandpiper (flag could not be read) and two from Great Sandy Strait (Godwit BRF and Great Knot AJW). The other 20 were spotted in the Gladstone area, consisting of 5 Bar-tailed Godwit, 9 Great Knot, 5 Pied Oystercatcher and 1 Red-necked Stint.

Green leg flag sighting seen Interstate

Red-necked Stint

(SF on flag) – reported from Broome Western Australia on 5 occasions - Clare and Grant Morton - 16.9.15 to 1.10.15. This bird was recorded in our last newsletter as being in China on 16.5.15!

Green leg flag sighting seen Overseas

Bar-tailed Godwit

- 1 – (AYW on flag) Sone Estuary Fukuoka Japan – Shiroi Yoshibumi – 16.04.15
- 1 – Yangkou Rudong Jiangsu, China – Yuetao Zhong & Tong Mu – 24.04.15
- 1 (BAK on flag) – Arao Beach Kumamoto Japan – Machitori Kaname – 5.05.15
- 1 (AJK on flag) – Miranda North Island, New Zealand – Jonas Kotlarz – 2.11.14 & 4.1.15 & 4.10.15
- 1 – Golden Bay, South Island, New Zealand – Ingrid Hutzler – 24.1.15
- 1 – Miranda North Island, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 15.3.15
- 1 – (ABW on Flag) Omaha Sandspit Auckland, New Zealand – Jonas Kotlarz – 7.10.15 & Marie Ward 16.10.15

Broad-billed Sandpiper

- 1 – Prison Ponds, China – Tong Mu – 17.05.15 & 23.5.15

Eastern Curlew

- 1 – Seocheon Tidal Flat, South Korea – Ju Yung Ki – 04.07.15

Great Knot

- 1 (AYV on flag) – Tomas Noah – 27.07.15
- 1 (ALS on flag) – Tomas Noah – 2.08.15
- 1 (AZB on flag) – Dmitry Dorofeev – 8.08.15
- 1 (BCM on flag) – Dmitry Dorofeev – 8.08.15 & 9.8.15
- 1 (AYR on flag) – Dmitry Dorofeev – 23.08.15

All of the above were seen at Khairusovo & Belogovaya Rivers Estuary, Russia

Grey-tailed Tattler

- 1 (AAR on flag) – Lake Samei Shizuakaken, Japan – Kurata Nahoko – 3.05.13
- 1 (AYN on flag) – Tokyo Bay Tokyo, Japan – Kei Fujimura – 7.08.14
- 1 (AYN on flag) – Tokyo Bay Tokyo, Japan – Michiko Hamada – 31.07.15
- 1 (AXD on flag) – Mouth of Seto River Hyogo-ken, Japan – Ohashi Kosaku – 27.08.15
- 1 (APV on flag) – Akkeshi Hokkaido, Japan – Yoshida Yuki – 12.09.15

Red Knot

- 1 – Clark's Bay Manukau Harbour Auckland, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 8.03.15

Ruddy Turnstone

- 1 (ABX on flag) – Yalu Jiang, China – Chen Lixia – 5.04.15

Leg flags from Interstate seen in Qld**Orange (Victoria) leg flag sightings**

A total of 77 orange flag sightings were reported, engraved flags were seen on 37 Bar-tailed Godwit, 2 Curlew Sandpiper, 2 Red Knot and a Red-necked Avocet.

The Godwit with CHH on flag was recorded 7 times, flag CRR was seen 6 times and flag D9 was reported 4 times.

Yellow (West Australia) leg flag sightings

Six sightings each at Cairns and Maaroom, one from the Gulf and one in the Gladstone area add up to a total of 14 records, a bumper crop of yellow flags recorded in Qld during this period, compare that to only 3 records for all of 2014!

This total may be inflated due to the fact that one bird, Great Knot (WDA on flag), was reported on five occasions at Cairns.

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.

- 1 (C4 on flag) – Manly Harbour – Arthur & Sheryl Keates – 25.07.15
- 1 (S1 on flag) – Manly Harbour – Arthur & Sheryl Keates – 29.09.15

OVERSEAS LEG FLAG SIGHTINGS**White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings**

One sighting from the Gladstone area, four recorded at Maaroom and twenty seen in the Moreton Bay area, a total of 25. Flag ZJJ was seen twice, ZMT was recorded three times and ZJS was reported on four occasions, 16 of the 25 were engraved flags. Penn Lloyd reported 11 white flag sightings.

Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings – use four combinationsGreat Knot

- 1 – Maaroom – Chris Barnes – 30.10.15 (flagged Hokkaido)

Grey-tailed Tattler

- 1 – (311 on blue flag) Zilzie Headland, near Rockhampton – Barry Ellis – 1.10.15 (flagged Torinoumi)
- 1 – (90 on blue flag) Redland Bay, Brisbane – Penn Lloyd – 4.10.15 (flagged Torinoumi)
- 1 – Cairns Esplanade – Hidetoshi Kudo – 13.10.15 (flagged Hokkaido)
- 1 – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 17.10.15 (flagged Hokkaido)
- 1 – (TT on blue flag) Toorbul – Linda Cross & Arthur Keates – 12.9.15 (flagged Torinoumi)
- 1 – Cairns Esplanade – Tony Neilson – 7.10.15 (flagged Hokkaido)
- 1 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates – 15.10.15 (flagged Hokkaido)
- 1 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates – 23.10.15 (flagged Hokkaido)

Lesser Sand Plover

- 1 – blue flag right tibia & blue flag right tarsus – Gladstone area – Jimmy Choi – 26.11.14 (flagged Hokkaido)
- 1 – blue flag right tibia & blue flag right tarsus – Gladstone area – Jimmy Choi – 18.01.15 (flagged Hokkaido)

Terek Sandpiper

- 1 – blue flag left tibia & white flag left tarsus – Toorbul – Mary Hines – 18.08.15 (flagged Yatsu Tokyo Bay)
- 1 – AM on blue flag left tibia & white flag left tarsus – Toorbul – Brian Russell – 3.09.15 (flagged Yatsu Tokyo Bay)
- 1 – blue flag left tibia & white flag left tarsus – Toorbul – Linda Cross & Arthur Keates – 12.09.15 (flagged Obitsu Estuary Tokyo Bay)

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

A quantity of 27 sightings were added to the leg flag database these consisted of Bar-tailed Godwit (3), Great Knot (17), Lesser Sand Plover (2), Red Knot (4) and (1) Terek Sandpiper. Engraved leg flags were found on four Great Knot, three of which were of J62 the other was E4. Two Red Knot with engraved flags were recorded, one was KJ the other one could not be read by the observer.

Blue over yellow (Bohai Bay, China) leg flag sightingsRed-necked Stint.

- 1 – Eastern Gulf – Arthur Keates & Peter Driscoll – 30.08.15

Red Knot

- 1 – Gladstone area – Jimmy Choi – 30.08.15
- 1 – Gladstone area – Danny Rogers – 31.08.15

Green over orange (Yalu Jiang Nature Reserve, China) leg flag sightingsBar-tailed Godwit

- 1 – Gladstone area – Danny Rogers – 9.10.14
- 1 – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 18.10.15

White over blue (Taiwan) leg flag sightingsCurlew Sandpiper

- 1 – Gladstone area – Jimmy Choi – 31.08.15

Greater Sand Plover

- 1 – Gladstone area – Jimmy Choi – 31.08.15

Yellow over white (Russia) leg flag sightingsGreat Knot

- 1 – Gladstone area – Jimmy Choi – 21.01.15
- 1 – Maaroom – Chris Barnes – 9.11.15

Grey-tailed Tattler

- 1 – Gladstone area – Jimmy Choi – 17.03.15

Red-necked Stint.

- 1 – Cairns Esplanade – Hidetoshi Kudo – 20.09.15
- 1 – Cairns Esplanade – Jun Matsui – 23.09.15

Black (Alaska USA) leg flag sightingsBar-tailed Godwit

- 1 – (N5 on flag) Gladstone area – Danny Rogers – 9.10.14
- 1 – Gladstone area – Jimmy Choi – 6.2.15
- 1 – (K3 on flag) Gladstone area – Jimmy Choi – 20.3.15
- 1 – (YO on flag) Gladstone area – Dylan Moffitt – 23.3.15

Other leg flag sightings and banded birdsCaspian Tern

A quantity of seventeen Caspian Tern with orange leg flag were recorded in the last three months. Engraved flags seen were 47 four times, 37 three times, E2 twice and E6 at roost sites in the Bribie Passage. In the Gladstone area engraved flags recorded were 19 twice, 70, E5 and plain orange flag on three occasions.

Count Programme - Linda Cross

Just as the last newsletter went to press in August this year we learnt about the sad passing of Trevor Ford. Trevor was a QWSG member for over 10 years and his first count entered into the database was 25 August 1997. The last entry was on 26 January 2009 and totalled 282 counts. A tribute to Trevor appears further in this newsletter from his good friend (and also a QWSG member and counter) Jill Dening.

Marion Williams (the counter for Oregon's Creek westside in Hervey Bay region has handed over her count site to Marilyn Sweetnam, who also counts the eastside of Oregon's Creek. Unfortunately, Marion is not able to physically do the count herself anymore, but does join Marilyn and her crew whenever she can at the site. Marion started counting in Tweed Heads area of New South Wales in February 2001 and along with Laurel Allsopp, helped cover seven sites in that area for nearly six years, until she moved to Hervey Bay. However, the move did not stop her from getting out and finding another site which would enable her to continue her enjoyment of counting waders and making a valuable contribution to the count programme with 220 counts entered into the database. Marion started counting in the Toogoom area of Hervey Bay in January 2009 and has continued until a couple of months ago. We would like to thank Marion for her many years of commitment to the count programme and shorebird conservation.

It has been unfortunate that some counters have not been able to complete counts the last month of two due to health reasons. One counter needed heart surgery, one counter is still recuperating from a shoulder injury, while a few others are having knee issues (including myself). Some have undergone knee surgery, while others are waiting or contemplating the procedure. We wish speedy recoveries and successful outcomes for all counters mentioned above.

The online count entries have certainly made my job a little easier, and I would hope that counters also find it easier than filling in the old count forms. Everyone has done an amazing job at navigating the online data entry and there are only a few queries that I have to ask these days. I have validated all counts up to the end of October and as I complete this article the November counts are starting to flood in, and that will be my next job. Thank you for supporting this new system.

The dates for the 2016 count programme have been selected and emailed to all counters who have access to emails, but it is also included at the end of this newsletter for everyone. The first couple of month's counts are scheduled in the afternoon when it may be hot, but these selections are unfortunately due to very large or king tides early in the morning, which would make timing for the counts difficult. There is also a slight change to the National Winter Count next year. It will be held in June instead of July as the tide height is much better in June. We normally have a rest month from counts, but as July also has a reasonable tide height to conduct a count, we have added a count for that month too, which means there is a count every month next year. We hope that counters will consider conducting the additional count in July to help add to the QWSG database. Please remember to mark your new 2016 calendars in the New Year.

As expected, Double-banded Plovers have now departed our shores to return across the Tasman in readiness for their breeding period in New Zealand. During August some still remained at Geoff Skinner Reserve, Manly Harbour, Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island, Noosa River sandbanks and Shellgrit Creek Entrance, Mackay. The last records reported were one at Kakadu Beach roost and three at Manly Harbour, both on 06.09.15.

Shellgrit Creek Entrance in Mackay has been hosting to a large number of Red-capped Plover during the last three months. The August count recorded 267, September count recorded 288 and October the record was 228.

It appeared that some of the migratory waders arrived back somewhat earlier than expected and among them there have been many interesting sightings, some of which include the rarer species.

Nathan Road Wetland at Kippa-ring has attracted many bird watchers after new QWSG member Ged Tranter reported a Wood Sandpiper on 27.09.15, only to be followed by a second Wood Sandpiper, a Pectoral Sandpiper and a Ruff on 05.10.15. The Pectoral Sandpiper and two Wood Sandpiper were reported still on site during 06.11.15.

There have been a few sightings of an Asian Dowitcher during the last three months. One seen at Bundaberg Port on 30.08.15, one seen at Osprey House, Dohles Rocks area on 22.09.15 and also seen the following two days, one seen at Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island on 28.10.15 and one seen at Burnett Heads, Bundaberg on 29.10.15.

Red Knot were reported from 16 sites during the southward migration before venturing on further south and across the Tasman. Thirteen of these sites were in Moreton Bay, while the other three sites were Cairns Esplanade, Maaroom and Cooloola. The earliest record came from Manly Harbour on 21.08.15 with a total of three birds, which increased to six on 23.08.15. Three other sites recorded the species in double figures at the end of August, and in September 11 sites had recorded them on their counts (mostly in double figures), however, 270 were recorded at Maaroom and 483 at the Port of Brisbane both on 27.09.15. October records came from 12 sites, of which four sites had larger totals as follows:

123 at Maaroom on 17.10.15	633 at the Port of Brisbane on 18.10.15
992 at Toorbul on 18.10.15	160 on sandbank off Amity Point on 19.10.15,

Following are some extracts from counts, and it is worth noting some of the figures so early in the season.

1,927 Red-necked Stint – Port of Brisbane – 27.09.15.
 2,483 Red-necked Stint – Port of Brisbane – 18.10.15
 974 Curlew Sandpiper – Port of Brisbane – 27.09.15
 1,983 Curlew Sandpiper – Port of Brisbane – 18.10.15
 359 Lesser Sand Plover – Port of Brisbane – 18.10.15
 258 Lesser Sand Plover – Shellgrit Creek Entrance, Mackay – 29.08.15
 267 Lesser Sand Plover – Shellgrit Creek Entrance, Mackay – 26.09.15
 105 Greater Sand Plover – Shellgrit Creek Entrance, Mackay – 29.08.15
 15 Sanderling – Shellgrit Creek Entrance, Mackay – 29.08.15
 92 Terek Sandpiper – Barubbra Island, Bundaberg – 28.10.15
 52 Terek Sandpiper – Manly Harbour – 27.10.15
 540 Grey-tailed Tattler – Toorbul – 12.09.15
 1,012 Grey-tailed Tattler – Port of Brisbane – 27.09.15
 484 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Bundaberg Port – 26.09.15
 1,059 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Port of Brisbane – 18.10.15
 79 Ruddy Turnstone – Port of Brisbane – 18.10.15
 35 Marsh Sandpiper – Nathan Road Wetlands, Kippa-ring – 03.10.15
 20 Marsh Sandpiper – Maaroom – 17.10.15
 1,100 Great Knot – Maaroom – 17.10.15
 717 Great Knot – Toorbul Sandfly Bay – 18.10.15
 279 Pacific Golden Plover – Port of Brisbane – 18.10.15
 24 Grey Plover – Port of Brisbane – 27.09.15
 88 Black-tailed Godwit – Osprey House, Dohles Rocks area – 27.10.15
 3,640 Bar-tailed Godwit – sandbank off Amity Point – 19.10.15
 2,590 Bar-tailed Godwit – Reeder's Point, Moreton Island – 19.10.15
 2,000 Bar-tailed Godwit – Maaroom – 17.10.15
 435 Whimbrel – Toorbul – 12.09.15
 813 Eastern Curlew – flying over Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island – 13.09.15
 332 Eastern Curlew – Reeder's Point, Moreton Island – 19.10.15
 248 Eastern Curlew – Thornlands Road, Thornlands – 17.10.15
 240 Eastern Curlew – Toorbul 1km north – 29.08.15
 223 Eastern Curlew – Geoff Skinner Reserve west – 18.10.15

Other interesting sightings are listed under 'Interesting wader sightings' and 'Not waders but of interest anyway' section of this newsletter, and it is hoped that the editor has room to include them in this issue.

Breeding records.

It is a pleasant surprise to see so many breeding records (particularly for Australian Pied Oystercatcher).

Beach Stone-curlew – breeding on Big Redcliffe Island off Finlayson's Point north of Mackay on 25.09.15. Nesting at Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island on 23.08.15.

Australian Pied Oystercatcher – Nesting at Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island on 23.08.15. Nest at Port of Brisbane Artificial Roost on 16.09.15. Adult on a nest at Noosa River sandbanks on 21.09.15. Two eggs at Finlayson's Point north of Mackay on 25.09.15. Two chicks at Queensland Aluminium Ponds (QAL7) on 25.09.15. Adult on Nest at Manly Harbour on 26.09.15. Half-grown chick at Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island on 11.10.15. One chick at Port of Brisbane Artificial Roost on 14.10.15 and two chicks on 20.10.15. Pair nesting just inside the gates of the reclamation area at the Port of Brisbane on 18.10.15. Nest with two eggs at Mirapool Beach Moreton Island on 19.10.15. One chick at Mirapool Lagoon Moreton Island on 19.10.15

Masked Lapwing – nest with three eggs at Maaroom on 29.08.15. Some nesting and four young at Kedron Brook Wetlands on 30.08.15. Nest with four eggs at Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island on 30.08.15. Nesting at Manly Harbour on 21.08.15. Four chicks at Manly Harbour on 29.08.15. Two chicks at Manly Harbour on 05.10.15. Nest with four eggs at Toorbul on 26.09.15. Two chicks at Toorbul 1 km north on 26.09.15.

Black-winged Stilt – six sitting on nests at Kianawah Road Wetland on 26.09.15. Nest at Manly Harbour on 11.10.15. One bird on nest at Port of Brisbane Artificial Roost on 13.10.15.

Red-capped Plover – Chick seen on tip of Bribie Island from Sandbank No 1 Caloundra on 28.08.15. Nest with four eggs at Geoff Skinner Reserve west on 29.08.15. Two chicks Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island on 13.09.15. Two pair nesting at Manly Harbour on 03.10.15. Adult nesting on sandbank off Amity Point Moreton Bay on 19.10.15. Adult on two eggs at Noosa River sandbanks on 19.10.15

Interesting wader sightings

1 Common Sandpiper – Endeavour River mouth, Cooktown – 29.08.15
 1 Common Sandpiper – Osprey House Dohles Rocks area – 18.09.15 to 21.09.15, and seen again on 01.10.15 and 03.11.15
 417 Black-winged Stilt – Kedron Brook Wetland – 25.10.15
 345 Black-winged Stilt – Manly Harbour – 18.08.15
 1 Wandering Tattler – Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island – 06.09.15
 79 Masked Lapwing – Nathan Road Wetland, Kippa-ring – 26.09.15
 892 Red-necked Avocet – Port of Brisbane – 30.08.15 and 548 still on site 27.09.15
 154 Red-necked Avocet – Trute's Bay, Tweed Heads – 23.08.15
 2 Beach Stone-curlew – Oregan's Creek westside, Hervey Bay area – 29.08.15
 1 Beach Stone-curlew – Maaroom – 27.09.15 & 17.10.15
 2 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Port of Brisbane – 18.10.15
 1 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Burnett Heads, Bundaberg – 29.10.15
 1 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Cairns Esplanade – 23.09.15
 5 Comb-crested Jacana – Buckley's Hole, Bribie Island – 06.09.15

Not waders but of interest anyway

1 White-tailed Tropicbird (juvenile sitting on beach exhausted) – Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – 26.09.15
 4 Black-shouldered Kite (adult and three offspring) – Kedron Brook Wetlands – 30.09.15
 9 Brolga – Kinka Wetlands, Yeppoon – 26.09.15
 103 Black Swan – inside the reclamation area at the Port of Brisbane (most unusual) – 30.08.15
 1 Gull-billed Tern (race affinis) – Cairns Esplanade – 25.10.15
 8,600 Crested Tern – Noosa River sandbanks – 21.09.15
 82 Whiskered Tern – Port of Brisbane – 18.10.15
 7 Lesser Crested Tern – Manly Harbour – 26.09.15
 6 Lesser Crested Tern – Oregan's Creek eastside, Hervey Bay area – 17.10.15
 3 Little Tern chicks – Barubbra Island, Bundaberg – 28.10.15
 490 Chestnut Teal – inside the reclamation area at the Port of Brisbane – 30.08.15
 488 Chestnut Teal – Nathan Road Wetlands, Kippa-ring – 26.09.15
 276 Plumed Whistling Duck (in paddock around dry marsh) – Bishop's Marsh – 18.10.15
 10 Wandering Whistling Duck – Buckley's Hole Bribie Island – 06.09.15
 18 Glossy Ibis – Garnet's Lagoon No 1, Hervey Bay – 20.09.15
 14 Glossy Ibis – Kedron Brook Wetland – 30.09.15
 1 Great-crested Grebe – Ewan Maddock Dam – 30.08.15
 352 Pied Cormorant – Pelican Waters, Lamerough Creek, Caloundra – 18.10.15
 9 Yellow-billed Spoonbill – Garnet's Lagoon No 1, Hervey Bay – 20.09.15
 211 Royal Spoonbill – Fisherman Island Visitors Centre Lake – 30.08.15
 2 Black-necked Stork (male and female) – Nathan Road Wetlands, Kippa-ring – 05.10.15
 1 Black-necked Stork – Goat Island, Maroochy River – 28.08.15
 3 Eastern Reef Egret (grey) – Goat Island Moreton Bay – 19.10.15

Counters not entering their counts online, please continue to send them to me at my email or postal address as follows:

During the winter months we normally struggle to get a good tide height for our count which usually results in not having a count in June. However, this year the tide heights are better for the National Winter Count to be held in June instead of July. Unusually we also have a reasonable tide height to conduct a count in July as well. It is hoped that counters will consider conducting a second count during the winter months to help add to the database.

Editor's Note Check last page for count dates

A reminder that Leg flag sightings must not be entered online during count entry. Please also note that flag sightings emailed to Phil should be sent to his new email address.

Please contact Phil or myself for the Leg Flag Observation Report Form

Phil & I would like to take this opportunity to thank all counters and leg flag spotters for their work during the year and wish you all and your families a very Merry Christmas and Happy and Healthy 2016.

Happy counting.

Linda Cross.

VALE TREVOR FORD

This year the Sunshine Coast has now lost two seriously good birders, with the death recently of Trevor Ford. As many of you will have read in the Birds Queensland newsletter, we farewelled Bob Inglis earlier this year, later scattering his ashes at the Toorbul roost. We were all friends, who used to enjoy good food and wine over long, chatty evenings spent debating the finer points of birds or the dismal state of Australian politics. We never agreed about much, but it was such fun to spend time in each other's company.

Most of you will be familiar with Trevor's work from his series of three identification guide booklets - "Shorebirds, Gulls & Terns of Coastal SEQ", "Waterbirds & Raptors of Coastal SEQ" and "Butterflies of Coastal SEQ". These free publications have reached thousands of local citizens, courtesy of funding by local councils, and the dedication and voluntary work of Trevor, as writer, and Bob, as the main photographer.

Trevor's first written work, after he moved to Australia and the Sunshine Coast from the UK in 1997, was called "A Curlew's Lament", a small booklet documenting the impending loss of a major shorebird roost at Dux Creek, Bribie Island, to urban development, and the reasons why it should not be permitted to proceed. At the time I was working with the developer to replace the old roost with an artificial roost, now known as Kakadu Beach roost, and although Trevor's plea for the retention of the old roost did not succeed, it marked the beginning of our long and stimulating friendship.

Trevor met Kym, the love of his life, at O'Reilly's Guesthouse in the Gold Coast hinterland, in 1992 when he was already 46 years old. They had twenty-one wonderful years of marriage, one of those marriages filled with great love, respect and plenty of fun. They lived for many years at Sandstone Point, and so naturally Trevor, as the most competent local birder, took on the ownership of all things ornithological on Bribie Island. He formed the Bribie Island Rarities Committee, and ran it with ferocious attention to validation. Anything at all suss was quickly tossed overboard. You had to fight hard to pass Trevor's "sniff test" about bird sightings. He authored two publications about Bribie birds, "An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Bribie Island" as well as "Bribie Birds", an updated review of a previous publication "Birds of Bribie Island, Pumicestone Passage and Environs" edited by Beverley Durrant and Ian MacRae. The new book "Bribie Birds" was produced listing only the birds that appeared on or around Bribie Island itself.

Trevor is irreplaceable. His wife, Kym, is grieving for the man she held dearest in the world, as are his close friends. Over the coming months we will scatter his ashes in the places where he loved to go birding.

Jill Denning

Wader ID Days 2016

Saturday 30 January at Toorbul

High tide at 13:14 hours (plus 30 minutes later for Toorbul 13:44 hours). Tide height will be 2.04m. Meeting time 12 noon.

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 any of the following people if you have any questions.
Phil & Linda Cross. Or Arthur & Sheryl Keates.

Saturday 27 February at Toorbul

High tide at 12:04 hours (plus 30 minutes later for Toorbul 12:34 hours). Tide height will be 2.12m. Meeting time 11:00 hours.

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 any of the following people if you have any questions.
Phil & Linda Cross or Arthur & Sheryl Keates

Sunday 20 March 2016 at the Wader Roost at Manly Harbour

2.30 m high tide at 07:40. Meeting time 07:30.

This is your chance to access the wader roost at Manly Harbour. Meet at the end of Davenport Dr, south of the Royal Queensland Yacht Clubhouse, Manly.

QWSG has a licence over the wader roost. Under the conditions of the licence, participants in this field trip will be required to sign a form acknowledging responsibility for their own health and safety, including:

- wearing protective clothing at all times (for example, hat, shoes, sunglasses) and using sunscreen
- drinking water to avoid dehydration
- using insect repellent if necessary
- telling a group leader about any health issues that may affect taking part in the field trip
- if feeling unwell, or concerned about someone else being unwell, immediately telling a group leader or another participant
- immediately telling a group leader or another participant about any injury suffered (including a slip, trip, fall and snake bite) or hazard that may cause injury to someone.

Participants must wear enclosed footwear and, as we are likely to be on site for up to 2 hours, must have enough drinking water.

Anyone who does not comply with these conditions will not be allowed to enter the site or asked to leave.

The gate will be locked after we enter the site and late arrivals will not be able to enter.

If you have any questions or are planning to attend an ID day, please contact the leaders. As numbers are kept at a reasonable level, you are advised to book early.

Leaders: Arthur and Sheryl Keates

Wader ID Reports 2015

Toorbul Wader ID Day Report 12th September 2015

A total of thirteen members and guests, including two visitors from the UK and one from Darwin, joined us at the main Toorbul roost. A cool gentle south-east wind and some cloud cover were experienced during the viewing of the waders, and just a light drizzle of rain fell at the end of the identification session.

There were 15 species of waders at the roost with a few species still showing signs of remnant breeding plumage, which helped with identification, particularly the difference between the Red and Great Knot. Whimbrel and Grey-tailed Tattler numbers were quite high, but the lack of Pied Oystercatchers and usually large numbers of godwits at this roost was quite notable.

Leg flagged birds seen were as follows:-

One Grey-tailed Tattler with engraved blue flag over white flag on left tarsus (flagged in Miyagi Prefecture, central Japan)

One Terek Sandpiper with blue flag on left tibia and white flag on left tarsus (flagged in Obitsu, central Japan) 25 (five different species) with green engraved flags (flagged Moreton Bay, Queensland)

Two Caspian Tern with engraved orange leg flag on right tarsus (flagged in Victoria)

A count of the birds at the roost was conducted by Arthur Keates and Phil Cross. The numbers appear in the list below.

Birds seen at Toorbul Roost and environs:

189 Black Swan in the passage, two Maned Duck, one Australian White Ibis, 31 Royal Spoonbill, two Great Egret, one White-faced Heron, two Little Egret, two Whistling Kite, 52 White-headed Stilt, two Masked Lapwing, two Red-capped Plover, two Black-tailed Godwit, 140 Bar-tailed Godwit, 435 Whimbrel, 104 Far Eastern Curlew, two Common Greenshank, 540 Grey-tailed Tattler, four Terek Sandpiper, 52 Great Knot, 28 Red Knot, two Red-necked Stint, 34 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 32 Curlew Sandpiper, five Gull-billed Tern, six Caspian Tern, one Sacred Kingfisher, two Galah, four Little Corella, heard Striped Honeyeater, one Mangrove Honeyeater, one Australian Magpie, one Willie Wagtail and two Welcome Swallow.

Bishop's Marsh was completely dry and not surveyed.

Linda Cross.



Photograph by Arthur Keates

Manly Harbour ID Day Report 11th October 2015

A covey of Brown Quail greeted the 10 attendees at the first of QWSG's shorebird outings during southern migration to Manly Harbour. Under a clear sky, good views were obtained of 16 species of migratory shorebirds and 4 species of resident shorebirds as well as waterbirds, terns, gulls and raptors.

Almost half of the just over 1,000 birds present were Bar-tailed Godwit, including several juvenile birds. An uncommon species at this roost, 3 Marsh Sandpiper gave viewers a good comparison with the larger Common Greenshank. About 60 of the 86 Far Eastern Curlew took exception to our presence and flew off, heading north towards Lytton. Further disturbance was caused by a Brahminy Kite and then a Whistling Kite flying overhead. However, the birds soon settled back on the roost.

Several species of migratory waders were noted with a Queensland green engraved leg flag while a single Victorian flagged Bar-tailed Godwit was seen.

The following species were seen at the roost site:

Black Swan, Chestnut Teal, Little Egret, Australian Pelican, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Eastern Osprey, Whistling Kite, Brahminy Kite, Pied Oystercatcher, Sooty Oystercatcher, White-headed Stilt, Pacific Golden Plover, Red-capped Plover, Lesser Sand Plover, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Far Eastern Curlew, Marsh Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Grey-tailed Tattler, Terek Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, Great Knot, Red Knot, Red-necked Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Silver Gull, Gull-billed Tern, Caspian Tern.

by Arthur Keates

QWSG is Going Back to Great Sandy Straits Same Place, New Time (20th – 23rd February, 2016)

QWSG have been making surveys of the Great Sandy Strait since before 1995, when Peter Driscoll and friends identified the importance of the region for waders. Since 2009, QWSG have tried to make bi-annual surveys of the entire Great Sandy Strait region. Most surveys have been in October to increase the chance of getting calmer weather. However, during 2015 we have been in discussion with the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection about their concerns at the decreasing counts of waders in the Great sandy Strait Ramsar site. Of particular concern are counts of three species that were previously present in internationally significant numbers (> 1% Flyway population) when the Ramsar site was listed in 1999. These species have had counts below these thresholds during recent surveys. The species of interest are Grey-tailed Tattler, Lesser Sand Plover and Terek Sandpiper. They all have higher counts during the northern migration period (February – March).

QWSG committee have agreed to make our 2015/2016 GSS survey in February 2016 to try and coincide with the peak counts of these species in Great Sandy Strait. The main survey day(s) will be planned for the Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st February.

As with previous surveys, we will plan to try and all stay in the units at the Poona Palms caravan park. Boat trips to Fraser Island and the central Great Sandy Strait islands will be made with Queensland Marine Parks vessels on the Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd February. Participants will be needed for these surveys and to survey the 50 other high tide roosts accessible from the mainland.

QWSG will be able to reimburse participants for their fuel expenses on production of receipts. All accommodation costs while in the Great Sandy Strait region will also be covered. All members and other birders are welcome to participate in the survey for one or more days. Please contact David Milton to register your interest or get additional information.

David Milton

Notice of 2015 AGM of QWSG

The 2015 AGM will be held Saturday 19th December at 11am on Lota Esplanade, south of Manly Marina and beyond the children’s play area, opposite Bart’s fish and chips.

The QWSG will buy fish and chips for everyone attending, and will have telescopes set up to watch waders on the foreshore as the tide drops.

Please email the chairperson if you are coming along, plus let me know if you require a nomination form for a committee position. chairperson@waders.org.au

NOMINATION FOR POSITION ON QWSG MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Name of Nominee:

Position:

Name of Proposer:

Name of Seconder:

(Note: Nominees, proposers and seconders must have current QWSG membership).

I accept the nomination for the position on the management committee of the Queensland Wader Study Group as indicated.

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

Secretary, Rae Clark secretary@birdsqueensland.org.au

Treasurer, Wayne Lock treasurer@birdsqueensland.org.au

BQ is having an AGM in December 2015, so these positions will change.

Monthly Meetings Birds Queensland

1st Thursday each month except January, when there is no meeting.

Royal Geographical Society Meeting Room, 237 Milton Road, Milton.

Arrive after 7:15pm for a 7:30pm start.

Electronic Newsletter??

Are you interested in receiving your "Queensland Wader" by email?

If you are interested email me on gouldian@ozemail.com.au or the treasurer at membership@waders.org.au

Please could you use the subject line as "Electronic Newsletter". Editor

QWSG MERCHANDISE

Should you wish to purchase any of the QWSG merchandise, Contact Vicki Campbell

Postage is **not** included in prices quoted.

BOOKS	\$35.00	Shorebirds of Australia
METAL BADGES	\$6.50	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 available.
 The locally made shirts are plain bottle or sky with contrast collar in sand, or tri-coloured sand / cocoa / sky and sand / cocoa / bottle.

Men's sizes: SM - XL



NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined recently:

Diane BLEWETT, Kevin & Pamela DONOHUE, Pamela ELLIOTT, Adrian GALLAGHER,
 James HERMANS Lynne HOGAN, John PILLIS, Steve SPANNER, Burney STARKEY,
 Ged TRANTER, David, TURTON, Melissa, WHITBY

A reminder to members, please let the Treasurer know if you change your email address. If you do please make sure that it does allow delivery and not send downloads to spam.

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.

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

www.waders.org.au

The Official Quarterly Publication of
Queensland Wader Study Group

Note there is an AGM in December 2015, so some of the details will have changed. Please check Web Site

MEMBERS of the MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE of the QWSG

<u>CHAIRPERSON:</u>	Jon Coleman	
<u>TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP</u>	Sheryl Keates	membership@waders.org.au
<u>SECRETARY:</u>	Peter Rothlisberg	
<u>NEWSLETTER EDITOR:</u>	David Edwards	gouldian@ozemail.com.au
<u>COMMITTEE MEMBERS</u>	Robert Bush	Deirdre Chrzescijanski
	Paul Finn	Richard Fuller
	Andrew Geering	Sandra Harding
	David Milton	

<u>COUNT COORDINATOR:</u>	Linda Cross	07 5495 2758	Email	xenus69@bigpond.com
<u>LEG FLAG COORDINATOR</u>	Phil Cross	07 5495 2758	Email	xenus69@bigpond.com
<u>MERCHANDISE</u>	Vicki Campbell	07 3378 2964	Email	vicki.campbell@cogentia.com.au
<u>BQ PRESIDENT</u>	Richard Noske	07 3300 2757		

CORRESPONDENCE All correspondence to:
The QWSG Chairperson,
xxxxxxxxxx,
xxxxxxxxxx
QLD xxxx

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

SUBSCRIPTIONS Annual subscription rates:
Single: \$15:00
Student/Pensioner: \$10:00
Family \$25:00
A receipt will be forwarded if required.

Forward application to:
QWSG Treasurer,
PO Box 3138,
SOUTH BRISBANE,
QLD 4101

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 **February 18th 2016**

Contributions should be addressed to:

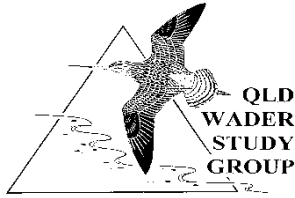
David Edwards, the QWSG Editor, 54 Elliott Street, Clayfield, Qld 4011

or E-mail to: gouldian@ozemail.com.au

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admin@jrdsons.com.au



Count Activities – 2015-2016

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Program – 2015-16

Sat 12 th Dec	2.44m at 10:06		
Sat 16 th Jan	2.20m at 14:11	National Summer Count	Sat 23 rd Jul
Sat 13 th Feb	2.28m at 13:00		Sat 20 th Aug
Sat 12 th Mar	2.33m at 11:56		Sat 17 th Sep
Sat 9 th Apr	2.32m at 10:51		Sat 15 th Oct
Sat 7 th May	2.24m at 09:43		Sat 12 th Nov
Sat 4 th Jun	2.11m at 08:32	National Winter Count	Sat 3 rd Dec
			1.98m at 11:48
			2.10m at 10:47
			2.21m at 09:43
			2.26m at 08:36
			2.22m at 07:26
			2.31m at 11:43

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2015-16

Sun 13 th Dec	2.45m at 10:44	Meet: 08:55	
Sun 17 th Jan	2.05m at 15:12	Meet 13:20	Nat Summer Count
Sun 14 th Feb	2.09m at 13:50	Meet 12:00	Sun 24 th Jul
Sun 13 th Mar	2.15m at 12:42	Meet 10:50	Sun 21 st Aug
Sun 10 th Apr	2.18m at 11:37	Meet 09:50	Sun 18 th Sep
Sun 8 th May	2.15m at 10:32	Meet 08:40	Sun 16 th Oct
Sun 5 th Jun	2.06m at 09:25	Meet 07:35	Nat Winter Count
			Sun 13 th Nov
			Sun 4 th Dec
			1.98m at 12:36
			Meet 10:45
			2.13m at 11:32
			Meet 09:40
			2.28m at 10:29
			Meet 08:40
			2.38m at 09:24
			Meet 07:35
			2.39m at 08:17
			Meet 06:25
			2.26m at 12:22
			Meet 10:30

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!

MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION

A reminder to members: please check to see if your renewal is due and please let the Treasurer know if you change your contact details.

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

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

Address:..... Membership: \$.....
 Postcode:..... Donation: \$.....
 Payment enclosed: \$_____

Do you require a receipt? Yes / No

Phone: (Home) (Work)(Mobile).....

Email Fax.....

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 email this form to: membership@waders.org.au

Direct funds transfer to:

Qld Wader Study Group

BSB: 313 140

Account number: 08305297

Or

Please post this form to: QWSG Treasurer, PO Box 3138, SOUTH BRISBANE, QLD 4101

Cheques to be made out to: Qld Wader Study Group

