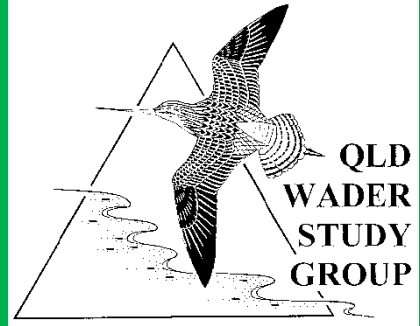


QUEENSLAND WADER



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Chairperson's Report for 2016

This is my last report as chairperson and after 5 years in the role, while sad, it's time to handover to somebody new, and someone with some new ideas so that the group continues to grow and ensure its value and contribution adapts and remains as valuable as it is today. 2016 as always was busy in our core areas of research, education and conservation/consulting but I thought I'd just cover what we've achieved in the last 5 years as a reminder of our continuing journey.

Firstly, we went online, initially with a web site which is still current, generating a lot of interest in shorebirds as those with email addresses on the site can attest to. Then we added our data entry so we stopped the very manual processes we had for entry, collation, checking and storage and replaced them with online entry and a simple workflow for checking and acceptance. Next, we're looking at flag entry online, and a way people can see the details about birds they see as well as fixing up some errors.

We also developed our relationship with UQ, helped significantly through having Richard on our committee and through that relationship, we've been involved in several high impact publications aimed at shorebird conservation and had a seat at many tables discussing shorebirds, traditionally seats we would have struggled to get to. All of this has had a huge beneficial impact on shorebird conservation. This continues as we're now entering our second ARC linkage project with UQ and other stakeholders looking at management practises in Marine Parks and their impact on shorebirds and we're also still involved in long term work with UQ at Gladstone.

Our active research into shorebirds accelerated not just through actively banding birds but also through using new technologies such as geolocators and this year satellite transmitters. Through this we played a small role in demonstrating the connectivity of Palau within the EAAF network through geocator analysis of tattler migration tracks and resightings of a Queensland flagged Great Knot in a roost there. We've also been involved in several publications recently on the research side because of our geocator work.

Finally, after a couple of years of work the group released a mobile application for educating school children which has to be one of the most exciting and potentially influential educational activities we've been involved with to date.

All these things have happened while the general business of the group has continued unabated. The group do a lot of things routinely that make us who we are and these deserve mention before we get to the 2016 highlights.

The newsletter continues to be incredibly well researched and prepared with articles from all over the world of shorebirds. David Edwards's commitment to the newsletter is directly reflected in this ongoing quality. Please remember if you get your newsletter posted to you, we do have a page limit so we fit more articles in our email version. If you can move to email it's cheaper for the group and you'll get more!

Sheryl Keates did another year as our treasurer and kept our finances and membership on track and under control as well as offering herself up for another year of this in 2017. A huge thank you to Sheryl for another year in that role.

Vicki has continued to do our merchandise which is part of our revenue generation so thank you too Vicki and also special thanks to her for her contribution as she stands down from the merchandise role this year.

As always, we were involved with a whole range of shorebird related issues in 2016 with ongoing concerns at Manly and queries and involvement in a range of other environmental issues concerning shorebirds such as Toondah, Wavebreak Island and more recently Thorneside where there is talk of building a sea wall. Our involvement has ranged from providing advice, being involved in ad hoc survey work and providing historical data for reports involving these issues. Manly is exceptionally well looked after now due to the efforts of Arthur and Sheryl, working with TMR on this and I have to thank Richard, Sandra, David Milton and Peter for their role this year in working on all these issues, although many other committee and non-committee members were also involved in these issues.

Our collaboration with the Port of Brisbane has also continued this year with the count program continuing and further banding at the Port, including their contribution to our satellite tracking project on Pacific Golden Plover. The background work, Phil and Linda Cross put into the count program and managing the thousands of flag sightings our banding program is now responsible for needs recognising. Their diligence is incredible and the data almost faultless because of that commitment.

Other unsung volunteers who don't always make the highlights are Peter, who maintains our meeting minutes and has the unenviable task of making us all accountable for our actions and David Milton who maintains all our data. Sandra Harding and Arthur Keates (who's not even a committee member) continue to help draft formal letters and provide advice in relation to conservation legislation, without whom we would all struggle a lot more so thank you to them too.

Other members of committee and non-members who I've not mentioned continue to provide advice, engage in debate and generally contribute to the business of running what is a very active group, so again thank you to all those who just help keep us going, a hugely important role. Deidre stands down from committee this year and has been treasurer for a period, and a well-balanced voice at committee meeting for several years. Thanks to Deidre and hopefully we will see you back in future years.

Some of the key activities in 2016, in no particular order of priority are highlighted below:

EDUCATION

As always, a number of wader ID days and a wader course were held in 2016 with Sheryl and Arthur Keates, Phil and Linda Cross and David Milton and Sandra Harding doing the lion's share of the work and coordination at these events. The wader course was again held at the marine Park offices at Manly and we are grateful to NPRSR and Kristy for the venue and time.

The banners and posters on display at events continue to grow and demonstrate in a modern professional way what we do and why the birds we represent require our focus. Thanks to Roberts dedication, and with funding from the Port of Brisbane we now have a mobile app for school children (and anyone else) which allows and encourages children to look at and record their environment on field trips to wetland areas, record habitat descriptions, identify and record birds and capture notes. This along with Sheryl's work with the Moreton Bay Environmental Centre educating young school children about shorebirds is so exciting and to my mind is key to the future of shorebirds. Using tools like the app to engage with them and reinforcing messaging through other interactions and events will hopefully start developing the next generation of shorebird ambassadors.

ARC LINKAGE AND OTHER UNIVERSITY AFFILIATIONS

We continued to work closely with University of Queensland during 2016. The ARC grant for a project looking at management practises in marine parks and the impact on shorebirds has now commenced and we have done the first survey for this in the Great Sandy Straits with more planned.

WE have also worked closely with UQ and others to ensure our data has contributed to the new flyway population estimates which will be published soon and are much needed given the last estimates we all use in assessing sites are very long in the tooth now. We've also ensured our data is used wisely in other research projects, helping a number of students in their studies and of course benefiting shorebird welfare as a result.

SURVEYS

The Great Sandy survey was completed early in 2016 and there was an opportunity to survey Shoalwater Bay sites through a private survey which was also completed adding valuable data, from what is a rarely counted but important location for shorebirds.

Thank you to David Milton and Linda Cross for their hard work organising those. We are already planning 2017 surveys in Mackay and have already done a pre-emptive survey with Peter Driscoll's microlight this year in preparation.

Marine Parks also helped with surveys of the Moreton Island roosts again this year so a huge thank you to them for making surveys of these important areas possible again this year.

THE COUNT PROGRAMME

Linda Cross again tirelessly organised and managed the count programme in 2016 with monthly counts across a whole range of sites in Moreton bay and further afield up and down the Queensland coast. Online data entry continues to make life easier in terms of data entry, validation and download and we are looking to improve the user experience further in the next few months. Linda is always looking for new counters so if you know anyone, or would like to count your own site please get in touch with her. Thanks not only to Linda but to every one of our members who counts as without you, we would not have been able to contribute as much as we have to shorebird conservation and please don't underestimate the value of consistently counting a location over long periods of time. Our count program has been responsible for some very influential discussion on shorebird declines and has influenced opinion throughout the flyway as a result of this dataset.

BANDING AND GEOLOCATORS

We continued with banding fieldwork throughout the year targeting both migratory and non-migratory shorebirds around Moreton bay and put engraved leg flags on 329 shorebirds of 19 species in 2016, with cannon netting at Manly, the Port of Brisbane and Toorbul and mist-netting once at Wellington Point. QWSG now have over 3,362 birds leg flagged with over 11,000 resightings of individually identifiable birds at feeding roosting and migration stopover sites providing important data on the way birds utilise Moreton Bay and also on their use of stopover areas on migration.

Thanks to the many individuals who volunteer for banding, spending long hours in the field, getting wet, muddy and sunburnt! If you're interested in getting involved in banding please contact me for further information.

2016 is exciting as we are targeting Pacific Golden Plovers and putting satellite transmitters on 4 individuals at the port to understand their migration routes.

CONSERVATION

On the conservation front we were actively involved in a number of initiatives and requested to get involved and provide information on the Toondah harbour development, the Thorneside sea wall project, Wavebreak Island and ongoing management of the Manly roost.

We are also refreshing many of the shorebird signs at important roost and feeding locations around Moreton Bay and provided advice on a number of other projects in the region, ensuring shorebirds are always considered.

I could go on forever and have tried to pick some of the bigger highlights of the year and mention some of the individuals involved as a demonstration of just how much we achieve each year. Thank you to every single committee member and also our non-committee roles such as Phil, Linda and Vicki. Thank you also to BQ for their collaboration through the year. Everyone has contributed to the group in many different ways and we always underestimate the effort required to make a group like this run effectively.

Finally, and most importantly, I have to say thank you to the QWSG members for your support and fieldwork over the last 12 months. Without you we achieve nothing and I hope the 2016 report has shown you how important your support, your counts, and your involvement in everything to do with shorebirds really is.

Here's to an equally busy and valuable 2017 and good luck to David Edwards as the new chairperson!

Jon Coleman 4th December 2016

Count Coordinator's Report to Annual General Meeting 4th December 2016

There have been a number of changes in the count programme during the year with gains, losses, replacements and intermittent counters. We gained 3 counters (Bill Price, Peter Tierney & Cecile Espigole) who count 3 important sites at Boonooroo and 1 at Thangawan Creek in the Great Sandy Strait. Our losses were (Marlis Schoeb) the counter for St. Helen's Beach north of Mackay and (Judith Lattaway), counter for Caboolture River Mouth. Currently Phil and I are covering Caboolture River mouth site along with our Deception Bay sites. The counter for Tin Can Bay (Kelvin Nielsen) has been unable to count since July due to health reasons, but thankfully Kelvin has recovered and hopes to start counting again in January next year.

Replacements have been Judith Coles taking over from Barb Dickson at Wickham Point and Margaret Worthington replaced Lindsay Boyd covering the Gladstone Aluminium sites. Although Nev Capell has been counting at Bundaberg Port for quite some time, he has now stepped into replace Sue Sargent in the role of organising the counts for that site.

There have not been any new sites added to the database from the count programme; however there have been some new sites added from the Bowen and Great Sandy Strait surveys conducted during the past year. There is still an issue with Pine Rivers northside site access, which has resulted in only 2 counts for that site during the year. Deception Bay Fisheries site has only been counted twice this year and will only be surveyed on the national summer and winter count date and Mathieson Homestead in Hervey has only been counted once during the year. We have only received 4 counts for Wave Break sand island on the Gold Coast and Luggage Point has only been counted 4 times this year and requires new people as the current counters feel they will be unable to continue covering the site.

The online count entries continue to have very few counter errors and I thank all counters for their diligence when loading counts onto the website. However, I still needed to reprimand one or two people for not adhering to the instructions I supplied. There also continues to be a couple of glitches on the website when it generates duplicate counts.

Counts conducted during 2015 are as follows:

925 programme counts validated and downloaded to end of October
 104 additional counts validated and downloaded to end of October
 25 validated and waiting to be downloaded
 85 waiting to be validated
 77 yet to be entered by counters

That is a total of 1,216, counts (83 more than 2015), for the year from the count programme, but does not include any counts entered from surveys that have been done.

David Milton (Database Manager) has very kindly extracted some figures for me from the database, and they are as follows:

Dees Wells was the most prolific counter with 109 entries followed by Arthur Keates with 94. I was the most prolific enterer of data onto the website (as one would expect), with 136 entries.

The total number of species counts was in excess of 11,321 (probably closer to 12,000 now). Since 1992 we have totals of 31,171 visits to roosts and 334,079 counts of species in the database, which is a significant quantity for a single state.

Without the support of all the counters the count programme would not exist, and I thank them for their continued commitment.

During 2016 personal things have sometimes taken me from my role and at times I have been very tardy in my replies to emails for which I sincerely apologise.

I only needed Jon's assistance a few times during the year in relation to the website entries and I believe I was perhaps a bit more on time supplying articles to David Edwards for the newsletter. I am sure David will tell me if I have that wrong!

I continue to liaise with Sheryl Keates to keep the Port counter/induction list up to date, and then ensure Peter Rothlisberg and Nadene Perry (Port of Brisbane) are kept informed accordingly.

Unfortunately for David Milton, I still had regular contact with him via email, home phone and mobile with numerous queries and discussions relating to the count programme.

I would like to thank all of the above for their assistance, and putting up with me during the year, and also thank the rest of the group (on and off committee) for their committed involvement with the QWSG. You're a great bunch.

Linda.

Leg Flag Database Report to QWSG Annual General Meeting – 4th December 2016

The leg flag database now consists of 17,529 records this is 2,810 more than the 2015 year end cumulative total, this equates to an increase of 19% year on year.

Two observers have between them reported 70% of the total entries seen in Queensland since the last leg flag report; Arthur Keates (1178 entries) and Tony Cotter (601 entries). On behalf of the group I would like to thank them for their efforts.

Green leg flags.

A total of 2,539 green coloured leg flag sightings were reported this year which is 90% of the total added to the database. Only 46 entries loaded in are plain flags, all the rest are engraved flags.

Green flags seen overseas.

The number of reports of waders carrying green flags, which were seen overseas, was 209, which is a 38% increase on the previous year's total. These reports came from eight different countries.

South Korea was the source of 130 of these overseas sightings, Bar-tailed Godwit was the most commonly seen species, accounting for 122 of the 130; Andreas Kim was the observer for 125 of that total.

This year 2 sightings from North Korea were added to the database.

I received 26 sightings recorded in New Zealand, only one was seen in 2016, the others were reports dated 2015 (quantity 17) and 2014 (quantity 8).

Japan supplied 34 reports, only one was a plain flag, the rest were birds carrying engraved leg flags. Grey-tailed Tattler was the species recorded on 25 occasions one of which was a bird with a geolocator.

Only 4 sightings were recorded in China.

In one area of western Kamchatka in Russia, green flagged waders were recorded on 7 occasions between mid-July and early August; 6 records were of Great Knot and Grey-tailed Tattler was the other species seen.

Fewer sightings from Taiwan this year, only 3 compared to 6 recorded last year.

The report of Great Knot (flag BEA) being seen in Palau Micronesia three times in April 2016 was an exciting first record for this part of the world.

Green flagged birds seen Interstate.

New South Wales

I entered 2 records of green (A6) flagged Pied Oystercatcher reported as being seen at Iluka in NSW.

Birds flagged overseas reported as seen in Queensland.

This year the total (191) is greater than in 2015 (164).

USA (Alaska)

One sighting of a Bar-tailed Godwit with an engraved black flag was reported from the Gladstone area. At Burnett Heads a Pacific Golden Plover was reported with coloured bands but without any flag, this has been confirmed as being banded in Alaska.

China

The highest quantity of overseas flagged birds came from China they were recorded on 76 occasions this year. Black/white combination - a total of 50 records of birds flagged at Chong Ming Island.

Blue/yellow combination - 5 entries from Bohai Bay, 3 of which were engraved leg flags these birds were flagged at Nan Pu Mudflat.

7 records of green over blue flags, 6 on Red-necked Stint and one on Lesser Sand Plover all from Jiangsu. Green/orange combination - a quantity of 14 records from Yalu Jiang Nature Reserve, 13 of which were of a Godwit we gave a nickname of "Mr Bling" because of the number of adornments it carries. This bird has now returned to the Bribie Passage for the fifth consecutive year since it was first seen in late 2012.

Japan

Fewer records this year (52) than last year (53).

Blue – birds flagged at Hokkaido reported on 36 occasions.

Blue/white combination – a total of 13 separate sightings, 1 record of a bird from Obitsu area and 12 from Torinoumi area.

Blue/orange combination – 3 records of birds flagged in the Kyushu area.

Korea

White/orange combination – 1 only sighting of a bird with these coloured flags, it was seen in north Queensland.

New Zealand

Birds carrying a White flag were reported on 46 occasions, of which 21 were carrying engraved leg flags.

White/green – one record this year, this is the first time that this combination has been recorded in the database.

Red flag – 3 sightings of Bar-tailed Godwit each with a different band combination, prior to this year there was only one other record of this colour flag in the database.

Russia

Black/yellow combination - 3 sightings of 3 different species flagged in Kamchatka.

Yellow/white combination – 2 records of birds flagged on Sakhalin Island.

Taiwan

White/blue combination – 5 recorded this year, all on Greater Sand Plover, 1 of which carried an engraved white flag.

Interstate leg flags seen in Queensland.

Victoria

A quantity of 61 sightings of waders with a single Orange flag were recorded, a significant reduction compared to last year (113). An engraved leg flag was recorded on 18 of the 61 sightings.

New South Wales

Pied Oystercatcher with an engraved Yellow flag on the left tibia, was recorded on only 7 occasions compared with 21 last year.

West Australia

A total of 13 records of birds from the other side of the country, all carried a yellow flag on the right tibia, one was an engraved flag and another had both a flag and bands fitted.

I would like to thank all the people who sent leg flag sighting records to me and ask them to continue to watch out for them and report them to me.

Phil Cross.

MERCHANDISE OFFICER

After many years of valued help Viki Campbell is unable to continue as our Merchandise Officer and has stood down at the end of last year.

We have been unable to obtain anyone interested in this position, so the Committee has decided at this stage to suspend the position of Merchandise Officer the stock we have at the moment will be slowly run down.

However, if you are interested, the job requires purchasing and obviously selling our stock. At the moment there is not a lot on hand so the successful applicant can make this position their own, with new ideas etc.

It is not necessary to be on the Committee to hold this position. If you are interested please contact the QWSG for more details.

The tiny transmitters tracking birds from North to South America

Feb 20 2017

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System is a pioneering programme of Bird Studies Canada (BSC, BirdLife Partner), in partnership with collaborating researchers and organisations. Motus (which means “movement” in Latin) utilises miniaturised radio transmitters weighing less than 0.3g, which can be unobtrusively fitted onto the backs of birds, including small passerines such as warblers. (Even smaller transmitters have also been developed that can be fitted to insects: for instance, one study already underway is tracking the movements of Monarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*).

The transmitters, or tags, emit a short burst or pulse every 5–30 seconds, each with a unique numerical pattern. These pulses are then picked up by automated very high frequency (VHF) receivers, which can automatically detect and record signals from the tags at distances of up to 15 km.

Thousands of tags can be simultaneously deployed and tracked within the system, which, as of today comprises nearly 350 receiving stations. Resembling oversized television aerials, the receivers can be fixed to existing structures such as towers or lighthouses, on trees, or on stand-alone poles that are around 30 feet in height. The receivers can also be located out to sea; some receivers have already been placed on offshore oil and gas platforms in coastal Nova Scotia, Canada



Red Knot fitted with Motus © Yves Aubry

“What’s new and exciting about Motus is that it harnesses the collective resources and infrastructure of numerous researchers into one massive collaborative effort. Indeed, it is the depth of these collaborations that makes the entire system possible”, explains Stuart Mackenzie, Motus Programme Manager for BSC.

As birds—or other animals, such as bats and large insects—pass within range of any receiver in the network, data is recorded automatically into BSC’s central database in Ontario, where it is shared with researchers. “As each tag has a unique signature, we can extract a massive level of detail about movement and behaviour, including learning where and how quickly the bird in question has travelled, and for how long they may have stopped en route”, says Mackenzie.

A large number of individual study projects are currently underway that utilise Motus’ open source technology. These include: studying the stopover and migration ecology of various waders (including Red Knot *Calidris canutus*, Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla* and White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis*); monitoring the migration routes of Grey cheeked Thrush *Catharus minimus* and Swainson’s Thrushes *Catharus ustulatus*; and investigating the post-breeding dispersal of Ipswich Sparrow, the *princeps* sub-species of Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis* which breeds only on Sable Island, Nova Scotia.



Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea* fitted with a Motus tracking device. © Audubon Panama

One of the big advantages of Motus over other methods of tracking bird movements —such as ringing (banding) or the use of geolocators or other archival tags – is that Motus-tagged birds don't have to be recaptured in order for the data to be accessed. Indeed, Mackenzie estimates that the chances of recovering data from a tagged Motus bird is something like a thousand times greater than with traditional ringing recoveries.

“With the 2015 project that studied migratory Grey-cheeked and Swainson’s Thrushes on their Colombian wintering grounds, migration data was obtained from around 30% of the birds involved—19 out of 67 tagged birds—an unprecedented figure compared to previous transcontinental migration studies”, says Mackenzie.

A striking level of insight is already being gleaned into the movements of thrushes. For instance, a Swainson’s Thrush tagged on 19 March 2015 remained at the Colombia study site, a shade-grown coffee plantation, until 14 April. On 18 May, it was detected flying past a small array of towers in Canada’s Chaplin Lake in Saskatchewan, an astounding journey of nearly 6,000 km in just 34 days; this equates to flying at least 175 km per day for a month. And one of the study’s Gray-cheeked Thrushes travelled over 3,200 km from Colombia to Indiana in just 3.3 days, meaning it flew an average of 986 km a day.

Motus is poised to expand rapidly over the next few years. Until recently most of the MOTUS equipment was located in North America, mostly around eastern Canada and the United States. However, a collaboration with BirdLife Partners Audubon Panama and Guyra Paraguay has seen the Motus’ networks of antennas stretch to Central and Southern America for the first time.

“This really is a project with global potential”, explained Mackenzie. “Perhaps one of the most exciting developments in 2016 is the deployment— working alongside Audubon Panama – of receivers across the canal zone of Panama, meaning that most tagged birds that migrate from North to South America will have to cross through and be recorded by the Panama Gateway.”

In Paraguay, a South American country that has documented more than 40 migratory species arriving from the northern hemisphere, we’ve pinpointed the ideal location to track their arrival. Thanks to the support of the Municipality of Asuncion, Guyra Paraguay has installed the first Motus tracking station in the southern cone in the Bay of Asunción, above the office of the Municipal Tourist Information Centre, a strategic place for the antenna on the coast with open view to the Bay of Asunción and the Paraguay River.

Later, it is planned to expand the system to Guyra Paraguay reserves, along the Paraguay River and other key areas for migratory birds such as the Salt Lagoons in the central Chaco plains.



South America's first Motus antenna, fitted in the Colombia Andes © Ana Maria Gonzalez.

In addition, Motus now has a foothold in Europe, with the tagging of songbirds taking place on the German island of Heligoland. With receiver coverage now expanding around the Gulf of Mexico and America's Pacific Flyway, use of this ground breaking technology is picking up pace, and enquiries have been made from as far afield as Australia as the world seeks to increase its understanding of the movements of our planet's incredible migratory birds.

This article was first published by BirdLife International on 10 Feb 2017.

Shorebird Education for 2016 by Sheryl Keates

The Birds and Beaches, Dogs and Leashes program continues with teachers from Moreton Bay Environmental Education Centre (MBEEC) and volunteers from QWSG, Birds Qld, BirdLife Australia.

Students from 10 schools attended the excursions, including the Islamic Brisbane College. Firstly, students visit MBEEC to learn about habitat, feeding, roosting, migration, flyway, disturbance, and threats.

After lunch, the students are transported by bus to the Port of Brisbane artificial roost where they are all provided with clipboards, pencils, erasers (for sharing), work sheets and binoculars (for half the students at a time). There are usually 50 grade-3 students each day, with half going to each hide to be split in half again. In each hide, 2 volunteers with telescopes show the students migratory shorebirds and waterbirds, while the other half use binoculars outside the hide. Students concentrate on Far Eastern Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Red-necked Stint, Pied Oystercatcher, White-headed Stilt and Little Egret.

Students use their worksheets to tally the number of species present, record what the birds are doing and draw other waterbirds present on the back of their sheets. The students swop over so that everyone has a turn with binoculars and time in the hide with the telescopes.

There is usually question time at the end of the session. Volunteers are asked a wide variety of questions. Students are encouraged to tell their parents, siblings, other relatives, and friends about what they have learnt about shorebirds.

The more students we reach, the better chance we have of spreading the word on the plight of shorebirds. The enthusiasm generated by the students raises our hopes that shorebirds will continue to visit our shores for some time to come.

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 and staff, MBEEC organised a Staff Christmas Breakfast at "Tide Wine Bar & Casual Dining" on Bill Gunn Jetty on Dec 6. Although, not accustomed to going out for breakfast, I thoroughly enjoyed it, as I'm sure others did also.

Wader Course, November 2016 – a 'student' perspective

– by Zena Dinesen

I was very pleased to attend the QWSG wader course on 20 November 2016. This was actually my second wader course with QSWG, and it served as a useful refresher on wader identification, as well as an update on scientific and conservation news. The morning's lectures and discussion were held at the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing building at Manly Marina, which was a perfect venue (thanks to DNPSR for making their premises available).

Following an introduction from Jon Coleman, QWSG, the first presentation was from Andrew Geering, QWSG, with a comprehensive overview of the taxonomy and evolution of waders. He reminded us that waders or 'shorebirds' do not include herons, egrets and cranes. Recent molecular studies have overturned the traditional taxonomy, and shed new light on evolutionary relationships. Andrew summarised the taxonomic groups within the Order Charadriiformes, a diverse 'paraphyletic' order which I think arose some 93 million years ago in ancient Gondwana (and includes button quails), ran through the various sub-orders, families etc.

Andrew then gave a further talk, covering migration and breeding. Many waders or shorebirds are migratory, however there are exceptions such as oyster catchers. Most of the waders we see here in Australia migrate to northern Asia to breed – taking advantage of more food biomass in higher latitudes, longer foraging times (in the northern summer), and probably less disease than in tropical environments. Andrew presented some fascinating research information about what helps these birds to navigate – including magnetic fields, and a protein in the retina called cryptochrome which acts as a molecular sensor and is activated by blue light. Shorebird chicks are born with down, and can walk and feed almost at once, and must fly unaided at just a few weeks old. Once in Australia, the adults will spend 5 - 6 months here in the southern hemisphere while juveniles will spend 1 - 3 years here before migrating north. It never ceases to amaze me how far these birds can fly – an individual Bar-tailed Godwit has been recorded as travelling over 11,000 km, non-stop.

Rob Clemens, from The University of Queensland, gave a fascinating talk on threats, impacts and responses. More than 15 species of these migratory birds have undergone a significant reduction on a national scale. A key problem is with stopover areas along the flyway, especially in the Yellow Sea around Korea and China, where there have been massive reclamation projects particularly over the last decade. As QWSG members will be well aware, this is a chilling story, recently documented in ABC Radio National's 'Off Track' production. Just for example, around 90,000 Great Knot have vanished following major reclamation projects in South Korea. These conservation issues highlight the critical importance of strengthening international agreements such as CAMBA, JAMBA and ROKAMBA, and providing good management of wader feeding and roosting areas in Australia to allow the birds to fatten up during our summer months, ahead of their next long migration.

Jon Coleman, QWSG gave us a presentation on banding studies (and some amazing travel statistics that come from these). Then, after a delicious and healthy buffet lunch, David Edwards, QWSG gave us a talk on identification including a great handout illustrating bill and body shape of key wader species. We then travelled to the Manly Roost for an excellent session in the field, with numerous telescopes available, which make viewing the waders so much easier than with my humble binoculars. I have to admit that I still struggle with identifying waders, apart from obvious species such as the busy little Red-necked Stint and the distinctive Far Eastern Curlew. I really appreciate the patience and skilled tutoring from the experts in the QWSG, who helped us 'students' to identify a considerable range of species. Thanks to all concerned for a great course.

QWSG Return to Survey Mackay Region on 4th–5th November 2017

The QWSG have been surveying the coast within 100 km of Mackay since 2002 when we were awarded a federal government grant through the national WWF shorebird project. After that project finished in 2004, QWSG decided to continue these surveys and have returned to Mackay every second year. The last survey was in 2014 and now it is time to return for the 10th Mackay regional survey. This time, we are partnering with the local natural resource management group, Reef Catchments to expand the survey area north of Mackay to include the coast up to Bowen. This will effectively double the length of coast to be surveyed, although probably only add about 10% to the total number of waders counted.

This is an early notice about the survey to encourage members to plan ahead. We hope members will set aside the weekend of 4 – 5 November 2017 to come to Mackay and join other QWSG members and interested locals visiting new and exciting locations to help count the 25,000 waders that occur along this part of the Queensland coast. Survey participants will have their travel, accommodation and most food expenses covered while on the survey. Participants do not need to be experienced and those with limited wader identification skills or previous survey experience will be partnered with experienced surveyors when they go in the field.

Members interested in being involved should contact either Peter Driscoll or Peter Rothlisberg to express their interest or make enquiries. We will make further announcements in future newsletters. We look forward to seeing you in Mackay in November!

QWSG 25th Year Celebrations

The Queensland Wader Study Group will be celebrating its 25th birthday this year. So, keep the week-end of 7th October 2017 free and wait for future information of our activities.

Also, the next Issue of Queensland wader will be number 100. So, if you have any reminiscences, articles or photos please send them to me as soon as possible. The usual restrictions will apply to the hardcopy mail-out so make sure, if you have not given us your email address, to send it to the membership registrar ASAP. Hoping Issue will be a bumper issue.

Wader ID Days 2017

Toorbul, Saturday 4th March 2017

1.99 m high tide at 13:39 (plus 30 minutes later for Toorbul – 14:09). Meeting time 13:00 onwards.

Take the Bruce Highway north from Brisbane to 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 of the left.

Amenities: At the T-junction turn left and 200 metres ahead is the toilet block and shop. 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.

If you have any questions or are planning to attend an ID day, please contact the leaders.
Leaders: Phil & Linda Cross

Toorbul, Saturday 1st April 2017

2.03 m high tide at 12:36 (plus 30 minutes later for Toorbul – 13:06). Meeting time 12 noon onwards.

Details and directions as above.

Wader ID Day Reports

Kakadu Roost, Bribie Island 17th December 2016

Although 16 people registered for this outing, the 31 attending created an overflow at the bird hide. Among the members and guests were Cecile Espigole and Bill Price who count Boonooroo and Thangawan Creek in the Great Sandy Strait, and Mary Barram and Sue-Ellen Carew who will be new counters for Dunwich on Stradbroke Island.

Weather conditions were fine, dry and warm with a moderate wind from the north-east making conditions comfortable for viewing the waders.

A small number of waders were on the roost when we arrived and a scope view across the passage showed a large flock of waders still on the Toorbul roost. Unlike the wader ID day, we had at this roost 3 years ago when the Toorbul flock of waders arrived for us to view; that did not happen this time.



Far Eastern Curlew. Photograph by Arthur Keates.

However Far Eastern Curlew (FEC) did keep arriving as the tide rose. Most unusually after landing they spread out on the grass and along the shoreline. I commented that I have never seen this many FEC at this site before, and certainly not spread out on the grass. In some cases, birds were quite close together, which is also unusual as they normally do like their own space. This species in the past has flown passed the roost and headed into Dux Creek where they roosted with Pacific Golden Plover, but the last few counts have recorded larger totals of them on the roost, suggesting the roost at Dux Creek has been lost, and the reason why so many are now turning up at the Kakadu Beach roost.

We did have a small variety of species for people to look at, but some were distant views. As there was still a large flock at the Toorbul roost one of the attendees, Judy Leitch decided to head over to Toorbul and was subsequently pressured by the count coordinator to do a count while there to compare with the flock at the Kakadu Beach roost and also to contribute to the QWSG database. A count was also conducted at Kakadu Beach roost.

Birds seen at Kakadu Beach roost and environs:

(F/O) – Flying over (H) - Heard

3 Black Swan, 3 Australian White Ibis, 1 Striated Heron, 1 White-faced Heron, 1 Australian Pelican, 1 Little Black Cormorant, 1 Little Pied Cormorant, 4 Australian Pied Cormorant, 1 White-bellied Sea-eagle (F/O), 1 Buff-banded Rail, 3 Beach Stone-curlew, 4 Pied Oystercatcher, 1 Masked Lapwing, 4 Red-capped Plover, 27 Lesser Sand Plover, 1 Greater Sand Plover, 2 Whimbrel, 422 Far Eastern Curlew, 43 Red-necked Stint, 2 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 8 Silver Gull, 1 Caspian Tern and 1 Greater Crested Tern.

Birds seen and counted at Toorbul roost by Judy Leitch:

7 Pied Oystercatcher, 1 Masked Lapwing, 350 Whimbrel, 6 Black-tailed Godwit, 1,500 Bar-tailed Godwit and 50 Great Knot.

Linda Cross.

Kakadu Roost, Bribie Island 14th January 2017

Unlike the previous outing to this roost just over 4 weeks ago, only 10 people turned up for the mornings viewing. The hide was much less crowded, which was certainly welcomed by those of us in attendance given the very hot humid conditions south-east Queensland was experiencing. It was fine, dry, hot and humid with a gentle breeze from the north-east to begin with, but strengthened to a moderate wind as the morning progressed.

Once again, the species on the roost as we arrived were mainly Far Eastern Curlew and a couple of other species. Some of the Far Eastern Curlew once again were spread out in the grass. A short time later other species started to arrive (although the smaller ones disappeared soon after) and it was not long before people could at least get a look at a larger variety of waders.

The 3 Beach Stone-curlew were also present and can be seen regularly at this roost. The juvenile bird reported on numerous counts is probably more of an immature now.

Early attendees got to see 4 Lesser Sand Plover before they disappeared along with 1 Whimbrel. A few Red-necked Stint also arrived, but were soon either hidden from view or departed. There were 3 Black-tailed Godwit in the flock of Bar-tailed Godwit that arrived from the Toorbul roost and most of the group did eventually find them. A few Bar-tailed Godwit and some Great Knot were showing the start of breeding plumage. Numerous engraved green leg flags were seen on Bar-tailed Godwit and Great Knot, but most were too distant to read them.

Most of the attendees departed the bird hide before midday, no doubt to find cooler conditions elsewhere, as did the leaders.

Birds seen:

1 Striated Heron F/O, 1 Australian Pelican, 1 Whistling Kite, 1 Brahminy Kite F/O, 3 Beach Stone-curlew, 4 Pied Oystercatcher, 4 Lesser Sand Plover, 3 Black-tailed Godwit, 291 Bar-tailed Godwit, 2 Whimbrel, 120 Far Eastern Curlew, 42 Great Knot, c25 Red-necked Stint, 10 Silver Gull and 1 Greater Crested Tern.

Linda Cross.

Manly Shorebird Roost Report 4 February 2017

The prolonged heat and humidity leading up to this outing did not deter members from turning up to hone their shorebird identification skills. Observation conditions were reasonably good with a north easterly breeze keeping the temperature down, giving observers good views of 16 species of migratory shorebird and 4 species of resident shorebird.

Although the total number of shorebirds was slightly down on the previous outing to the roost in November last year, some species were present in good numbers, particularly Lesser Sand Plover and Curlew Sandpiper with over 200 of each species. Birds of several species were showing traces of breeding plumage, notably Bar-tailed Godwit, Great Knot and both sand plover species. After an absence of a month or so from the site, White-headed Stilt have returned; 3 pair were observed nesting on the island.

While no Black-tailed Godwit were observed to be able to compare with the Bar-tailed Godwit, most observers were able to get good comparative views of Greater Sand Plover and the shorter-billed Lesser Sand Plover. Also, diagnostic features of a Grey Plover, an infrequent visitor to the site, were clear to observers as it stood near 2 Pacific Golden Plover.

Birds of several species fitted with a Queensland green leg flag were observed, including the Grey Plover, quite likely the individual that was banded at the roost 6 years ago. No overseas or interstate flagged birds were noted.

As observers trained their optics on the roosting birds, almost all of them suddenly lifted; the reason soon became obvious, a Peregrine Falcon had launched an unsuccessful attack. After evading the falcon, the birds soon settled allowing us to continue our observations.

The following species were seen at the roost site:

Chestnut Teal, Little Pied Cormorant, Striated Heron, Australian Pelican, Pied Oystercatcher, White-headed Stilt, Masked Lapwing, Grey Plover, Pacific Golden Plover, Red-capped Plover, Greater Sand Plover, Lesser Sand Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Far Eastern Curlew, Marsh Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Grey-tailed Tattler, Terek Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, Great Knot, Red-necked Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Silver Gull, Caspian Tern and Little Tern.

by Arthur & Sheryl Keates

Count Programme - Linda Cross

Thank you to all counters who took up the challenge to do an additional count over the New Year period resulting in an extra 53 counts added to the database. It would appear that all counters completed the National Summer Count and all but a couple have been entered onto the website or emailed to me. I would like to thank you all for your dedication to the Count Programme, which at times might feel like you are not contributing much, but let me assure you that the data is very important in plotting long term information on our shorebirds. I realise this summer has been long and hot and a lot of counters (including myself), are ageing and have some health issues, so I know how difficult it is to get yourself motivated into doing the count. We can only hope that some younger people will start stepping into our shoes sooner rather than later.

In the last newsletter I placed a table with wader species for some northern count sites. I have again continued with the results of other count sites (this time Hervey Bay and most sites in the Great Sandy Strait). The count dates are different to reflect the maximum number of species recorded at the sites. I have combined the wader count for Garnet's Lagoons 1 & 2 in Hervey Bay, and you will note the species count and numbers are very low, which is due to the lagoons drying out and virtually dry as I type.

Table below with counts from Hervey Bay and Great Sandy Strait count sites. List as per IOC taxonomic order.

Species	ORCW 28 Jan 17	GAPR 15 Dec 16	GSG1 & 2 12 Nov 16	GSMA 28 Jan 17	GSB1 27 Jan 17	GSB2 27 Jan 17	GSB3 27 Jan 17
Pied Oystercatcher	2	2		53	46	5	6
Sooty Oystercatcher		1					
White-headed Stilt				34			3
Masked Lapwing			14	12	3		5
Pacific Golden Plover	27	9					66
Grey Plover					86	47	
Red-capped Plover	428		2		49		
Lesser Sand Plover	5	79			191		
Greater Sand Plover	33	11			47		
Black-fronted Dotterel							
Black-tailed Godwit				5			
Bar-tailed Godwit	119			2000	280	875	187
Little Curlew							
Whimbrel	12	2		1			1
Far Eastern Curlew	14		2	49	213	60	2
Marsh Sandpiper			4	21			
Common Greenshank			2	5			18
Grey-tailed Tattler		3			1	5	1
Terek Sandpiper							
Ruddy Turnstone		4					
Great Knot	28			1220	88	39	15
Red Knot				4	8		
Sanderling							
Red-necked Stint	41	275			221		
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper			13				26
Curlew Sandpiper	1	7		40	1	4	

ORCW – O'Reagan's Creek Westside, Hervey Bay
 GAPR – Gable's Point Rocks, Hervey Bay
 GSG1 & 2 – Garnet's Lagoons 1 & 2, Hervey Bay
 GSMA – Maaroom
 GSB1, 2 & 3 – Boonooroo (3 sites)

Counters – Marilyn Sweetnam et al.
 Counters – Donald & Lesley Bradley.
 Counter – John Knight.
 Counter – John Bell et al.
 Counters – Bill Price, Peter Tierney & Cecile Espigole.

Counts for the last 2 months have shown that White-headed Stilt have started to return to the coast (although not in great numbers). They have appeared at 16 sites and some counters have mentioned the number of immatures within the flock. Recording this information on the count sheet gives us an indication of the breeding success of the species, so if you have time on your next count, please scan the flock for immature birds and record that information in the comments section next to the species count. The highest count so far has been 257 birds at Kedron Brook Wetland on 02.01.17 followed by 170 at Luggage Point on 29.01.17 and 137 at Kianawah Road Wetland on 28.01.17.

Black-fronted Dotterel is another species returning to the coast and has been recorded at 9 sites, with the highest totals being 8 at Buckley's Hole on 22.01.17, 7 at Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone on 27.01.17 and 5 at Kedron Brook Wetland on 02.01.17.

Other records showing return of species to the coast include 1 Red-kneed Dotterel at Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone on 02.12.16, and although not a wader, Silver Gull have made a return to 10 sites with the largest total being 413 at the Port of Brisbane on 29.01.17 followed by the next highest count of 200 at Wave Break Sand Island on the Gold Coast on 08.02.17. Totals in excess of 100 were recorded at the other 8 sites.

There are no records to date of Red-necked Avocet along the coast, and waterbird species are also fairly low in numbers.

Some unusual sightings extracted from counts include 1 Oriental Pratincole at Endeavour River claypan Cooktown on 12.11.16, 1 Painted Snipe at Lake Samsonvale on 04.12.16, a Pectoral Sandpiper at Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone on 27.01.17 and 1 Wood Sandpiper at Garnett's Lagoon No 1 Hervey Bay on 28.01.17.

A large count of 87 Sanderling were recorded at South Passage sandbank off Moreton Island on 16.02.17 and 12 Sanderling stopped in at Queensland Aluminium Limited in Gladstone on 27.01.17. The following 5 sites also recorded 1 Sanderling each.

O'Reagan's Creek westside Hervey Bay on 04.01.16
 Mirapool Beach Moreton Island on 16.01.17
 Gable's Point Rocks Hervey Bay on 31.01.17

Adair Street Boonooroo (GSB1) on 09.01.17
 Reeders Point Moreton Island on 16.01.17

At O'Reagan's Creek westside in Hervey Bay an unusually high total of 428 Red-capped Plover were counted on 28.01.17, and equally unusual were 12 Red Knot observed on the same day at Pine River Wetland Reserve.

The January counts show significant increases in some species, which suggests that northward migration is well underway. Here are a few examples:

23 Marsh Sandpiper – Deception Bay south – 27.01.17	21 Marsh Sandpiper – Maaroom – 28.01.17
3,883 Red-necked Stint – Port of Brisbane – 29.01.17	1,220 Great Knot – Maaroom – 28.01.17
1,442 Lesser Sand Plover – Port of Brisbane – 29.01.17	237 Whimbrel – Toorbul – 29.01.17
447 Pacific Golden Plover – Port of Brisbane – 29.01.17	
790 Curlew Sandpiper – Lytton No 1 claypan – 28.01.17	
731 Grey-tailed Tattler – Manly Harbour – 28.01.17	
369 Black-tailed Godwit – Pine Rivers Wetland Reserve – 28.01.17	
428 Eastern Curlew – Geoff Skinner Reserve east – 28.01.17	
63 Terek Sandpiper – Manly Harbour – 28.01.17	
133 Grey Plover – combined total for sites 1 & 2 at Boonooroo – 27.01.17	
139 Greater Sand Plover – Mirapool Beach Moreton Island – 16.01.17	
2,440 Curlew Sandpiper – Port of Brisbane – 01.01.17	
213 Ruddy Turnstone – Port of Brisbane – 01.01.17	
40 Common Greenshank – Thangawan Creek Great Sandy Strait – 01.01.17	

Other high totals for species extracted from counts over the last few months were as follows:

3,591 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – 15.11.16	424 Black-tailed Godwit – Dohle's Rocks – 23.11.16
1,320 Great Knot – Maaroom – 31.12.16	555 Great Knot – Toorbul – 31.12.16
50 Marsh Sandpiper – Maaroom – 03.12.16	50 Marsh Sandpiper – Bundaberg Port – 13.11.16
92 Terek Sandpiper – Manly Harbour – 03.12.16	350 Whimbrel – Toorbul – 17.12.16
31 Marsh Sandpiper – Pine River Wetland Reserve – 03.12.16	
122 Greater Sand Plover – Shellgrit Creek entrance Mackay – 28.01.17	
490 Eastern Curlew – Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island – 18.11.16	
28 Common Greenshank – Geoff Skinner Reserve west – 03.12.16	

Breeding records

Beach Stone-curlew – 1 juvenile with adults at Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island on 13.11.16 and a pair possibly nesting or with young, at Mirapool Beach, Moreton Island on 16.01.17.

Pied Oystercatcher – 1 juvenile at Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island on 13.11.16, a 2-week-old chick at the Artificial Roost, Port of Brisbane on 18.11.16 and 11 juveniles in a flock of 25 birds at Toorbul on 29.01.17.

White-headed Stilt – 4 chicks at Kedron Brook Wetlands on 11.11.16. At Kianawah Road Wetland on 12.11.16 one pair was nesting; another pair had a day-old chick and another pair had a 2-week-old chick. At Manly Harbour on 04.02.17, 3 pairs were observed nesting on the island.

Masked Lapwing – nesting at Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island on 13.11.16, 4 chicks at Toorbul 1 km north on 15.11.16, 2 young chicks at Toorbul 1km north on 01.12.16 and 4 young at Toorbul Sandfly Bay on 01.12.16.

Black-fronted Dotterel – 1 chick (possibly 2) at the Artificial Roost, Port of Brisbane on 01.01.17.

Red-capped Plover – nest with 2 eggs at Kinka Wetlands Yeppoon on 12.11.16, 12 pairs with 1 to 2 chicks each at different ages at Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone on 02.12.16, 2 nests on dunes at O'Reagan's Creek westside Hervey Bay on 03.12.16, 2 pair nesting with 2 eggs in each nest at Kinka Wetlands Yeppoon on 03.12.16, 1 chick at Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island on 26.12.16, 2 young at Mirapool Beach Moreton Island on 16.01.17, 2 nests with eggs and 2 pairs with 2 small chicks each at Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone on 27.01.17 and 2 eggs on the road at Kinka Wetlands Yeppoon on 28.01.17

Interesting wader sightings

4 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Bundaberg Port – 01.01.17 and 1 on 29.01.17

2 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Manly Harbour – 31.12.16

1 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Cairns Esplanade – 27.10.16

2 Common Sandpiper – Endeavour River mouth Cooktown – 10.11.16

1 Common Sandpiper – Endeavour River mouth Cooktown – 24.01.17

1 Wandering Tattler – Wickham Point – 01.01.17

1 Wandering Tattler – Gable's Point Rocks Hervey Bay – 31.01.17

5 Sooty Oystercatcher – Wickham Point – 01.01.17

1 Beach Stone-curlew (long time since last sighting) – Tweed River Entrance, New South Wales – 09.12.16

2 Latham's Snipe – Buckley's Hole Bribie Island – 22.01.17

2 Latham's Snipe – Kedron Brook Wetland – 02.01.17

142 Pied Oystercatcher – Port of Brisbane – 29.01.17

188 Red-capped Plover – Bundaberg Port – 29.01.17

Not waders but of interest anyway

2 Eastern Grass Owl – Kedron Brook Wetland – 29.01.17

3 Lesser Frigatebird – Bundaberg Port – 01.01.17

1 Black Bittern – Lillis Island, Tweed Heads, New South Wales – 07.11.16

1 Lewin's Rail – Kedron Brook Wetland – 29.01.17

2 Spotless Crake – Buckley's Hole, Bribie Island – 22.01.17

1 Spotless Crake – Bundaberg Port – 01.01.17

6 Buff-banded Rail (includes 4 newly hatched chicks) – Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island – 12.01.17

4 Buff-banded Rail – Queensland Aluminium Limited, Gladstone – 11.11.16

3 Buff-banded Rail (includes 1 juvenile) – Kinka Wetland, Yeppoon – 12.11.16

12 Brolga (large family group) – Kinka Wetland, Yeppoon – 28.01.17

4 Great-crested Grebe (includes 1 juvenile) – Ewan Maddock Dam – 29.01.17

1 Chestnut Teal (male) – Wave Break Sand Island, Gold Coast – 08.02.17 (first record for site)

1,929 Little Tern – Port of Brisbane – 01.01.17

4 White-winged Black Tern – Noosa River sandbanks – 20.01.17

4,260 Greater Crested Tern – South Passage sandbank off Moreton Island – 16.02.17
 500 Common Tern – Maroochy River sandbanks – 02.02.17
 412 Common Tern – Shellgrit Creek entrance, Mackay – 12.11.16
 6 Eastern Osprey – O'Reagan's Creek, Hervey Bay – 03.12.16
 1 Spotted Harrier – Bundaberg Port – 01.01.17

Unfortunately, due to the numerous articles in some issues of the newsletter, some information does not appear in the paper version, particularly 'Interesting wader sightings', 'Not waders but of interest anyway' sections and leg flag sightings. However, if you have an email address please ask for the electronic version, which has all of the articles that could not be included in the paper version.

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

Snail mail: Phone:

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 me for the Leg Flag Observation Report Form

Happy counting.
 Linda Cross.

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, 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 totalled 1605 in the last three months, the species recorded and the number of observations was as follows. Australian Pied Oystercatcher 17, Bar-tailed Godwit 829, Curlew Sandpiper 65, Eastern Curlew 7, Great Knot 220, Greater Sand Plover 2, Grey Plover 3, Grey-tailed Tattler 282, Lesser Sand Plover 22, Pacific Golden Plover 7, Red-capped Plover 4, Red-necked Stint 54, Ruddy Turnstone 15, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper 13, Terek Sandpiper 7, Whimbrel 57, and White Headed Stilt 1.

They were sighted by Chris Barnes, Sarah Beavis, Diane Blewett, Vicki Campbell, Tony Cotter, Phil Cross, Linda Cross, Detlef Davies, Carol Davies, John Esdaile, Cecile Espigole, Julian Foster, Sandra Harding, Ian Hartley, Mark Hocking, Arthur Keates, Sheryl Keates, Ko Konno, Penn Lloyd, Wayne Matthews, Neale Maynard, Ed Meyer, David Milton, Jan Nargar, Stuart Pickering, William Price, Peter Rothlisberg, Brian Russell, Natalie Sands, Michael Strong, Nicola Udy, Chris Walker, Dez Wells, and Melissa Whitby.

The following is a list of the individually marked green flags that have been seen on these species during this reporting period.

Australian Pied Oystercatcher – AAA, AAC, AAD, AAE, AAT, AAU, AAW, ABC ABE, C4, and EX.

Bar-tailed Godwit – AAA, AAB, AAE, AAH, AAL, AAM, ABX, ACA, ACB, ACH, ACJ, ACK, ACL, ACT, ACX, ACY, ACZ, ADA, ADB, ADC, ADD, ADH, ADN, ADP, ADT, ADW, ADX, ADZ, AEA, AEJ, AEN, AES, AEU, AEV, AHA, AHC, AHL, AHS, AHT, AJD, AJE, AJJ, AJL, AJM, AJS, AJT, AJY, AJZ, AKA, AKB, AKC, AKD, AKS, AKV, AKY, AKZ, ALD, ALH, ALL, ALM, ALN, ALS, ALU, ALZ, AMC, AMK, AML, ANB, ANM, ANW, ANX, ANY, APP, APR, APT, APV, APW, AR, ARA, ARJ, ARK, ARN, ART, ASD, ASE, ASM, ASN, ASR, AST, ASX, ASZ, ATA, ATB, ATD, AVA, AVB, AVC, AVD, AVK, AVM, AVP, AVR, AVU,

AVX, AVZ, AWC, AWE, AX, AXT, AXU, AXV, AXW, AXZ, AYB, AYC, AYD, AYK, AYN, AYR, AYS, AYT, AYV, AYX, AZA, AZB, AZC, AZU, AZV, AZX, BAB, BAK, BAP, BAR, BAX, BBA, BBD, BBE, BBH, BBJ, BBK, BBL, BBM, BBN, BBP, BBR, BBS, BBV, BBY, BBZ, BC, BCC, BCE, BCK, BCX, BCZ, BD, BEB, BJK, BJZ, BKH, BKJ, BKK, BKL, BKP, BKS, BKT, BNA, BNB, BNK, BNL, BNN, BNP, BNS, BNU, BNY, BP, BPB, BPC, BPD, BPF, BPH, BPS, BPU, BPV, BPY, BR, BRJ, BRK, BRL, BRP, BRS, BRT, BTA, BTC, BTD, BTF, BTH, BTL, BTN, BTV, BTY, BUA, BUH, BUK, BX, CAB, CAC, CAD, CAF, CAH, CAJ, CAK, CAL, CAN, CAS, CAT, CAU, CAV, CAX, CAY, CAZ, CBA, CBB, CBC, CBD, CBF, CBH, CBJ, CBK, CBL, CBN, CBP, CBS, CBT, CBU, CBV, CBX, CBY, CCA, CCB, CCC, CCD, CCF, CCH, CCJ, CCK, CCL, CCN, CJA, CJB, CJC, CJD, CJF, CJH, CJJ, CJK, CJL, CJM, CJN, CJS, CM, CPB, CPD, CPM, CS, CU, CX, DN, DS, DX, EC, EJ, EL, EM, EN, ET, EX, FJ, FM, FY, HL, HP, HR, HU, JA, JB, JE, JJ, JP, JR, JX, KM, KN, NC, NV, PA, PC, PD, PE, PJ, PR, PU, RL, AND RP.

Curlew Sandpiper – AAK, AAM, AAP, ABP, ACS, ACZ, ADA, ADJ, AHX, AHZ, AJA, AJD, AJK, AJL, AJR, AJS, AJV, AKH, AKL, AND, ANN, ANU, APD, ASJ, AXA, AYA, AYH, AYP, AYS, AZA, CB, DR.

Eastern Curlew – AHA, AHC, AR.

Great Knot – AAP, ADA, ADC, AED, AEE, AEH, AEK, AEL, AEV, AEX, AHY, AJB, AJH, AJJ, AJN, AJS, AJU, AJW, ALA, ALC, ALE, ALL, ALN, ALS, ALU, ALW, ALX, AMJ, AMK, ATH, ATJ, ATK, ATM, ATN, ATR, ATT, ATU, ATX, ATY, ATZ, AUA, AUJ, AVX, AWA, AWE, AWJ, AYR, AYY, AZB, BAP, BAV, BAZ, BBB, BBD, BBE, BBH, BBK, BBL, BBT, BBX, BBY, BCE, BCT, BCY, BED, BEE, BEH, BEJ, BEK, BEL, BEM, BEN, BER, BES, BET, BEU, BEV, BEW, BEY, BEZ, BHA, BHB, BHC, BLA, BNA, BND, BNS, BRB, BRD, BRP, BRY, BTJ, BVK, CMA, CMJ, CMP, CMY, CNB, CND, CNN, CNS, and NA.

Greater Sand Plover – flag could not be read.

Grey Plover – JT.

Grey-Tailed Tattler – AAC, AAK, AAR, AAY, ABD, ABN, ACB, ACD, ACH, ACJ, ACK, ACN, ACW, ACX, ACY, ADH, AKB, AKJ, AKR, AKW, AKX, ALC, ANA, ANJ, ANN, ANT, APD, APL, APP, APS, APU, APV, APY, AR, ARD, ARH, ARJ, ARL, ARP, ARV, ARW, ARY, ASE, ASL, ASU, ASV, ASY, ATB, ATC, ATD, ATE, ATL, ATP, ATU, ATV, ATW, AUD, AUJ, AUN, AUS, AUT, AUU, AUV, AUW, AUZ, AVJ, AVN, AWU, AWV, AWW, AWX, AWY, AWZ, AXB, AXE, AXH, AXP, AXR, AXS, AXT, AXX, AXY, AYA, AZJ, AZP, AZS, AZU, AZV, AZX, AZY, AZZ, BAC, BAD, BAJ, BAM, BDB, BDD, BDH, BDJ, BDK, BDL, BDN, BHE, BT, BTA, BXC, BXD, BXF, BXH, BXL, BXN, BXP, BXS, BXT, CCA, CD, DAC, DAD, DX, EN, FA, H7, HK, HV, JN, JY, JZ, KV, KZ, LN, RD and RL.

Lesser Sand Plover – AJZ, AKX, ALU, ANP, ANV, APT, AST and AYT.

Pacific Golden Plover – AVS, BTA, DAA and DAB.

Red-capped Plover – CP and CR.

Red-necked Stint – A5, B9, F2, F6, F8, H2, H9, J5, K3, K7, L3, N3, N6, P6, PD, SJ, SK, SV, SX, TT, TY, U4, UK, UZ, V2, V6, V9, VL, VS, VZ, X9, XL, XZ, Y4, Y8, Z2, Z6 and ZZ.

Ruddy Turnstone – ABX, AJB, AKW, AKX, ALC, AXY, AYH, EX, and HE.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – AEL, AKB, AKJ, AMH, AXJ, CCD and CCF.

Terek Sandpiper – ACK, ALB and HD.

Whimbrel – ABT, BXA, BXB, BXD, BXF, BXH, BXN, BXV, BYB, BYD, BYJ, BYN, BYP, BYU, CJX, CJY, CKA, DAF, DAM, DAN, DAP, DAS, DAV, DAX, DAY, DJA, DJC, DJD, DJF, DJJ, DJM, DJP, DJS, FV, UH and UP.

White-headed Stilt – AAZ.

Green leg flag sightings seen Interstate

Australian Pied Oystercatcher

(A6 on flag) – Iluka NSW – Observer unknown -2.2.2017

(A8 on flag) – Richmond River Ballina NSW – Bob Moffatt – 2.1.2017

Green leg flag sightings seen Overseas

Japan

Grey-tailed Tattler

ADS on flag - 9.5.2016 – Fijimae Tidal Flat Nahoya-shi Aichi-ken – Kenichi Kondo

BWC on flag – 27.9.2016 – Mouth of Kumode River Matsusaka-shi Mie-ken – Michinobu Nakatsuka

New Zealand

Bar-tailed Godwit

AJN on flag – 28.12.2015 – Miranda South Auckland – Tony Habraken

AJN on flag – 2, & 15.3.2016 – Miranda South Auckland – Ian Southey

ASJ on flag – 3.1 & 27.2.2017 – Mataitai South Auckland – Tony Habraken

DAA on flag – 31.1.2016 – Big Sand Island Kaipara Harbour – Tony Habraken

AHH on flag – 28 Feb, 4 & 13 Mar 2016 – Omaha Sandspit North Auckland – Marie Ward

AHH on flag – 10.3.2016 – Omaha Sandspit North Auckland – Sue Cook
 AHH on flag – 18.11.2016 – Omaha Sandspit North Auckland – G Pulham
 AHH on flag – 27.11.2016 – Omaha Sandspit North Auckland – Marie Ward & Sue Cook
 ABW on flag – 27.11.2016 – Omaha Sandspit North Auckland – Marie Ward & Sue Cook
 AJK on flag – 12.3.2016 – Miranda South Auckland – Ian Southey
 FX on flag – 24.10 & 20.11.2016 – Clifton Road Whitford South Auckland – Tony Habraken
 BRB on flag – 14.11.2016 – Papakanui Spit Kaipara Harbour – Tony Habraken
 BJK on flag – 26.12.2016 – Clifton Road Whitford South Auckland – Tony Habraken
 ALB on flag – 2.1.2017 – Karaka Manukau Harbour Auckland – Tony Habraken

Yellow (Western Australia) leg flag sightings

Great Knot

1 plain flag – 12.11.2016 – Maaroom – Chris Barnes

Orange (Victoria) leg flag sightings

Bar-tailed Godwit

CBB on flag – 20.10.2016 – Toorbul – Dez Wells
 CHH on flag – 19.1.2017 – Oyster Point Cleveland – Penn Lloyd
 1 with plain flag – 20.10.2016 – Toorbul – Dez Wells
 1 with plain flag – 28.10.2016 – Toorbul – Dez Wells
 1 with plain flag – 29.11.2016 – Toorbul – Detlef & Carol Davies

Great Knot

1 with plain flag – 26.9.2016 – Cairns Esplanade – Jun Matsui
 1 with plain flag – 15.11.2016 – Toorbul – Dez Wells
 1 with plain flag – 21.11.2016 – Toorbul – Linda Cross
 1 with plain flag – 29.11.2016 – Toorbul – Detlef & Carol Davies
 1 with plain flag – 16.12.2016 – Toorbul – Cecile Espigole & William Price

Curlew Sandpiper

DCV on flag – 24.1.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates

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

Great Knot

U04 on white flag – 26.9.2016 – Cairns Esplanade – Jun Matsui
 T58 on white flag – 28.10 & 15.11.2016 – Toorbul – Dez Wells
 T58 on white flag – 18.11.2016 – Kakadu Beach Bribie Island – Michael Strong
 J62 on white flag – 23.11.2016 – Manly / Lota Esplanade – Arthur Keates
 J62 on white flag – 15.12.2016 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates
 J62 on white flag – 10.1.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates & Melissa Whitby
 J62 on white flag – 24.1.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates
 J62 on white flag – 7.2.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates
 J74 on white flag – 26.12.2016 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates
 J74 on white flag – 10.1.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates & Melissa Whitby
 J74 on white flag – 24.1 & 7.2.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates
 1 plain flags – 26.12.2016 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates
 1 plain flags – 28.12.2016 – Mouth Black River Townsville – John Lowry
 4 plain flags – 29.12.2016 – Mouth Black River Townsville – John Lowry
 1 plain flags – 10.1.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates & Melissa Whitby
 1 plain flags – 7.2.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates

Green over Blue (Jiangsu, China) leg flag sightings

Red-necked Stint

1 plain flag right tibia – 11.11.2016 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates

Lesser Sand Plover

1 plain flag left tibia – 13.11.2016 – Port of Brisbane – David Milton
 1 plain flag left tibia – 10.1.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates & Melissa Whitby
 1 plain flag left tibia – 7.2.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates

Green over Orange (Yalu Jiang Nature Reserve, China) leg flag sightings

Bar-tailed Godwit

Also blue over white band left tarsus, yellow over yellow band right tarsus and metal band left tibia
 20 & 28.10.2016 – Toorbul – Dez Wells
 21.11.2016 – Toorbul – Linda Cross

29.11.2016 – Toorbul – Detlef & Carol Davies
 1.12.2016 – Toorbul – Dez Wells
 14.1.2017 – Toorbul – Arthur Keates
 29.1.2017 – Kakadu Beach Bribie Island – Michael Strong
 5.2.2017 – Toorbul – Mark Hocking
 12.2.2017 – Kakadu Beach Bribie Island – Michael Strong, Jan Nargar & Julian Foster

Bar-tailed Godwit

1 plain flag only - 29.9.2016 – Brisbane Airport Mudflat – Penn Lloyd
 1 plain flag only – 16.12.2016 – Toorbul – Cecile Espigole & William Price

Green over Blue (Jiangsu, China) leg flag sightings**Red-necked Stint**

Blue left tibia, green left tarsus – 1.1.2017 – Port of Brisbane – David Edwards & Robert Bush

Yellow over White (Sakhalin Island Russia) leg flag sightings**Great Knot**

12.11.2016 – Maaroom – Chris Barnes

Black over Yellow (Kamchatka Russia) leg flag sightings**Great Knot**

L2 on yellow flag – 29.12.2016 – Black River Townsville – John Lowry
 EH on yellow flag – 2.1.2017 – Bushland Beach Townsville - Ed Pierce

White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings**Bar-tailed Godwit**

Plain white flag – 13.11.2016 – Bundaberg Port Swamp – Nev Capell

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

28.10.2016 – Toorbul – Dez Wells
 12.11.2016 – Maaroom – Chris Barnes

Grey-tailed Tattler

24.1.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates

Bar-tailed Godwit

16.11.2016 – Port of Brisbane – Arthur Keates

Blue & White (Japanese) leg flag sightings**Grey-tailed Tattler**

315 on blue flag – 24.1.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates
 315 on blue flag – 7 & 9.2.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates
 191 on blue flag – 7.2.2017 – Manly Harbour – Arthur Keates
 311 on blue flag – 12.2.2017 – Zilzie Headland Rockhampton – Barry Ellis

Red-necked Stint

195 on blue flag (left tibia), white left tarsus – 13.2.2017 – Shellgrit Creek Mackay – Gerry Woodruff

Other wader leg flag and banded sightings

None reported

Pied Oystercatcher Yellow leg flag (2 digit) 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.

S5 on flag – 19.11.2016 – Dunwich North Stradbroke Island – Mary Barram
 C4 on flag – 18.1.2017 – St Helena Island Pier – Robert Bush & Arthur Keates
 Yellow flag unread – 18.1.2017 – St Helena Island North – Arthur Keates & Natalie Sands

Other leg flag sightings and banded birds**Caspian Tern Orange flag (Victoria)**

E6 on flag, left tarsus - 15.10.2016 – Buckley's Hole Sandbar – Dez Wells:

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER www.waders.org.au

The Official Quarterly Publication of
Queensland Wader Study Group

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<u>LEG FLAG COORDINATOR</u>	Phil Cross
<u>MERCHANDISE</u>	Position suspended.

BQ PRESIDENT **Rae Clark** Email president@birdsqueensland.org.au

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

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Forward application to:

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5 Stanmere St,
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QLD 4152

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 **May 18th 2017**

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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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, Rae Clark
 Secretary, Robert Bush
 Treasurer, Judith Giles

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treasurer@birdsqueensland.org.au

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.

Dog Disturbance on Shorelines

When people see dogs chasing or disturbing shorebirds,
 Phone the BCC Call Centre 3403 8888 and request a RAPID RESPONSE TEAM be sent.
 Add the number to your mobile.

QWSG MERCHANDISE

MERCHANDISE OFFICER

After many years of valued help Viki Campbell is unable to continue as our Merchandise Officer and has stood down as of the end of last year.

We have been unable to obtain anyone interested in this position, so the Committee has decided at this stage to suspend the position of Merchandise Officer. The stock we have at the moment will be slowly run down.

However, if you are interested, the job requires purchasing and obviously selling our stock. At the moment there is not a lot on hand so the successful applicant can make this position their own, with new ideas etc.

It is not necessary to be on the Committee to hold this position.
 If you are interested please contact the QWSG for more details.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined recently:

Mr/s Peter & Leonie DAVIES, Mr Richard FORD,

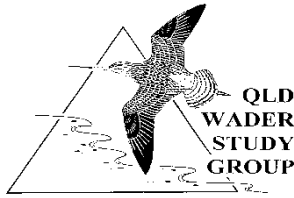
Mr Ko KONNO, Mr/s John & Deborah MERTON, Mr Sean NOLAN,

Ms Ekaterina (Katya) OVSYANIKOVA, Ms Carla PERKINS, Mr Mike SMITH,

Ms Margaret WORTHINGTON, Mengxiong WU

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.



Count Activities – 2017

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Program 2017

Sat 25 th Mar	2.30m at 07:35	Sat 29 th Apr	2.07m at 11:34
Sat 27 th May	2.06m at 10:31	Sat 24 th Jun	2.01m at 09:25 National Winter Count
Sat 22 nd Jul	1.92m at 08:20	Sat 26 th Aug	1.99m at 12:33
Sat 23 rd Sep	2.14m at 11:23	Sat 21 st Oct	2.26m at 10:21
Sat 18 th Nov	2.33m at 09:24	Sat 16 th Dec	2.32m at 08:25

Also, for 6 months of counts there are quite high tides, but unfortunately these cannot be avoided. Please ensure you get to your sites before the waders are pushed off the roosts. This will probably mean that you do the count on an incoming tide before the peak of the tide, when possibly the birds have gone.

Port of Brisbane Count Dates 2017

Sun 26 th Mar	2.39m at 08:19	Meet 06:30	Sun 30 th Apr	1.93m at 12:26	Meet 10:35
Sun 28 th May	1.98m at 11:23	Meet 09:35	Sun 25 th Jun	1.98m at 10:18	Meet 08:30 Nat Winter Count
Sun 23 rd Jul	1.95m at 09:16	Meet 07:25	Sun 27 th Aug	1.94m at 13:16	Meet 11:25
Sun 24 th Sep	2.10m at 11:59	Meet 10:10	Sun 22 nd Oct	2.25m at 10:55	Meet 11:05
Sun 19 th Nov	2.35m at 09:58	Meet 08:10	Sun 17 th Dec	2.37m at 09:30	Meet 07:40

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).....

EmailFax.....

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