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The Latham's Snipe Project Migration and Movement Studies

Birgita Hansen August 2019

The Latham's Snipe project began in 2014 as a discrete set of surveys aimed at investigating snipe use of urban and non-urban wetlands in south-west Victoria. Since that time it has expanded into a much larger research program aimed at determining patterns in abundance and distribution, habitat use, movement and migration. The project has two major field components – the national surveys and the capture-based work aimed at determining movements and migration. This article focuses on the findings of the migration investigation.
Three approaches have used to obtain movement data from Latham's Snipe (1) geolocators, (2) radio tracking, and (3) satellite tracking. The intention of using these different approaches was to try and obtain movement data at different spatial scales relevant to snipe conservation. At the fine scale, there is very little data about daily movements of snipe between their daytime roost sites, and their night time foraging areas. Radio tracking using VHR transmitters, deployed at a relatively well-studied site in south-west Victoria, was used to address this knowledge gap. At the trans-equatorial scale, migration pathways have been previously inferred based on temporal changes in abundance across the distribution of the species. Geolocators and satellite transmitters were all trialled to collect empirical evidence about actual migration routes and stopover sites.

Fine-scale movements
Radio tracking was carried out over two years in Port Fairy (SW Victoria) and in Canberra. Forty-four 1.5g VHF transmitters were deployed over two seasons in Port Fairy (17 in 2016-2017 and 27 in 2017-2018). Detection rates were higher in the first year than the second (82% versus 44%), but sufficient data were obtained to determine the primary night time foraging locations of snipe captured in Port Fairy. The majority of night time detections were made at two nearby, heavily-grazed wetlands <2km away. In all cases, those birds were detected during daylight hours back at their original roost wetlands (Figure 1).
Radio tracking in Canberra was less successful as it was very difficult to detect transmitters due to obstruction of radio signals from wetlands (caused by muddy, vegetated hummocks in the wetland) and interference from nearby infrastructure (e.g. powerlines).

Large-scale movements
Investigation into migration routes began with the deployment of light-level geolocators on snipe in Port Fairy. Geolocators are data logging devices, so birds must be recaptured to retrieve the logger and download the light data. The light data can be used along with the date and time data to reconstruct the latitude and longitude of the bird, however, the precision of the spatial data is very coarse (typically 100-300km error). Nevertheless, they are useful for long-distance migrants and are relatively cheap compared to satellite transmitters.

Fourteen loggers were deployed in the first year in Port Fairy (2015-2016) and another 25 deployed in the second year (2016-2017). In addition, 15 loggers were deployed on snipe at Jerrabomberra wetlands in 2017-2018. Unfortunately, only three loggers were ever retrieved and the battery on one of the Port Fairy loggers failed, meaning that a full migration cycle of data was only available from one bird recaptured at each location. This was despite both resighting of other flagged birds, and recapture of non-geolocator birds between years.

The migration data from the two loggers revealed fairly similar migration routes, despite the birds differing in sex and being recaptured in different years (female snipe "T0" was recaptured in Port Fairy 2016-2017 and male snipe "P3" was recaptured in Canberra 2018-2019). Both birds migrated to and from Japan directly across the Pacific Ocean (Figure 2). In both cases they made stopovers either in central Japan or on the island of Papua New Guinea, although the exact locations of stopover sites is not able to be determined. T0 made migration fame by completing a non-stop flight from northern Japan to central coastal Queensland in approximately three days. At an average speed of around 95 km/h, this is one of the fastest wader migrations on record. P3 may have made his own fame, by appearing to go to the breeding grounds on the island of Sakhalin (Russia) (Figure 2).

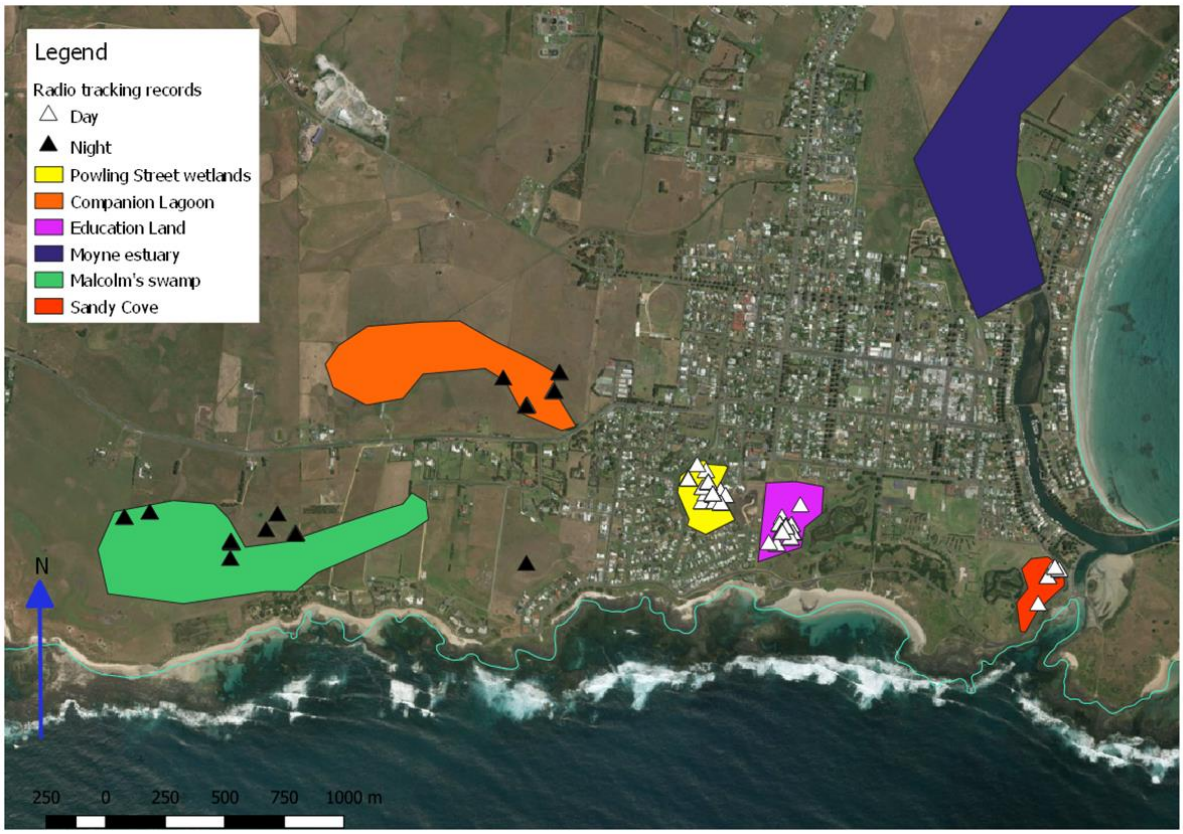

Figure 1. Map showing day time (white triangles) and night time (black triangles) VHF fixes of tagged Latham's Snipe in the Port Fairy region (south-west Victoria) during the 2017-2018 season. Map copyright Andrew Crossley and The Latham's Snipe Project.

In 2017, a trial was conducted at Jerrabomberra wetlands using Microwave Telemetry 5g solar Platform Transmitter Terminals (PTTs). Three transmitters were deployed, but unfortunately only a single bird began migration and the signal was lost after it reached the Gwydir wetlands in northern New South Wales (orange star in Figure 2). However, this is the first indication that snipe might be staging at this location. A second trial was initiated in early 2019 using 4g Lotek PinPoint Argos GPS transmitters. These devices have the advantage of being slightly lighter and also far more accurate (50m error compared to approximately 1km error with the PTTs). Only a single tag was deployed on a female captured at Jerrabomberra wetlands. She remained at the wetlands for about a month after release, using a nearby turf farm at night time. She left Canberra on March 8 and migrated to the cane sugar district south of Mackay (Figure 2). She spent 11 days in this area before flying direct to Papua New Guinea where she then spent approximately 1 week in the highlands (between 2500-3000m) (Figure 2). Her signal was lost after this.

The collective findings from both the geolocator and satellite tracking trials were extremely enlightening, despite the small samples sizes and incomplete satellite migration data. It is clear that some snipe migrate directly across the Pacific Ocean, rather than via the Philippines (which has been proposed in the past). It is also clear that south-east and central Queensland, and the island of Papua New Guinea are important staging areas. Unfortunately, the exact location of most staging areas is still unknown. The next step is to establish exactly where key staging areas are in Queensland and attempt to determine characteristics of those locations that can be used to predict where other staging sites might occur. Most importantly, knowing the land tenure of staging sites is critical to conserving an adequate network of stopover sites for Latham's Snipe.
Latham's Snipe is considered to be declining on the breeding grounds in Japan. It is therefore imperative we identify conservation areas that require protection or special management to support the species. Satellite tracking trials using the PinPoint Argos devices will be continued over the 2019-2020 season. It is hoped that combining these tracking data with on-ground surveys and monitoring, that key staging sites can be located.
Anyone who is interested in participating in this study, or helping find and monitor staging sites, please contact Birgita (b.hansen@federation.edu.au). Your expertise is desperately required!

Acknowledgements: Birgita would like to thank her project colleagues Jodie Honan, Richard Chamberlain, Lori Gould, Andrew Crossley, David Wilson and Don Stewart, as well as all the volunteers that have kindly contributed their time toward the Latham's Snipe Project catching (and counting) activities. The radio tracking study forms part of Andrew Crossley's honours research at Federation University (Ballarat).

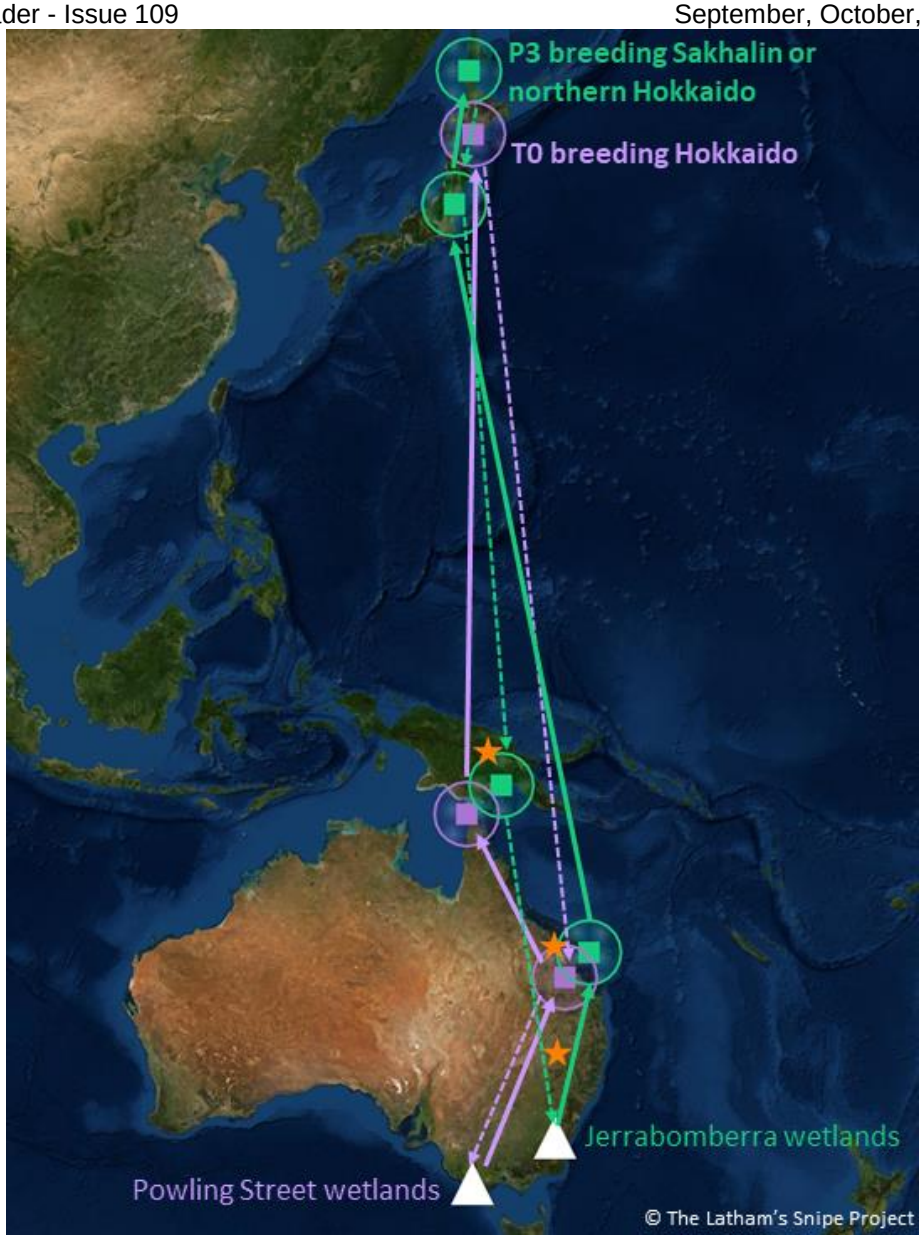

Figure 2. Map showing a simplified summary of migration routes and stopover locations from two full geolocator tracks (P3 in green and T0 in purple) and stopover sites from two partial satellite transmitter tracks (orange stars). Capture / recapture locations are represented by white triangles.

Leg flagged Latham's Snipe photographed at Jerrabomberra wetlands. Photo courtesy of Con Boekel.

Against The Odds - The Masked Lapwing Family

By Jill Praeger

Imagine our surprise when sitting on our back deck in suburban Manly West around mid-November, my husband and I spied (after pulling out the binoculars and having the 'Is it really?' conversation) a small mottled egg amongst the leaf litter on the tin roof of our neighbours shed right on our fence line. It was then that we paid more attention to the Masked Lapwing parading up and down and intermittently squatting down in the hot, hot sun….saying nothing of what the temperature must have been on the tin roof!!

We had noticed the lapwing in the lead up to that day with no idea what was about to unfold. The leaf litter consisted of black pine needles blown on to the roof from the tree in our yard so it was a bit spikey and quite sparse……a relatively safe place to bring up a family when compared with the ground level frequented by the 3 neighbourhood cats. The nursery she, presumably, had chosen though had no shade, no water, very limited pickings and was very exposed to the western sun and winds. However she was not alone, her loyal mate stood by and relieved the egg sitting at various intervals so mum could fly off in search of food and water and stretch her wings.

We watched and waited with great interest and sure enough 2 days later another egg appeared. The days rolled on and just as we thought that's it….. twins it is, another smaller egg appeared in another 2 days making 3 eggs in the clutch. This was getting quite exciting for us….a real life bird drama from the comfort of our deck chairs. Would they all survive the challenges ahead? We were not feeling that confident that these eggs would make it to hatching. The weather, the crows, the magpies, the grey butcherbirds, the magpie larks, noisy miners and common mynas and the cats all frequenting the area and this little family was very exposed to all.

So now the shared responsibilities started in earnest with turns of sitting on the clutch and flying off for supplies. Changeover was very orderly. As the relieving bird flew in there was a brief period while it seemed as though the birds took their time to consider for safety then it would be only a matter of seconds between a very civilized change over. No fluster, no drama, feathers were fluffed out, shuffling over the eggs to settle ……..done and in seconds the relieved bird would take flight. This routine went on for over 3 weeks with incredible attentiveness by both birds.

Showing exemplary parenting skills these birds protected their eggs through around 4 weeks of many challenges. They survived a couple of very blustery storms, in which we thought for sure the nest would be blown off the roof and down the road and some hot, hot days which we thought would surely cook those eggs. Calls were made when assistance was needed at the nest and there were times when one bird looked like it was being a decoy drawing the attention away. When unwanted company came just a bit too close, in a flash that spur on the wing was exposed and put into action with the desired success.

There was one night we heard both birds squawking and making quite a racket. Our hearts sank!! The torch did not reveal the intruder ….possibly either a possum or cat? We thought our eggs may be gone by morning and we had begun to get quite attached to them. But a check at first light we were amazed at the tenaciousness of these plovers still sitting serenely on 3 mottled eggs.

Finally the day came when the first of the fluffy chicks emerged ….very, very cute!! Successive chicks emerged over the next 2 days and we were entertained by the most amazing bird instincts those little chicks were born with. When a crow or other bird flew over or came too close the lapwing would give a low guttural sound and instantly those chicks would drop flat to the ground and appear to become camouflaged amongst leaf litter and silvery colour of the tin roof…..quite amazing to see. In the following days both parents were very vigilant and when a soft feathery wing covering wasn't over them those chicks would roam around the roof pecking at what they could find and I am thinking …not much! Meanwhile care was taken by the parents to steer them away from the edge and alert at any perceived danger. Now that the chicks were hatched the neighbour's cat was hounded back indoors by the squawking, dive bombing birds whenever she tried to venture outside.

On the 3rd day after the last and smallest chick had hatched by early morning, our neighbours witnessed the parents, at around 5.00pm, make a flying exit off the tin roof onto the ground and apparently walk their little family out of their yard and up to the end of the street, around 100 metres or so. The drop from the tin roof was quite considerable and I was told that often the landing would be too much for the chicks long thin legs and could result in a broken leg. But against all odds ……they survived!

We were able to find them the next day feeding amongst the grasses on the verge of the road and to this day we believe we are seeing 2 of those same grown up chicks around our neighbourhood. It seems that maybe it was that third and smallest chick became prey to a predator. Who knows …they all look the same. We have a new respect for these amazing Masked Lapwings surviving 'Against the odds' in our urban back yards.

Queensland Leg Flagged Lesser Sand Plover

by Arthur Keates

On 17 March 2007, the first engraved leg flag (**ELF**) was fitted to a Lesser Sand Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*) in Queensland. At the end of April 2019, 320 ELFs had been fitted to Lesser Sand Plovers; the majority since 2017 (95 in 2017 and 98 in 2019). The ELFs have been fitted at the Port of Brisbane (138), Geoff Skinner Reserve, Wellington Point (2) and Manly Harbour (180). Five birds were recaptures: 2 individuals previously had been fitted with a plain green leg flag (**PLF**) and 3 others were fitted with replacement ELFs.

At the end of May 2019, QWSG's leg flag database had 163 entries for reports of observations of PLFs fitted to Lesser Sand Plover and 1056 entries for reports of observations of **ELFs**. However, over 40 of those ELF reports are for unread, partially read or misread flags.

In Australia, there are old records of observations of leg flagged birds (all PLFs) of one bird in Cairns and one bird, or possibly 2 birds, at Ballina, NSW. All other reports are of observations in Moreton Bay and, with very few exceptions, all at sites within 7 km of the banding site. Of course, the high number of reports from the Wynnum-Manly-Wellington Pt area reflect observer effort and the birds' site fidelity.

Reports of observations of leg flagged birds at sites in the northern hemisphere of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway account for only 10 of the records in the database, 2 of which are almost certainly repeat observations of the same individual. The only report of an ELF is of **DY** in Taiwan on 7th April 2011. In fact this is the only observation of this bird after its banding at Manly Harbour on 30th October 2010. Also on northern migration, there are reports of 2 PLFs in Taiwan and one from mainland China. From Japan, come reports of observations of a PLF:

at Yatsu Tidal Flats, Narashino-Shi, Chiba in August 1998 and 1999 - a bird on southern migration; and
at Sanbanze Tidal Flats, Funaba-Shi, Chiba in early May 1996 and 1999 - a bird on northern migration.

So far as longevity of the species is concerned, we know reports of an observation of a PLF observed on 20th February 2019 relates to a bird at least 13 years old because the last PLF fitted to a Lesser Sand Plover was in mid-January 2007. Moreover, the following table shows the ages, when last observed, of some of the oldest known individuals fitted with an ELF (all of which were aged 2 or more years when originally banded):

ELF	Original Banding Date	Recapture Date	Last Observation Date	Age at Last Observation Date
BUD (previously a plain flag)	19 Dec 2006	28 Oct 2017	6 Apr 2019	15+ years
FD (previously a plain flag)	1 Dec 1996	30 Oct 2010	30 Oct 2010	14+ years
AVS (previously DL)	30 Oct 2010	28 Oct 2017	23 Mar 2018	9+ years
BAA (previously DU)	30 Oct 2010	28 Oct 2017	15 Apr 2018	9+ years
ALR (previously FE)	30 Oct 2010	1 Mar 2015	26 Mar 2019	10+ years
HZ	3 Apr 2011		2 Feb 2019	10+ years
ABJ	12 Feb 2012		17 Feb 2019	9+ years

Again, I thank those who report their observations of leg flags and Phil Cross for his diligence in recording them in QWSG's leg flag database.

Lesser Sand Plover CVD prior to northern migration in late March 2018. Photo: A Keates

Port of Brisbane Count Results 2018 by Linda Cross

With 16 years of extensive counting now conducted by QWSG for the Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd (PBPL) at the Port of Brisbane complex, there have been significant records going into the database. As with previous years, the counts were conducted the day after the scheduled monthly count set for the QWSG count programme.

The methodology for the counts has continued as before with numbers being listed under the appropriate habitat the birds were observed using: dry open area, wet margin, broken ground and bund wall. The overall count for the complex in 2018 was 51,253 waders, 4,882 terns/gulls and 5,537 waterbirds/raptors which do not include the figures for the Visitors Centre Lake (167 waders, 2 terns/gulls and 8,226 waterbirds/raptors). However, these figures of course are not the number of birds using the site at any one time, but the aggregate of the monthly totals. No count was conducted in October due to bad weather creating unstable conditions within the complex.

The following table provides the total migratory and resident waders recorded at the complex over the last 16 years.
Note: These figures do not include the Visitors Centre Lake site.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
2018	9969	4727	5899	4670	1825	864	1145	1110	4551	No count	8867	7626	51253
2017	8825	12479	7291	2000	2373	1392	2003	2179	4459	No count	8187	10697	61885
2016	5913	6386	6528	2793	4103	No count	1532	1356	4581	7544	8287	4911	53934
2015	9132	9233	14299	5618	3380	1737	2089	3352	7460	9994	9653	9953	85900
2014	8701	7673	6520	4809	1075	1022	1513	1839	7007	8145	7329	5567	61200
2013	No count	5897	7377	4312	4553	3989	2709	2934	4089	7793	7331	6506	57490
2012	6214	6676	6476	1335	1624	No count	1098	1267	2862	9461	10029	8389	55431
2011	No count	10173	No count	8108	2112	1552	1236	1488	2004	5430	8738	No count	40841
2010	7345	7099	6709	2864	1256	2145	1648	2568	5205	6942	5904	NC	49685
2009	10072	13243	7192	2293	NC	1200	1245	2439	4372	6478	6182	8003	62719
2008	5179	8935	4394	4204	2202	2793	2700	2724	5468	4069	6617	8286	57571
2007	8853	5264	8307	1120	1989	1543	1752	1629	3885	7609	6165	5664	53780
2006	12323	10573	7055	4230	2142	1969	2250	2635	5296	8051	8995	7514	73033
2005	4751	5609	3572	3317	2162	3034	2436	2096	3790	6173	6745	7731	51416
2004	11650	4528	7398	1607	2416	1617	1328	2410	2974	6026	5976	8194	56124
2003	7445	6922	6126	4021	2286	2107	2041	1720	4466	4118	8054	7996	57302

Overall total wader figures for 2018 were less than 2017 and the June wader total was the lowest count (864), that has been recorded since extensive counting was started in 2003.

The following table provides the numbers for migratory and resident waders, terns, waterbirds and raptors for the complex and Visitors Centre Lake each month for 2018.

2018 Month	Port Waders	Port Terns/ Gulls	Port Waterbirds/Raptors	Lake Waders	Lake Terns/ Gulls	Lake Waterbirds/ Raptors	Totals
January	9969	519	250	2	1	303	**11044**
February	4727	1070	176	7	0	498	**6478**
March	5899	470	222	0	0	293	**6884**
April	4670	199	303	3	0	340	**5515**
May	1825	246	2692	2	0	476	**5241**
June	864	191	597	0	1	973	**2626**
July	1145	144	454	1	0	970	**2714**
August	1110	152	203	3	0	1174	**2642**
September	4551	299	115	5	0	1642	**6612**
October	No count	No count	No count	No count	No count	No count	No count
November	8867	1021	367	21	0	765	**11041**
December	7626	551	158	123	0	811	**9269**
Totals	**51253**	**4862**	**5537**	**167**	**2**	**8245**	**70066**

Comments on individual count sites for 2018 are as follows:

R3 – This large riverside paddock attracted a few more thousand waders than 2017 which was probably due to the decline in waders using BS3 site. The site recorded the highest wader count 5 months during the year and in November it recorded the highest count of 5,734 waders for the whole year, which was nearly 65% of the total waders recorded on all sites for that month. Grey Plover was recorded on site for 4 months of the year, with the highest count being 44 in both November and December and Curlew Sandpiper were recorded during 9 months of the year with large counts in September (1,716), November (2,088) and December (917). Other interesting counts included 3 Broad-billed Sandpiper and 926 Lesser Sand Plover in February, 377 Red-necked Avocet in September, 472 Grey-tailed Tattler and 1,834 Red-necked Stint in November and 469 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in December. Of interest was a count of 19 Black-tailed Godwit on site in March, which is not only uncommon, but a large number for this species at the Port complex. The site again attracted the highest counts of terns and gulls for 7 months of the year and some waterbirds were seen on site for most of the year.

C2 – This central site continues to be filled with sand for development and bird numbers were low for the year. Small numbers of Red-capped Plover and Red-necked Stint were the main species using the site. Terns and gulls were recorded on the site for 2 months, but no waterbirds were recorded for the whole of the year.

C3 – This second central site had a couple of thousand less waders than the previous year and recorded the highest wader counts for 4 months during the first half of the year. In January the site recorded the second highest count of 5,437 waders for the year, which was nearly 55% of the total waders recorded on all sites. Some species numbers from the January count included 206 Pied Oystercatcher, 2,097 Curlew Sandpiper, 566 Great Knot, 72 Greater Sand Plover, 646 Lesser Sand Plover and 1,313 Red-necked Stint. Other interesting records were 213 Pied Oystercatcher in February, 755 Red-necked Avocet in May and 547 Pacific Golden Plover in November. The central paddock sites are favoured by Red- capped Plover and they were recorded 9 months of the year with a few reasonable counts of 130 in April, 89 in May, 165 in June, 136 in July and 61 in September. In May 28 Double-banded Plover were counted and increased to 36 during the July count. Only small numbers of terns, gulls and waterbirds are recorded on site.

BS1 – The first of the bayside paddocks has continued to record very low numbers of waders, but counts have doubled since 2017. The highest count for the year was 248 in November, of which 144 were Far Eastern Curlew that were probably displaced from the claypan during dry conditions. A few other waders occasionally used the site, with Red-capped Plover recorded in small numbers for 10 months of the year.

BS2 – Wader numbers declined overall by 40% compared to the previous year. December produced the highest count of 1,537 birds, which included 369 Curlew Sandpiper, 180 Greater Sand Plover, 386 Lesser Sand Plover, 106 Pacific Golden Plover, 473 Red-necked Stint and 23 Ruddy Turnstone. Pacific Golden Plover used the site for 6 months of the year and recorded a high count of 366 in February. Also, in February 4 Broad-billed Sandpiper were among a flock of 379 Red-necked Stint. Double-banded Plover were recorded on site 4 months of the year with the highest count being 14 in July. Only 1 month (February), attracted a few species of terns and gulls.

BS3 – In 2017 this site recorded the highest wader count 7 months during the year but has dramatically reduced during 2018 with more than a 92% decline in waders using the site. Numbers struggled to make double figures for 7 months of the year and only January and September had anything of interest with 645 and 317 respectively.

Highlights were 79 Broad-billed Sandpiper, 413 Red-necked Stint in January and 207 Curlew Sandpiper in September. The decline in waders using this site was possibly due to lack of water within the site, and waders preferring other areas within the complex, such as R3.

BS4 – The last of the bayside sites was unchanged regarding wader numbers, with totals ranging from low to high hundreds for the year. Grey-tailed Tattler continued to frequent the site for 6 months of the year with some large counts of 1,259 in January, 545 in February, 375 in November and 710 in December. Only 2 Terek Sandpiper were recorded within the tattler flocks for January and December. Other records of interest include 164 Pied Oystercatcher and 13 Grey Plover in March, 36 Red-necked Avocet in August, 30 Ruddy Turnstone and 38 Broad-billed Sandpiper in December. A species recorded only a couple of times previously at the Port complex (Sanderling), was recorded on site in November. A small number of terns, gulls and waterbirds were recorded during most of the year.

FPE Outer – This site facing out onto Moreton Bay is the largest site within the complex and has an expansive area of water. Wader numbers increased slightly which was due to recording the highest count of 3.623 in April (77% of the total count for the month), which was made up of 3 Broad-billed Sandpiper, 720 Curlew Sandpiper, 40 Greater Sand Plover, 300 Grey-tailed Tattler, 660 Lesser Sand Plover, 1,430 Red-necked Stint, 10 Ruddy Turnstone and 460 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. Numbers for the rest of the year were quite low. The uncommon Sooty Oystercatcher was recorded twice during the year, 1 in February and 2 in July and 27 Double-banded Plover were recorded in May. In March 1 Black-tailed Godwit was recorded, which is unusual within this site.

PLDE (Lucinda Drive drain east) – This long drain area that was constructed along the southern end of the reclamation area is not intended as wader habitat and did not attract any waders during high tide counts. A handful of other waterbirds (darter, heron, cormorant, ibis and duck species), were recorded using the area at various times of the year.

PBAR (Artificial Roost) – For 11 months of the year wader numbers remained low, but overall, they doubled since 2017 due to a large count of 1,818 in December which included 1,318 Bar-tailed Godwit, 1 Black-tailed Godwit and 189 Pied Stilt. In total 19 species of waders used the site throughout the year, and a few are recorded at this site frequently. Pied Stilt were recorded 11 months of the year with numbers in excess of 100 from May onwards with the highest count being 210 in August. A pair of Black-fronted Dotterel are regularly seen on site most of the time and were recorded 8 months during the year and this site is also favoured by Common Greenshank, which were only seen 4 times in 2018, with the largest count of 4 in February and November. Other interesting records include 30 Red-necked Avocet in August, 113 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in November and 1 Red-kneed Dotterel in both November and December. A vagrant Asian Dowitcher was seen in both November and December and 1 Broad-billed Sandpiper in December. Although not recorded during the December count, 6 days after the count a Buff-breasted Sandpiper, a vagrant to Australia, was first observed at the roost.

FICP (Claypan) – This large claypan attracted half the number of waders recorded in the previous year. Most months only a couple of hundred waders were seen, but in January nearly 1,500 were using the site which included an Asian Dowitcher (probably the one recorded at the artificial roost the 2 previous months), 96 Bar-tailed Godwit and 72 Far Eastern Curlew. As with the previous year, the site recorded the highest count in March for the whole of the complex with 2,409 birds, including 649 Bar-tailed Godwit, 195 Pied Stilt, 311 Curlew Sandpiper, 154 Great Knot, 73 Red Knot, 570 Red-necked Stint, 205 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and 199 Whimbrel. A favoured site for Far Eastern Curlew, the species was recorded 8 months of the year, but numbers were below 100 each time, and the highest count only reaching 88 in February. Other species of interest were 1 Red-necked Avocet in April and 1 Double-banded Plover in July,

FIVC (Visitors Centre Lake) – Only a handful of waders (mainly Masked Lapwing and Pied Silt), were recorded on site during 9 months of the year with the highest count of 123 Pied Stilt in December. A single Red-necked Avocet was recorded in July and 1 Black-fronted Dotterel was recorded in August. Up to 24 species of waterbird used the lake site during the year and 10 of those species (Australian Pelican, Australian White Ibis, Black Swan, Chestnut Teal, Dusky Moorhen, Eurasian Coot, Hardhead, Pacific Black Duck, Purple Swamphen and Royal Spoonbill), were recorded every month. Less common species in the lake included 4 records for Magpie Goose in January, March, November and December, 1 Striated Heron in February, 1 Nankeen Night Heron in February and November and 1 Spotless Crake in August. Some of the high counts for species, breeding records and other interesting sightings appear further down in this article.

Leg flag sightings: There were 6 green leg-flagged birds (only half the number seen in 2017), during the counts, but because these birds have been flagged by our group in Moreton Bay (not far from the banding site), they are not included. Only 2 other leg-flagged and banded birds were seen at the complex during the 2017 counts, and both were seen in the same site (R3), as follows:

November Black over white flag on a Great Knot (flagged Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China) and a plain orange flag on a Red Knot (flagged Victoria).

Breeding records:

Red-capped Plover 3 juveniles in C2 and 2 chicks in BS1 in January – bird possibly nesting in R3 in August – 1 runner in R3 in December.

Pied Oystercatcher Bird possibly nesting in PBAR in September – 2 chicks in PBAR in November.

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

Jan 72 Australian Pelican in PBAR – 4 Magpie Goose and 6 Chestnut Teal ducklings in FIVC.

Feb 538 Little Tern in R3 – 1 Pacific Reef Heron (grey) in FPE Outer – 97 Hardhead in FIVC.

Mar 3 Lesser Crested Tern in R3 – 61 Australian Pelican in FIVC.

Apr 1 Peregrine Falcon over C2 – 1 Australian Hobby in BS2 – 1 Black-shouldered Kite over BS4 – 1 Australian Kestrel in FPE Outer – 1 Brown Goshawk over PLDE and 2 Pacific Black Duck ducklings in PLDE.

May 1 Swamp Harrier over BS1 – 198 Chestnut Teal in BS3 – 1,630 Little Black Cormorant in BS4 – 2 Chestnut Teal ducklings in FPE Outer – 300 Little Black Cormorant and 67 Royal Spoonbill in PBAR – 102 Eurasian Coot and 108 Hardhead in FIVC.

Jun 82 Black Swan (unusually high number within the reclamation area) and 1 Brown Falcon in R3 – 131 Little Pied Cormorant in PBAR – 131 Gull-billed Tern and 139 Chestnut Teal in FICP – 66 Australian White Ibis and 239 Royal Spoonbill in FIVC.

Jul 30 Great Egret in PBAR – 177 Chestnut Teal in FICP – 308 Grey Teal in FIVC.

Aug 1 Pacific Reef Egret (white) in BS4 – 211 Hardhead, 1 Buff-banded Rail and 1 Spotless Crake in FIVC.

Sep 171 Gull-billed Tern in R3 – 138 Australian White Ibis, 461 Chestnut Teal and 12 Pied Cormorant in FIVC.

Nov 710 Little Tern and 2 Whiskered Tern in R3 – 176 Black Swan, 1 Nankeen Night Heron and 3 Magpie Goose in FIVC.

Dec 197 Black Swan, 1 Chestnut Teal duckling and 16 Magpie Goose (includes 12 goslings in FIVC.

A table showing wader species and numbers at the complex during 2018 (except for the Visitors Centre Lake), has been included. Many other waterbirds were also recorded using the sites; however, lack of space in the newsletter does not allow their inclusion.

QWSG would like to sincerely thank the PBPL for their ongoing support to the group and supplying their staff and vehicles during the counts. Craig Wilson, Environmental Manager for the PBPL, Michael Linde, Senior Environmental Advisor, Nadene Perry, Environmental Advisor, Jessica Rudd, Sustainability Advisor and Penelope Webster Graduate Environment shared the role in looking after our welfare and needs during the counts.

We must also sincerely thank the following committed regular counters and other members for helping us obtain the results for the PBPL and the QWSG database in 2018. Without people like these this would not have been possible. My apologies if I have omitted anyone from the list.

Louis Backstrom, Mick Barker, Allan Briggs, Robert Bush, Michele Burford, Deirdre Chrzescijanski, Rae Clark, Jon Coleman, Ken Cowell, Linda Cross, Phil Cross, Leonie Davies, Peter Davies, Peter Driscoll, David Edwards, Wendy Gaisford, Rod Gardener, Andrew Geering, Sandra Harding, Paul Hinds, Micha Jackson, Arthur Keates, Sheryl Keates, Penn Lloyd, Kelly Matthews, Deborah Metters, David Milton, Gordana Pozvek, Peter Rothlisberg, Peter Ryan, Amelia Selles, Floss Wainwright, Melissa Whitby and Brad Woodworth.

The contract with PBPL continues throughout 2019/20 and as most of the regular counters are now retired and taking off on extended holidays, we need a bigger support group to help spread the workload, particularly during the spring and summer months. As the PBPL insurance only covers their employees you will need to be either a QWSG or BQ member to attend these counts, so their liability insurance will cover you. Please also note that these counts are not recreational outings, but we are always looking for committed counters to join our team.

Please contact Peter Rothlisberg or me if you would like to participate. The dates and meeting times for the counts are listed at the back of this newsletter.

Peter Rothlisberg email: peter.rothlisberg@csiro.au Home: 07 xxxx xxx Work: 07 xxxx xxxx

Or

Linda Cross email: xenus69@bigpond.com Home: 07 xxxx xxxx Mobile: 0xxx xxx xxx

Species list as per the IOC checklist.

	14.01.18	18.02.18	18.03.18	15.04.18	13.05.18	17.06.18	25.07.18	12.08.18	16.09.18	14.10.18	11.11.18	09.12.18
Species												
Pied Oystercatcher	209	217	166	109	48	3	27	8	9	NO	54	94
Sooty Oystercatcher	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	COUNT	0	0
Pied Stilt	67	107	219	147	140	0	222	224	411	DUE TO	235	212
Red-necked Avocet	0	3	6	277	755	200	42	266	381	RAIN	10	13
Masked Lapwing	3	2	6	9	3	3	2	5	2		1	1
Red-kneed Dotterel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	1
Pacific Golden Plover	191	386	276	10	1	0	0	0	110		564	120
Grey Plover	0	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	13		44	44
Red-capped Plover	107	122	112	230	210	277	258	137	117		93	120
Double-banded Plover	0	0	2	13	55	36	23	11	1		0	0
Lesser Sand Plover	1115	1138	787	660	0	0	1	5	10		124	898
Greater Sand Plover	85	16	60	40	0	0	0	0	2		12	223
Black-fronted Dotterel	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	2		2	2
Asian Dowitcher	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	1
Black-tailed Godwit	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	1
Bar-tailed Godwit	1402	717	1149	11	3	0	0	32	312		1001	1318
Whimbrel	30	17	200	19	0	0	0	0	4		32	26
Far Eastern Curlew	75	90	43	14	7	0	2	26	0		203	69
Marsh Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
Common Greenshank	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		4	0
Grey-tailed Tattler	1259	553	52	300	4	3	19	0	0		851	710
Wandering Tattler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
Terek Sandpiper	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	2
Ruddy Turnstone	31	31	31	10	1	0	6	0	2		15	73
Great Knot	580	103	204	0	0	0	0	1	15		196	186
Red Knot	0	0	73	0	0	0	0	0	0		44	3
Sanderling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	0
Red-necked Stint	2160	696	1784	1566	571	282	518	380	1222		2706	1505
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	215	106	248	504	24	0	1	0	14		447	569
Curlew Sandpiper	2354	409	393	747	2	60	22	14	1924		2224	1397
Broad-billed Sandpiper	80	7	0	3	0	0	0	0	0		1	38
Unidentified wader	0	0	40	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
Total Wader Species	**20**	**22**	**24**	**19**	**15**	**8**	**14**	**13**	**18**		**26**	**25**
Total Wader Numbers	**9969**	**4727**	**5899**	**4670**	**1825**	**864**	**1145**	**1110**	**4551**		**8867**	**7626**

Canada delta in danger from trading port expansion

Fraser River Delta is one of British Columbia's most vital habitats for migratory shorebirds, and the site of a major discovery about how shorebirds feed. Two BirdLife Partners, Bird Studies Canada and Nature Canada, are joining forces with BC Nature to halt plans for a huge trading port on-site.

The delta is home to 40,000 Snow Geese © Bird Studies Canada
By James Casey, Bird Studies Canada

The Fraser River is the longest river in British Columbia, Canada, consisting of a 240,000 km² watershed encompassing Rocky Mountain glaciers flowing down to a fertile delta front on Canada's western coast. The lands and waters of the estuary are the unceded territory of the indigenous Coast Salish people who have lived in the region since time out of mind.

Despite having already lost almost 80% of its natural habitat, the Fraser estuary today continues to support millions of birds and Canada's largest migration of wild salmon. In this sense, those living in and around the estuary are blessed with a unique richness of wildlife. During a well-timed walk along this coast, lucky visitors can happen upon 100,000 Dunlin *Calidris alpina*, or 40,000 Snow Geese *Anser caerulescens.*

The importance of the Fraser estuary is well known amongst the scientific community. It has been designated an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area, a Ramsar Wetland of International Significance, and a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Site of Hemispheric Importance in an effort to ensure Canada provides the level of protection this site deserves. And in any other part of Canada, this would be enough to secure its position as a National Park. However, the delta mouth's strategic location - opening into the Pacific Ocean – has instead seen the estuary grow into a major transport and trading hub, and it is now known as Canada's 'Gateway to Asia'.

The pressure on the remaining habitats is now immense, with piecemeal development occurring across the entire estuary with no overarching legal framework to protect it. The warning signs of ecological collapse of are there for all to see: populations of several birds are declining, and along the coast local Killer Whale populations are on the borderline of functional extinction. Further up the river, even the wild salmon populations are now threatened. And the situation may soon get even more desperate. A massive container port expansion is being proposed that would sit smack in the middle of the estuary: the Robert's Bank Terminal 2 project.

Ironically, it was here on the Fraser estuary that we learned the true value of coastal mudflats to wading birds: in 2005, the coastal ecologist Dr Bob Elner, who had spent many hours watching Western Sandpipers *Calidris mauri* at Roberts Bank, realised the birds consumed huge quantities of biofilm – basically, a coating of microorganisms that sat on top of the mud. This has triggered a much more detailed look at the proposed development. In particular, authorities are examining how this project might alter the function of the larger estuary that provides space and nutrients for hundreds of thousands of migrating shorebirds.

The Roberts Bank Terminal 2 project is just one example of how Canada is putting the Fraser estuary at risk without a firm conservation plan to maintain its function. However, Canada's movement to deliver on its commitments to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and a recent financial commitment to restore salmon habitat in the Lower Fraser give us hope. Our Preserve Our Living Delta campaign calls on the Canadian government not to approve any new industrial projects until a comprehensive conservation strategy for the Fraser estuary is in place. Existing projects should be managed to restore biofilm, migratory bird stopover areas, and salmon habitat.

Victory for Montenegro's bird paradise!

6 Jul 2019

Ulcinj Salina has been declared a national protected area! For the past 15 years, our Montenegrin partner CZIP has fought tirelessly to block a controversial building development poised to destroy one of Europe's most important migratory bird sites.

Ulcinj Salina © CZIP *By Gui-Xi Young*

At long last, the salt pans of Ulcinj Salina have been declared a national protected area! For the past 15 years, our Montenegrin partner CZIP has fought tirelessly to block a controversial building development poised to destroy one of Europe's most important migratory bird resting and breeding sites. BirdLife partners up and down the flyways join CZIP in celebrating this epic victory for nature and people.

For almost a century, salt – the precious "white gold" of Ulcinj Salina – ensured that life here was good for birds and people alike. The huge salt production complex, in operation from the 1920s until 2013, miraculously transformed the landscape around the small coastal town of Ulcinj into a living expression of harmonious coexistence between nature and people. With 40,000 tons of annual salt production came employment and prosperity for the local community, along with thousands of migratory birds attracted by the unique, biodiversity-rich ecosystem created by the man-made salt pans.

Breathtaking flocks of Greater flamingo and Dalmatian pelican, along with over 250 different bird species, earned Ulcinj Salina its international reputation as a great bird paradise of the Adriatic.

But in 2005, the golden age of Ulcinj came to an end. The salt pans were privatized and the new ownership's agenda was soon revealed when it won governmental approval for its controversial plans to drain the site and build a luxury tourist resort. When the company went bankrupt in 2011, workers lost their jobs and the salt pans were left to fall into ruin. The water pumps - essential for maintaining water levels for nesting and foraging birds – were turned off overnight. Their abandonment has had hugely damaging consequences for the site's fragile man-made ecosystem; nests have been flooded and noticeably fewer birds have been coming with each passing year.

Our Montenegrin partner, CZIP, has spent the last decade fighting tirelessly to block the resort development and see the resumption of salt production, without which they warned "*this place will die*". Despite public support, the road to victory seemed to be blocked by insurmountable odds – from acts of vandalism and allegations of business corruption, to the raiding of flamingo nests.

But last year, the fight started to gain international attention when BirdLife joined CZIP and the German environmental NGO EuroNatur to launch the #SaveSalina campaign. The online petition succeeded in gathering more than 100,000 signatures, making it one of the biggest petitions of its kind in Montenegro. Its presentation to the Montenegrin Prime Minister Duško Marković in April was a watershed moment, with the head of government pledging his commitment to saving the salina.

Finally, on 25 June, the local parliament of the Ulcinj municipality voted to declare the salt pans a national protected area in recognition of their distinct ecological and cultural value. "*This is the great victory for nature in recent Montenegrin history*" says CZIP's Executive Director, Jovana Janjušević. Crediting the support of the 100,000 Europeans who signed the #SaveSalina petition she adds "*All these people showed that in today's world, there is no greater luxury than protecting nature*."

And of course, it is also a victory for the birds of Ulcinj, such as the Little tern, Kentish plover, Black-winged stilt or Common shelduck. CZIP ornithologist Bojan Zeković notes optimistically that "*there is hope for species that have nested in the past or have had failed attempts in recent years, such as the Pied avocet, Oystercatcher, Greater flamingo*".

This protection of Ulcinj – a critical site within a wider Mediterranean network of coastal wetlands – is also "*an important piece of a bigger puzzle*" remarks Sofia Capellan, IBA Conservation Officer at BirdLife Europe. Coastal wetlands act as buffer areas when extreme events such as storms and floods happen. They have an important role to play as nature-based solutions to tackle big societal challenges such as climate change, but also water pollution, human health and natural disaster.

This victory could not have come without the critical financial support given to CZIP and their partners over the years. Sincerest thanks must go to the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) for supporting CZIP from 2013 to 2017 in a project to restore the infrastructure of the site, monitor birds and showcase the importance of the site to wider audiences. And a debt of gratitude also goes to the MAVA Foundation for helping BirdLife support Ulcinj Salina as part of our Mediterranean wetlands conservation work and also in our efforts to raise awareness of the situation amongst EU decision markers.

Conservationists will continue to keep a close eye on Ulcinj. Its newly awarded protected status must "*not become a fig leaf for the government*" warns EuroNatur Director, Gabriel Schwaderer. Now is the time, he adds, to "*revitalize the salt works*". This site, once protected and well managed, could support a vibrant economy of salt production and sustainable tourism in which people and nature truly benefit from each other.

Count Programme - Linda Cross

As I type this article for the newsletter it is early August, which means it won't be long before the migratory waders return to our shores. In fact, a quick look at a few August counts that have been entered onto the website indicate a slight increase in the number of Far Eastern Curlew recorded at 3 sites. Give your telescopes a clean in readiness for the return of the birds and remember to look out for leg flags and juvenile birds. The juvenile birds will return later than the adults (late October).

In the table below are the results of the National Winter count. Species listed as per IOC checklist.

Species	FNQ	CQ	GSS	SC	NMB	CMB	SMB	TH	**Totals**
Bush Stone-curlew						2			**2**
Beach Stone-curlew		2	6						**8**
Pied Oystercatcher	2	51	52	11	9	28	160	6	**319**
Sooty Oystercatcher				6				1	**7**
Pied Stilt		64	568	31	1470	780	1164	123	**4200**
Red-necked Avocet						68		6	**74**
Masked Lapwing		25	55	8	30	36	25	12	**191**
Red-kneed Dotterel			6		1	2			**9**
Pacific Golden Plover			11	12	20	68	41		**152**
Grey Plover						8			**8**
Red-capped Plover		268	109	43	92	439	128		**1079**
Double-banded Plover		39	12	13	24	1	107		**196**
Lesser Sand Plover		2	29			61	28		**120**
Greater Sand Plover		2		1					**3**
Black-fronted Dotterel	1	24	10		50	11			**96**
Comb-crested Jacana			2	1					**3**
Black-tailed Godwit						3			**3**
Bar-tailed Godwit	3	22	148	9	74	69	197		**522**
Whimbrel	7	30		7	22	1	15	1	**83**
Far Eastern Curlew	3	38	127	13	157	6	54	2	**400**
Marsh Sandpiper			11						**11**
Common Greenshank			4				6		**10**
Grey-tailed Tattler	16	6	10		320	4	246		**602**
Wandering Tattler			1						**1**
Terek Sandpiper							2		**2**
Ruddy Turnstone						17	10		**27**
Great Knot	22		19				34		**75**
Red Knot			3						**3**
Red-necked Stint		197	50		68	871	384		**1570**
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper						1			**1**
Curlew Sandpiper		3	7				66		**76**
Total Wader Species	**7**	**15**	**21**	**12**	**13**	**20**	**17**	**7**	**31**
Total Wader Numbers	**54**	**773**	**1240**	**155**	**2337**	**2476**	**2667**	**151**	**9853**

FNQ – Far North Queensland. Total for 2 sites in Cairns and Cooktown.
CQ – Central Queensland. Total for 9 sites in Bundaberg, Gladstone, Yeppoon and Mackay.
GSS – Great Sandy Strait. Total for 11 sites in Boonooroo, Maaroom and Hervey Bay.
SC – Sunshine Coast. Total for 11 sites in Caloundra, Maroochy River and Noosa River.
NMB – North Moreton Bay. Total for 16 sites in Redcliffe, Deception Bay, Bribie Island and Toorbul.
CMB – Central Moreton Bay. Total for 7 sites in Port of Brisbane, Luggage Point and Pine River.
SMB – Southern Moreton Bay. Total for 17 sites in Victoria Point, Thornlands, North Stradbroke Island, Wellington Point, Thorneside, Manly and Lytton.
TH – Tweed Heads. Total for 7 sites in Tweed Heads, NSW.

It should be noted that there are 15 sub sites within the Port of Brisbane complex, but recorded as 1 site in the above explanation.

In the first table, 20 migratory and 11 resident species were recorded during the winter count. The combined south, central and north Moreton Bay sites recorded 76% of the total winter count.

Pied Stilt numbers were close to 43% of the total count, Red-necked Stint were just under 16% and Red-capped Plover nearly 11%.

Unfortunately, 2 sites were not counted for the National Winter count, and the Moreton Island and St. Helena Island seasonal surveys had to be postponed due to bad weather. St Helena sites (5 in total), were counted on 9 July and Moreton Island sites (5 on the island and 3 other sites within Moreton Bay), were counted on 2 August. A separate table for these counts appears here.

A total of 9 migratory and 7 resident species were recorded for both seasonal counts. The high number of Far Eastern Curlew and Sanderling were of interest.

Species	Moreton Island	St. Helena Island	**Totals**
Beach Stone-curlew		2	**2**
Pied Oystercatcher	85	11	**96**
Pied Stilt		90	**90**
Masked Lapwing	5	4	**9**
Red-kneed Dotterel		2	**2**
Red-capped Plover	60		**60**
Double-banded Plover	176		**176**
Lesser Sand Plover	1		**1**
Greater Sand Plover	1		**1**
Black-fronted Dotterel		4	**4**
Bar-tailed Godwit	174		**174**
Whimbrel	1	17	**18**
Far Eastern Curlew	257	68	**325**
Grey-tailed Tattler	22		**22**
Sanderling	83		**83**
Red-necked Stint	83		**83**
Total Wader Species	**12**	**8**	**16**
Total Wader Numbers	**948**	**198**	**1146**

Some of the Sanderling at Amity Point sandbank during Moreton Island survey - photograph by Robert Bush

As recorded in both tables, Double-banded Plover remain on our shores, but will almost certainly have left, or about to leave when you receive this newsletter. They were recorded at 16 sites during May, June and July with many noted as in breeding plumage in the July counts.

Red-capped Plover were reported at 27 sites during the last 3 months, with the highest count (256), recorded at the Port of Brisbane complex on 02.06.19 and followed by 116 at Queensland Aluminium Limited (Ashpond site), Gladstone on 08.07.19. At Gregory Road, Hay's Inlet 86 were recorded on 01.06.19 and more than 50 birds were recorded at 4 sites.

Although wader numbers were low during May, June and July, I have listed some of the highlights and of interest counts extracted for those months which appear below. Additional high wader counts can be found in the "Interesting wader sightings" section, although in low numbers, which is expected for this time of the year.

107 Far Eastern Curlew – Maaroom – 01.06.19
3 Black-tailed Godwit – Pine River Wetland – 01.06.19
104 Pied Oystercatcher – Dunwich, North Stradbroke Island – 08.06.19
6 Sooty Oystercatcher – Wickham Point – 07.07.19
8 Grey Plover – Port of Brisbane complex – 02.06.19
68 Red-necked Avocet – Port of Brisbane complex – 02.06.19
687 Pied Stilt – Sandfly Bay, Toorbul – 07.07.19
54 Masked Lapwing – Bishop's Marsh, Toorbul – 07.07.19
13 Marsh Sandpiper – Maaroom – 07.07.19
4 Red Knot – Toorbul Sandfly Bay – 07.07.19
3 Red Knot – Maaroom – 01.06.19
326 Grey-tailed Tattler – Manly Harbour – 21.05.19
320 Grey-tailed Tattler – Toorbul Sandfly Bay – 02.06.19

1 Wandering Tattler – Point Vernon – 28.05.19
35 Ruddy Turnstone – Manly Harbour – 21.05.19
9 Terek Sandpiper – Manly Harbour – 20.05.19
49 Black-fronted Dotterel – Redcliffe Airport Northside – 01.06.19
6 Red-kneed Dotterel – Garnett's Lagoon No. 2, Hervey Bay – 02.06.19
651 Red-necked Stint – Port of Brisbane complex – 02.06.19

On 21 May the first record of a Bush Stone-curlew was reported at Manly Harbour, but it was entangled in fishing line and subsequently died.

Photograph by Arthur Keates

Unfortunately, it is not always possible to include all articles in the paper version of the newsletter as there is a page limit for posting, so "Interesting wader sightings" and "Not waders but of interest anyway" sections may not appear. However, if you have an email address please ask for the electronic version, which has all the articles that could not be included in the paper version. The electronic version is also in colour.

Breeding records:

Red-capped Plover – 1 bird nesting at Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island on 16.06.19 – 2 chicks at Queensland Aluminium Limited (Ashpond), Gladstone on 30.05.19.

Counters not entering their counts online, please continue to send them to me at my email or postal address as follows: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.com
Snail mail: xxxxxxxxxxxxx, xxxxxxx. Qld 4510 Phone: 07 xxxx xxxx

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 phillipcross50@gmail.com Please contact Phil or myself for the Leg Flag Observation Report Form.

Happy counting.
Linda Cross.

Wader ID Day Reports

Manly Shorebird Roost Report 17 August 2019

by Arthur Keates

It was a glorious sunny morning with a gentle NE wind; ideal conditions for the observers who joined me on this outing.

We recorded 4 species of resident shorebird and 13 species of migratory shorebird. Disappointingly, we were unable to find the trans-Tasman migrant, Double-banded Plover. Perhaps they took advantage of the recent strong westerly winds to head back to the south island of New Zealand.

Other species normally seen at the roost but escaping our optics were Whimbrel and Ruddy Turnstone. However, we counted at least 8 Red Knot in varying degrees of remnant breeding plumage. All of them looked to be in good physical condition suggesting they have worked their way down the coast rather than having made a long flight to Moreton Bay. Also, the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper were the first of the species I have seen since their northern migration earlier in the year.

Birds of several species fitted with a Queensland green engraved leg flag were observed but no overseas or interstate flagged birds were observed.

The following species were observed at the roost:

Little Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, Eastern Great Egret, Australian Pelican, Pied Oystercatcher (nesting), Pied Stilt (*c* 340), Masked Lapwing (nesting?), Pacific Golden Plover (19), Red-capped Plover (nesting), Lesser Sand Plover (2), Greater Sand Plover (1), Bar-tailed Godwit (*c* 260), Far Eastern Curlew (55), Common Greenshank (1 heard), Grey-tailed Tattler (*c* 200), Terek Sandpiper (8), Great Knot (*c* 40), Red Knot (8), Red-necked Stint (*c* 90), Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (4), Curlew Sandpiper (*c* 95), Silver Gull, Gull-billed Tern, Caspian Tern, Greater Crested Tern and Lesser Crested Tern.

Wader ID Days

Saturday 21 September 2019 at Toorbul

High tide at 2.08 p.m. (plus 30 minutes later for Toorbul 2.38 p.m.), with a height of 1.98m. Meeting time 1.00 p.m.

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 5495 2758. Linda's mobile: 0490 0800 340

MANLY HARBOUR WADER ROOST

Saturday 5 October 2019

2.05 m high tide at 14:43. Meeting time 14:30.

Sunday 3 November 2019

2.10 m high tide at 14:01. Meeting time 14:00.

Meeting Place: At the end of Davenport Dr on the southern boundary of the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron.

Under the conditions of the access agreement for the wader roost, participants must wear enclosed footwear and will be required to sign a form acknowledging responsibility for their own health and safety, including:

- wearing protective clothing at all times (eg. hat, sunglasses) and using sunscreen
- drinking water to avoid dehydration
- using insect repellant if necessary
- telling a 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.

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.

Participation in this field trip is strictly limited to those who have registered with the leaders. Please do not just turn up on the day without registering.

Leaders: Arthur and Sheryl Keates xxxd xxxx or 0xxx xxx xxx

Surveys! Surveys! – Calling all Counters

QWSG committee have decided to once again undertake surveys of both Mackay and the Great Sandy Strait. All **Surveys! Surveys! – Calling all counters**

QWSG committee have decided to once again undertake surveys of both Mackay and the Great Sandy Strait. All members and interested wader counters are welcome to participate in either or BOTH surveys.

The proposed dates are as follows:
Mackay survey: 26 – 27 October 2019.
Great Sandy Strait survey: 22 – 23 February 2020.

Interested participants please contact Peter Driscoll or Linda Cross for details.
Peter Driscoll – email: xxxxxx@xxxxx.com or phone: 0xxx xxx xxx
Linda – email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxxx.com or phone:07 xxxx xxxx Mobile: 0xxx xxx xxx

Accommodation and transport costs during both surveys will be provided by QWSG. In Mackay, air flights and most food costs will also be covered for participants. We need counters to undertake each survey efficiently, but always appreciate more counters if interested. Participants do not need to be experienced and are most welcome. They will be partnered with experienced counters, although final numbers may be limited by funds and resources to transport and accommodate people.
For the GSS survey, vehicle fuel costs travelling to and from the survey will also be reimbursed.

Chairperson's Comment: This is a great way to expand your knowledge of wader field work and to get to know other members of QWSG.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined recently:

Terence & Hayley ALEXANDER, Robert BALL, Tyde& Shinead BANDS & ASHE, Lyndal BARKER, Val CATCHPOOLE, Liz CHRISTENSEN, Ivor DAVIES, Melanie DO, Nicholas HAMILTON, Judith GILES, Nikolas HAASS & Raja STEPHENSON, Alec HOPPING, Wayne & Colleen LOCK, Kellie NEWPORT, Mr Martin RADY, Deb STUMM

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.

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 president@birdsqueensland.org.au
Secretary, Robert Bush secretary@birdsqueensland.org.au
Treasurer, Judith Giles treasurer@birdsqueensland.org.au

Monthly Meetings Birds Queensland
1st Thursday each month except January, when there is no meeting.
Brunswick Room, Merthyr Road Uniting Church, 52 Merthyr Road, New Farm.
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

Chairperson Note re AGM and New Committee Members

It is coming up to that time of year for the AGM, and leading up to this period the Committee is looking to find out who wishes to stay or leave. As ever we are hoping to get new blood on to the Committee. It might seem to be a daunting prospect to join a group of people who have been working together for a long time. We all seem to know each other far too well and a bit of a clique. However, this is probably because we find it hard to get new members on board.

We would really like to see some new faces with new ideas and experiences. You are not expected to be thrown in at the deep end, but can learn on the job.

If you are interested please contact one of the Committee to see what is involved in being part of the Committee. All are welcome.

In anticipation David Edwards, Chairperson QWSG

Notice of 2019 AGM of QWSG

The 2019 AGM will be held on Sunday 15th Dec 2019 at 3:00 pm at George Clayton / Dreveren Park, The Esplanade, Lota/Manly.

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

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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.

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QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of Queensland Wader Study Group

Website www.waders.org.au

Facebook https://www.facebook.com/QueenslandWaderStudyGroup/

MEMBERS of the MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE of the QWSG

CHAIRPERSON:	David Edwards	(07) xxxx xxxx	chairperson@waders.org.au
TREASURER	Judith Giles	0xxx xxx xxx	treasurer@waders.org.au
SECRETARY:	Peter Rothlisberg	(07) xxxx xxxx	secretary@waders.org.au
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Gordana Pozvek	0xxx xxx xxx	membership@waders.org.au
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	David Edwards	(07) xxxx xxxx	gouldian@ozemail.com.au

QWSG COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Robert Bush	0xxx xxx xxx	Jon Coleman	(07) xxxx xxxx
Paul Finn	(07) xxxx xxxx	Sandra Harding	(07) xxxx xxxx
Sheryl Keates	(07) xxxx xxxx	Wayne Lock	0xxx xxx xxx
Andrew Moss	(07) xxxx xxxx	Brad Woodworth	0xxx xxx xxx

COUNT COORDINATOR:	Linda Cross	07 xxxx xxxx	Email xxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxx.com
LEG FLAG COORDINATOR	Phil Cross	07 xxxx xxxx	Email xxxxxxx@xxxxxx.com

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

CORRESPONDENCE All correspondence to:
The QWSG Chairperson,
xxxxxxxxxxxx,
xxxxxxxxxx,
QLD 4011

CHANGE OF ADDRESS Please notify the Membership Secretary 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:
Membership Secretary or QWSG Treasurer,
xxxxxxxxxxx,
xxxxxxxxxxx,
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 **November 18th 2019**
Contributions should be addressed to:
David Edwards, the QWSG Editor, xxxxxxxxxxxxx, xxxxxxxxxxx, Qld 4011
or E-mail to: gouldian@ozemail.com.au

Opinions expressed in Queensland Wader are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily those of the Queensland Waders Study Group, nor Birds Queensland.
Advertising Rates are $20:00 for one-quarter page and $25:00 for a third of a page.

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Count Activities – 2019

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Program 2019

Sat 31st Aug	2.10m at 10:07
Sat 28th Sep	2.16m at 09:02
Sat 19th Oct	2.15m at 12:50
Sat 16th Nov	2.35m at 11:52
Sat 14th Dec	2.53m at 10:59

Port of Brisbane Count Dates 2019

Sun 1st Sep	2.16m at10:55	Meet	09:05
Sun 29th Sep	2.26m at 09:49	Meet	08:00
Sun 20th Oct	2.11m at 13:44	Meet	11:55
Sun 17th Nov	2.31m at 12:38	Meet	10:50
Sun 15th Dec	2.52m at 11:43	Meet	09:55

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 (Bank Australia)
Account number: 08305297

OR

Please post this form to: QWSG Membership Secretary
PO Box 3138,
SOUTH BRISBANE,
QLD 4101.