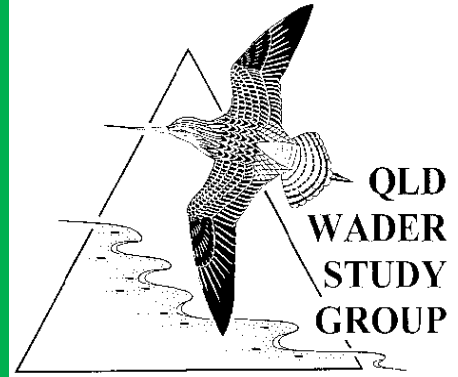


QUEENSLAND WADER



Issue 113

Sept, Oct, Nov 2020

Newsletter of the Queensland Wader Study Group (QWSG), a special interest group of
Queensland Ornithological Society Incorporated. www.waders.org.au
<https://www.facebook.com/QueenslandWaderStudyGroup/>

Turtle Cove – Decision Notice – Refusal of Approval

Some great news as of 27th August 2020.

The proposed Turtle Cove Retirement Village development was **REFUSED** by Minister Ley under the EPBC Act.

More details of the decision notice and statement of reasoning (also available here: <http://epbcnotices.environment.gov.au/publicnoticesreferrals/>)

Here is the wording from the decision:

DECISION NOTICE – REFUSAL OF APPROVAL

The Turtle Cove Haven Retirement Village, Queensland (EPBC 2013/7038)

This decision is made under section 130(1) of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)*.

Details

Person who proposed to take the action - Anscape Pty Limited

ACN or ABN of person who proposed to take the action ACN: 010 399 747

Proposed Action - The construction and operation of a retirement village, associated infrastructure and facilities, 6.5 ha solar power plant and 10 ha open space at River Heads in Queensland. [See EPBC Act referral 2013/7038 received 25 October 2013, and variation requests dated 11 January 2017 and 22 May 2017].

Refusal of Approval decision - I have decided not to approve the taking of the proposed action. My decisions on whether or not to approve the taking of the action for the purposes of each controlling provision for the action are as follows.

Controlling Provisions

Wetlands of International Importance

Section 16 - Not Approved

Section 17B Not Approved

Listed Threatened Species and Communities

Section 18 – Approved

Section 18A Approved

Listed Migratory Species

Section 20 - Not Approved

Section 20A Not Approved

Decision-maker

Name and position The Hon Sussan Ley MP for the Environment

Date of decision 27th August 2020

The QWSG Submission to EPBC Regarding to Turtle Cove

12-November-2018

Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Energy

epbc.referrals@environment.gov.au

Re: Turtle Cove Haven Retirement Village, River Heads, Queensland 4655

Title of referral: Anscape Pty Limited/Residential development/Lotplan 214 & Lotplan 996, River Heads /QLD/Development of the Turtle Cove Haven retirement Village and golf course, Qld

Reference number: 2013/7038

Dear Sir/Madam,

This report was produced in response to the proposed Turtle Cove Haven Retirement Village (EPBC 2013/7083). Information presented herein is based on summary and analysis of shorebird monitoring data meticulously collected by the Queensland Wader Study Group (QWSG, a special interest group of Birds Queensland, www.waders.org.au). QWSG has monitored shorebirds in the Great Sandy Strait since 1988, with the most recent strait-wide census of shorebird numbers taking place in January 2018.

Great Sandy Strait is one of the most important areas in the world for the Far Eastern Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*), a large-bodied migratory shorebird that is Critically Endangered in Australia (Department of Environment 2018) and Endangered globally (BirdLife International 2017). The estimated global population size for this species is 35,000 individuals (Hansen *et al.* 2016). Based on analyses of count data from 2012-2014, Great Sandy Strait was estimated to support 2104 Far Eastern Curlew (Clemens and Milton, unpublished data), corresponding to 6% of the global population of the species. Like many of Australia's migratory shorebirds, Far Eastern Curlew populations are declining, with an estimated national rate of decline of 5.8% per year (Studds *et al.* 2017). Despite these declines, Great Sandy Strait still supports significant numbers of Far Eastern Curlew; in the most recent January 2018 QWSG survey of the Strait, 1378 Far Eastern Curlew were counted, equating to 3.9% of the global population. Both of these recent population counts of Far Eastern Curlew are well above the 1% threshold criteria for Wetlands of International Significance under Ramsar, highlighting the critical importance of the Great Sandy Strait for this highly threatened species.

Monitoring data show that the large claypan in Turtle Cove situated directly adjacent to the proposed development, is the most numerically important high tide roost site for Far Eastern Curlew within the Great Sandy Strait (Fig. 1). In 2005, 1182 Far Eastern Curlew were observed roosting on the Turtle Cove claypan, representing more than 3% of the global population and an all-time high count for the species at this site. Since 1995 when QWSG began conducting strait-wide censuses of the population, the average count of Far Eastern Curlew occupying the Turtle Cove claypan is 553, corresponding to 1.6% of the global population. As such, the claypan at Turtle Cove alone consistently meets the numerical criterion for international importance (1% of the flyway population) and far exceeds the criterion for a site of national importance (0.1% of the flyway population).

The numbers presented clearly signal the regional, national, and global importance of the Turtle Cove claypan roost site for the Critically Endangered Far Eastern Curlew.

We hope that this report assists in making an informed and evidence-based decision regarding the proposed Turtle Cove Haven Retirement Village. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any concerns regarding this submission.

Kind regards,

Dr. Brad Woodworth^{1,2} David Edwards, QWSG Chair¹ Dr. Jon Coleman¹ Sandra Harding¹ Professor Richard Fuller²

¹Management Committee, Queensland Wader Study Group, www.waders.org.au

²School of Biological Sciences, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD 4072, Australia

Attachments Figure 1. (right) Google Satellite Imagery of the Turtle Cove claypan roost site and (left) average counts of Far Eastern Curlew at 32 high tide roost sites in the Great Sandy Strait from 1995-2018. In the left panel, each point shows a roost site and the size of each point is scaled to the average of the maximum summer count (Nov-Feb) for each roost, with larger symbols denoting sites with higher abundance.

References

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Observations of Queensland Flagged Ruddy Turnstones

by Arthur Keates

The unmistakable Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* is a species that may be found on most continental coastlines except Antarctica. Its breeding range, generally north of 60°N, encompasses Scandinavia and across northern Russia to the Bering Strait, to Alaska and northern Canada, to Greenland and Iceland.

In late July 2020, QWSG's leg flag database had 860 records of observations of leg flagged turnstones dating back to late 1993. Of these, green leg flags fitted in south-east Queensland account for 851 records, 78 of birds fitted with a plain leg flag (**PLF**) and the rest fitted with an engraved leg flag (**ELF**). Since March 2007, ELF's have been fitted to just over 130 birds, the last on 2 August 2020.

Overseas observations of green leg flagged birds account for only 22 records.

Russia

The most recent overseas observation is that of **AHN** on 14 May 2020, on Russky Is, just south of Vladivostok, Russia. Interestingly, not only is this the only observation of a green flagged Ruddy Turnstone in Russia but also it is the first observation of this individual since banding aged 2+ on 3 March 2019.



Ruddy Turnstone **AHN** on a stop-over on northern migration at Russky Is, Russia

China

Two ELF's have been reported from mainland China, both at Yalu Jiang Nature Reserve during northern migration: **ABX** on 5 April 2015 followed by **ABY** on 25 May 2015, both having been banded on 16th December 2012, aged 2+ years. However, it is quite possible that these reports relate to the same bird; the last letters could easily have been misread in the field.

South Korea

EY, a female banded on 3 April 2011, has been observed 7 times by Andreas Kim at Aphae Is and Mokpo Namhang Tidal Flat, South Korea. All observations were made during northern migration in April-May 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2018. The only other observation of **EY** was at King Is, Moreton Bay on 28 February 2015.

Japan

During migration periods, Japan has important sites identified for Ruddy Turnstone with more recognised for northern migration (26) than southern migration (12). There are 14 reports of green leg flagged birds in total from Japan. These include repeat observations at Yatsu Tidal Flat, Narashino, Chiba Prefecture of an individual fitted with a PLF on apparent southern migration (possibly the same individual in consecutive years):

- 3 reports between 26 July and 10 August 1996
- 6 reports between 14 August 1997 and 30 Aug 1997.

The other reports of birds on southern migration are of the following ELF's (neither of which has been reported since):

- **DH** (banded on 4 April 2008) observed on 4 September 2009 at Kumozu R, Mie Prefecture
- **HB** (banded on 3 April 2011) observed on 12 August 2013 at Yatsu Tidal Flat, Narashino, Chiba Prefecture.

Reports of birds on northern migration relate to:

- a PLF on 30 April 1998 at Yatsu Tidal Flat, Narashino, Chiba Prefecture
- a PLF on 27 April 2007 at Miyakojima, Island of Okinawa
- **AHW** (banded on 13 April 2019) observed on 30 April 2019 at Miyakojima, Island of Okinawa.



Northern hemisphere observation sites

New Zealand

In addition to the observations in the northern hemisphere, the following reports show the trans-Tasman movement of birds or possibly even a single bird:

- 19 October 1996 at Taramaire, Firth of Thames
- 6 and 8 January 1997 at Kaipara Harbour, Auckland.

However, because the reports relate to a PLF rather than an ELF, more particular data are not available.

Returning to Australian records, none are for observations outside of Queensland. In fact, all have been in Moreton Bay except for a single observation on Lady Elliott Is of **HB**, the only other observation of which was, as mentioned above, in Japan.

On 13 February 2017, a catch of 25 turnstones at Manly Boat Harbour included 13 aged as juveniles. Of these juveniles, 10 were observed during the Austral winter of that year showing that 1-year old turnstones do not migrate. Further, one of them, **ATB**, was seen overwintering here in 2018 and 2019. Furthermore, **ATB**, reported 40 times since banding, was recaptured in a mist net on 20 July 2019 at the original banding site. **ATB** was last observed at Manly Boat Harbour on 7 April 2020 and with no observations of it reported during the Austral winter, one can reasonably assume it set out on northern migration this year. It remains to be seen whether it survives its first migration and returns to Moreton Bay.

Research has shown that turnstones are relatively long-lived. The following table summarises the ages of the oldest known individuals fitted with green leg flags based on the age determined when originally banded:

PLF/ELF code	Original Banding Date	Last Observation Date	Age at Last Observation Date
PLF	Before Mar 2007	28 Dec 2016	10+ years
EY	3 Apr 2011	2 May 2018	9+ years
HE	2 Oct 2011	12 Apr 2018*	8+ years
ABY	16 Dec 2012	29 Dec 2018	8+ years
AKX	12 Oct 2014	14 Oct 2019	7+ years
AYH	12 Oct 2014	26 Mar 2019	6+ years
ABX	16 Dec 2012	24 Jan 2017	6+ years
CSA	12 Oct 2014	26 Mar 2019	6+ years

- On 19 April 2020, I observed a female Ruddy Turnstone at Manly Harbour with an ELF which I read as **HE** although I was unsure of the last letter. If in fact it was, **HE**, it would have been 10+ years of age. The only other possibility is **HB** but given it has not been seen since the observation in Japan on 12 August 2013 it is less likely.

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

Port of Brisbane Count Results 2019 by Linda Cross

The QWSG has conducted 17 years of extensive counting for the Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd (PBPL) at the Port of Brisbane complex. 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 2019 was 57,085 waders, 10,841 terns/gulls and 6,002 waterbirds/raptors which do not include the figures for the Visitors Centre Lake (661 waders, 96 terns/gulls and 10,588 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 July due to bad weather creating unstable conditions within the complex and 2 counts were conducted in September.

The following table provides the total migratory and resident waders recorded at the complex over the last 17 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
2019	8137	5641	5357	4108	1814	1458	No count	1358	2099 4908	5577	7599	9029	57085
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	No count	49685
2009	10072	13243	7192	2293	No count	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

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 2019.

2019 Month	Port Waders	Port Terns/ Gulls	Port Waterbirds/ Raptors	Lake Waders	Lake Terns/ Gulls	Lake Waterbirds/ Raptors	Totals
January	8137	1455	228	123	0	1022	10965
February	5641	1980	187	67	1	666	8542
March	5357	1233	172	177	5	790	7734
April	4108	490	179	4	0	477	5258
May	1814	154	571	2	0	559	3100
June	1458	126	3438	0	0	1142	6164
July	No count	No count	No count	No count	No count	No count	No count
August	1358	178	216	1	0	1152	2905
September 1st	2099	229	295	31	0	683	3337
September 29th	4908	611	194	141	18	1267	7139
October	5577	877	281	19	35	1173	7962
November	7599	1178	149	75	36	1080	10117
December	9029	2330	92	21	1	577	12050
Totals	57085	10841	6002	661	96	10588	85273

Comments on individual count sites for 2019 are as follows:

R3 – This riverside paddock was the second most productive site within the complex for 2019 producing the highest wader count for 4 months and the highest tern count for 3 months of the year. In September, the site recorded the highest count of 3,319 waders, which was 66% of all waders within the complex for that month. Red-necked Avocet were recorded on site for 7 months of the year with a couple of higher counts of 205 in February and 490 in October. The site was also favoured by Grey Plover recorded 5 months in the year with the lowest count being 33 in March and the highest count of 53 in September.

Bar-tailed Godwit were recorded on site for 6 months of the year with most counts being between 320 and 400 birds but there were 2 larger counts of 519 in February and 1,074 in December. For 10 months of the year Curlew Sandpiper frequented the site, and although in small numbers on most occasions there were some larger counts of 1,725 in January, 960 and 1,495 respectively for the September counts and 224 in October. Other high counts of interest include 278 Far Eastern Curlew in January, 123 Ruddy Turnstone in March, 1,025 Red-necked Stint in September, 620 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in October and 344 Great Knot in December. Terns and gull counts were much lower than in the previous year.

C2 – The least productive pond within the complex as the site continues to be filled with sand for development. Only a handful of waders were recorded 5 times during the year but in December 241 waders were present (mainly Red-necked Stint) that were attracted to a pool of water which formed in the south-east corner of the pond after rainfall. No terns, gulls or waterbirds were recorded for the whole of the year.

C3 – This central site became the most productive for both waders and terns in 2019 producing the highest counts for 7 months of the year and supporting 51% of all waders within the complex in February and April, and 62% in November. Pacific Golden Plover were recorded on site for 10 months with high counts of 446 in January, 815 in February, 308 in March, 1,200 in November and 458 in December. This is a favoured site for Red-capped Plover and except for April, the species was recorded every month and some higher counts include 79 for January, 189 in March, 93 in May, 184 in June and 148 in December. Double-banded Plover also preferred the site and were recorded for 6 months between March and September with the highest count of 28 in June. Other smaller waders also appeared to favour the site which included Lesser and Greater Sand Plover. Some of the counts for the smaller of the 2 sand plovers (Lesser) include 381 in February, 1,103 in March, 716 in April, 279 in September and 1,669 in December. The Greater Sand Plover were recorded less often (7 months) and in much fewer numbers with the highest counts being 195 in March and 147 in December. For 10 months Curlew Sandpiper were also recorded on site with a few high counts of 276 in January, 223 in February, 1,301 in November and 551 in December. Red-necked Stint were recorded every month of the year with 5 counts more than 500 and higher counts of 682 in March, 1,768 in November and 894 in December. Other interesting counts include 6 Broad-billed Sandpiper in March and 321 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in November. The site also recorded the highest tern and gulls for 7 months of the year, but waterbirds were in exceedingly small numbers.

BS1 – The second least productive pond within the complex attracting less than 50 waders each month, with the exception of November, when 279 waders (predominately Red-neck Stint) were recorded feeding in a pond that had formed within the site after recent rains.

BS2 – There was a continued decline in wader numbers using this site compared to 2018 with October producing the highest count of 622 birds, which included 341 Pacific Golden Plover, 4 Broad-billed Sandpiper, 90 Curlew Sandpiper and 137 Red-necked Stint. Double-banded Plover were recorded on site in June (2) and August (5). Hardly any other species of birds were recorded for the year.

BS3 – There was little change in the number of waders recorded for the site compared to the previous year. The highest count being 735 in April which included 85 Red-necked Avocet and 641 Red-necked Stint. Four (terns/gulls/waterbirds) species were recorded during the year, which produced 10 birds in total.

BS4 – Wader numbers using this last bayside pond improved for 11 months of the year with an increase of nearly 2,000 more birds than in 2018. The outer rock wall of this site is favoured by tattlers, tereks and sometimes turnstones. Grey-tailed Tattler were recorded for 5 months of the year producing large counts of 679 in January, 547 in February, 923 in November and 1,433 in December. There were only 2 records for Terek Sandpiper, and both came from this pond with 2 counted in March and 5 in December. Ruddy Turnstone were recorded for 6 months with high numbers in January (70), February (43) and December (126). Broad-billed Sandpiper were also drawn to the site for 6 months, with counts of 30 in January, 23 in February, 70 in March, 28 in April, 2 in October, 1 in November and 38 in December. Other records of interest were 144 Pied Oystercatcher and 179 Red-necked Avocet in April, 268 Red-necked Avocet in May and 1 Common Greenshank in March, which is unusual within the fenced reclamation area.

FPE Outer – The largest of the sites within the complex, with an expansive area of water, had a slight increase in wader numbers each month (except for January) with a couple of hundred birds being recorded each time. The January count of 1,252 birds included 175 Pied Oystercatcher, 22 Grey Plover, 622 Lesser Sand Plover and 255 Bar-tailed Godwit. Pied Oystercatcher were recorded every month at this site with high counts of 175 in January and 216 in February. The only records for Sooty Oystercatcher came from this site with 3 in January and 3 in March. Other counts of interest were 407 Grey-tailed Tattler in April, 19 Double-banded Plover and 2 Masked Lapwing (most unusual within the reclamation area) in May, 20 Red Knot in October and 1 Wandering Tattler in November. A small number of terns and gulls are regularly recorded using the site.

PLDE (Lucinda Drive drain east) – this drainage section does not have suitable wader habitat, however, a new extension of the drain linking it to the road attracted a Black-fronted Plover in September and 2 Masked Lapwing in November. A handful of waterbirds (ducks, swans, cormorants, darters, egrets and pelicans) were recorded using the area at various times of the year.

PBAR (Artificial Roost) – Although there was a slight increase in wader numbers, the site only attracted a couple of hundred each month. January was the exception with 1,191 waders being counted, of which 893 were Bar-tailed Godwit. The wader species diversity is high for this site with 22 being recorded for the year with some being on site regularly. Pied Oystercatcher were recorded 11 months, however it was usually just a pair on site, except for January, when there were 4. Pied Stilt were recorded every month of the year with numbers more than 162 from March onwards with the highest count being 229 in October. A pair of Black-fronted Dotterel have continued to be regulars at the roost and the species was recorded 9 times during the year. This is also a favoured site for Common Greenshank which were seen 7 times, which is an increase in numbers with 6 being recorded in January, November and December. Other species of interest recorded include 1 Marsh Sandpiper in August, 20 Eurasian Whimbrel (unusually high number for the site) in September, 166 Curlew Sandpiper and 4 Broad-billed Sandpiper in October, 31 Red Knot in November and 2 Red-kneed Dotterel and 2 Black-tailed Godwit in December. The vagrant Buff-breasted Sandpiper that was observed at this roost on 15 December in 2018 (after the last scheduled count on the 9 December) eventually made it into the Port count database after being recorded in February, March and April 2019.

FICP (Claypan) – Wader numbers using this expansive claypan dropped slightly compared to the previous year with only a few hundred recorded most months. The 2 highest wader counts were February with just under 1,000 birds and just over 1,000 birds in October. The appearance of Eurasian Whimbrel and Far Eastern Curlew during the surveys were less than previous years with both species only recorded 5 months for the year. The highest Eurasian Whimbrel count of 89 in April was a significant drop compared to a total of 200 in March the previous year. There were 2 high counts for Far Eastern Curlew with 249 in February and 338 in August with the latter figure tripling the 2018 highest count. Other species of interest were 402 Bar-tailed Godwit in February, 12 Black-tailed Godwit in April, 38 Red Knot in September, 5 Pied Oystercatcher (unusual at this site), 176 Curlew Sandpiper and 430 Red-necked Stint in October and 223 Pied Stilt in December.

FIVC (Visitors Centre Lake) – Wader numbers increased at the site compared to 2018 figures, which was probably due to a drop in the water level with drier conditions during some months. Pied Stilt and Masked Lapwing were again the predominate species using the site with 3 high counts for Pied Stilt of 120 in both January and March and 135 in September. Other wader species of interest include 6 Black-fronted Dotterel in March, 1 Black-tailed Godwit and 4 Black-fronted Dotterel in September, 1 Marsh Sandpiper and 4 Red-kneed Dotterel in November. A total of 30 other species (waterbird, raptor and tern) were recorded using the site in 2019. High counts for other species, breeding records and other interesting sightings for this site appear further down in this article.

Leg flag sightings: There was a total of 21 green leg-flagged birds: Pacific Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Lesser Sand Plover, Far Eastern Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Red Knot, Broad-billed Sandpiper and Curlew Sandpiper) seen during the counts, which is more than triple the number (6) seen in 2018. As these birds have been flagged by our group in Moreton Bay and have not travelled any significant distance from the banding site, they have not been included. Two other leg-flagged and banded birds were seen at the complex during the 2019 counts as follows:

September	Orange flag on Caspian Tern (flagged in Victoria)
October	Orange flag on a Curlew Sandpiper (flagged in Victoria).

Breeding records:

Pied Stilt Bird possibly nesting between R3 and C3 in August.

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

January	2 Whiskered Tern in R3 – 2 Pacific Reef Heron in BS4 – 7 Magpie Goose in FIVC
February	1,223 Little Tern, 206 Silver Gull in C3 – 168 Crested Tern in PFPE – 232 Black Swan, 2 juvenile Pacific Black Duck and 32 Magpie Goose in FIVC
March	123 Crested Tern and 1 Lesser-crested Tern – 6 Pink-eared Duck and 2 Magpie Goose in FIVC
April	1 Swamp Harrier over R3
May	2 Australasian Shoveler and 121 Little Pied Cormorant in PBAR – 4 Wandering Whistling-Duck in FIVC
June	3,202 Little Black Cormorant and 1 Pacific Reef Heron in PFPE – 5 Australasian Shoveler, 122 Pink-eared Duck, 120 Black Swan and 1 Red-rumped Parrot (escapee?) in FIVC
August	15 Black Swan (unusual) in R3 – 124 Australian White Ibis and 421 Chestnut Teal in FIVC
September	324 Little Tern in R3 – 23 Australian White Ibis (unusual within the reclamation area), 1 Eastern Great Egret (unusual within the reclamation area) in BS4 and 1 Pacific Reef Heron in PFPE –

66 White-faced Heron in FICP – 2 juvenile Chestnut Teal, 456 Grey Teal, 129 Hardhead, 236 Pacific Black Duck, 6 Pink-eared Duck, 1 Buff-banded Rail and 1 Brown Falcon in FIVC

October 250 Gull-billed Tern and 28 Whiskered Tern in R3 – 252 Royal Spoonbill in FIVC.

November Black Swan with engraved band (AVK), 302 Chestnut Teal, 344 Grey Teal and 22 Whiskered Tern in FIVC

December 33 Whiskered Tern in R3 – 1,731 Little Tern in C3 – 212 Grey Teal in FIVC.

A table showing wader species and numbers at the complex during 2019 (except for the Visitors Centre Lake), has been included at the end of the article. 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 Lead 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 2019. Without people like these this would not have been possible. My apologies if I have omitted anyone from the list.

Louis Backstrom, Mick Barker, Robert Bush, Deirdre Chrzescijanski, Rae Clark, Jon Coleman, Ken Cowell, Linda Cross, Phil Cross, Detlef Davies, Leonie Davies, Peter Davies, David Edwards, Wendy Gaisford, Andrew Geering, Sandra Harding, Chloe Hockley, Anita Huber, Lenn Isidore, Micha Jackson, Arthur Keates, Sheryl Keates, Linda Lewis, Mike Lewis, Penn Lloyd, Scott Pascoe, Eva Plaganyi-Lloyd, Gordana Pozvek, Peter Rothlisberg, Floss Wainwright, Melissa Whitby and Brad Woodworth.

The contract with PBPL continues throughout 2020/21 and as Covid-19 has now brought about significant international travel restrictions, meaning our retired and younger members may have travel plans curtailed, it is hoped that we might get a boost in the number of people wanting to help spread the workload. This would be particularly beneficial 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. The dates and meeting times for the counts are listed at the back of this newsletter. If you would like to participate, contact details are below.

Peter Rothlisberg email: peter.rothlisberg@csiro.au Home: 3822 3759 Work: 3833 5960

Or

Linda Cross email: xenus69@bigpond.com Home: 5495 2758 Mobile: 0490 080 340

Port Results Table 2019

	13.01	10.02	10.03	07.04	05.05	02.06	04.08	01.09	29.09	20.10	17.11	15.12
<i>Species</i>												
Pied Oystercatcher	183	229	165	148	78	28	33	23	24	9	30	80
Sooty Oystercatcher	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pied Stilt	33	145	172	150	219	183	221	266	184	281	202	257
Red-necked Avocet	17	205	4	325	268	68	2	2	1	490	71	55
Masked Lapwing	1	5	6	2	5	5	2	4	-	-	2	4
Red-kneed Dotterel	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	2
Pacific Golden Plover	536	836	339	28	63	45	59	7	215	494	1219	487
Grey Plover	22	34	36	2	4	8	2	-	54	13	34	40
Red-capped Plover	142	66	239	32	153	256	51	53	93	28	38	194
Double-banded Plover	-	-	1	10	29	31	12	2	-	-	-	-
Lesser Sand Plover	664	545	1140	741	12	61	105	44	427	565	163	1672
Greater Sand Plover	11	14	195	39	2	-	4	-	43	2	-	147
Black-fronted Dotterel	1	2	-	2	2	2	1	2	1	-	1	2

Eurasian Whimbrel	30	19	11	89	-	-	-	-	20	32	25	68
Far Eastern Curlew	291	260	184	23	10	-	338	63	37	-	98	69
Bar-tailed Godwit	1499	956	523	33	30	69	25	15	502	829	199	1106
Black-tailed Godwit	1	1	-	13	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Ruddy Turnstone	90	77	156	110	1	17	11	-	1	10	-	190
Great Knot	151	130	146	1	-	-	-	18	116	126	322	389
Red Knot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	49	20	35	8
Broad-billed Sandpiper	33	23	76	30	-	-	-	-	-	10	4	38
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	373	476	420	157	105	1	-	10	85	722	549	808
Curlew Sandpiper	2192	328	261	147	34	29	86	965	1663	856	1455	633
Red-necked Stint	1179	730	997	1576	799	651	399	621	1389	1089	2218	1332
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terek Sandpiper	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Wandering Tattler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Grey-tailed Tattler	679	554	270	407	-	4	5	-	-	-	924	1434
Marsh Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
Common Greenshank	6	5	2	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	6	6
Unidentified wader	-	-	8	41	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total Wader Species	23	23	24	24	17	16	19	16	20	18	23	26
Total Wader Numbers	8137	5641	5357	4108	1814	1458	1358	2099	4908	5577	7599	9029

Bird's Eye View

The article below has been taken from The Moreton Bay Foundation (MBF) Newsletter. I have used it as it sets out beautifully project to be undertaken by Josh Wilson with grants from the Queensland Wader Study Group and the MBF.

The significance of Moreton Bay for migratory shorebirds is well known, along with the threats causing rapid decline. Better monitoring data will improve management actions, particularly information on low-tide distribution and abundance.

The Moreton Bay Foundation responded to this call and provided funding for the 'Surveying Shorebirds in Moreton Bay using an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)' project. This project will deploy and test a shorebird monitoring system using UAVs (drones) to capture aerial imagery. The imagery can be automatically processed to determine bird abundance, resulting in an accurate, efficient, and practical method for recording low tide counts, and for reaching inaccessible areas and large flocks. It will require reduced volunteer effort, and cause minimal disturbance to birds, complementing the existing manual survey effort.

The project will also produce a best-practice guide to inform appropriate management regulations regarding the use of UAV's where shorebirds are present.

'Surveying Shorebirds' is overseen by Professor Richard Fuller and implemented by Researcher Josh Wilson in a partnership between the University of Queensland, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, and the Queensland Wader Study Group.

It is anticipated that techniques developed through the Surveying Shorebirds UAV project will be transferable to other monitoring and survey programs across Moreton Bay – helping us better understand, protect and restore the unique habitats and biodiversity of Moreton Bay.



Birds from the shore, and above - Photos Josh Wilson

Endangered Shorebirds Unsustainably Hunted during Migrations, Records Show

More than 30 species, including nine that are threatened, are being hunted unsustainably, report finds.



Migrating shorebirds, such as bar-tailed godwits, tend to gather in high concentrations to rest and feed as they make their long migrations, making them easy to hunt. Photograph: Ding Li Yong/BirdLife International

More than 30 shorebird species that fly across oceans each year to visit Australia – including nine that are threatened – are being hunted during their long migrations, according to a study that analysed decades of records from 14 countries.

The study, which experts said filled a major gap in the world's knowledge about the impact of hunting on declining shorebird numbers, found that more than 17,000 birds from 16 species were likely being killed at just three sites – Pattani Bay in Thailand, West Java in Indonesia and the Yangtze River delta in China.

Prof Richard Fuller, a co-author on the study, said that figure was “terrifying”. “We know hunting is going on at hundreds of other sites around the flyway. It's highly likely that unsustainable hunting levels are being executed for many species,” Fuller said.

All the birds use the East-Asian-Australasian Flyway – one of nine recognised migratory routes around the globe. Two species – the far eastern curlew and the great knot – are listed as critically endangered under Australia's environmental law. Great knots breed in the high Arctic and far eastern curlews in south-east Russia and north-east China – all more than 10,000km from their summer layovers in Australia.

Eduardo Gallo-Cajiao, a researcher at the University of Queensland, coordinated the study, which took five years to complete and appears in the Biological Conservation journal. More than 100 logbooks, newsletters, citizen science projects, academic studies and “dusty old technical reports” going back to 1970 were gathered from 14 countries.

“We knew since the 1980s that hunting was still going on, but there was an idea that hunting wasn’t really a concern. It has gone under the radar for a long time,” Gallo-Cajiao said. “Because these birds fly across vast areas, hunting needs to be measured and monitored considering the cumulative levels of hunting at various places throughout the region. Up to now, all we had was bits and pieces of data on hunting from different individual sites, but nobody had pooled them together to get a better picture. It was just like assembling a jigsaw puzzle.”



The far eastern curlew, which is being hunted during migration, is listed as critically endangered under Australian environmental law. Photograph: Auscape/Universal Images Group via Getty Images

He said the only place where hunting records came from regulated activity was in the Yukon-Kuskokwim delta in Alaska, where indigenous people hunted bar-tailed godwits for food. Much of the remaining hunting along the flyway – which stretches across 22 countries and Taiwan – was unregulated and likely illegal, he said. Some 61 species were being affected, 37 of which were seen on Australian shorelines. Migrating shorebirds tend to gather in high concentrations to rest and feed as they make their long migrations, making them predictable and easy to hunt.

As recently as 2019, there was evidence that far eastern curlews were being shot in the Kamchatka peninsula in eastern Russia as they gathered among larger flocks of whimbrels.

The study found there was a lack of coordinated monitoring along the flyway, despite at least 12 of the 61 species appearing on the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s red list of threatened species.

“We need to have a conversation among the many countries in the flyway,” Gallo-Cajiao said.

Two taskforces have been formed to look at hunting impacts – one as part of a voluntary organisation of countries covered by the flyway and another under the UN’s convention on migratory species.

“Hunting is a hidden threat that we’ve known about but haven’t been able to quantify just how big the problem is,” Fuller said. Birds were being hunted for subsistence, he said, as well as to trade for food. Shorebird numbers are declining and Fuller said developments around the Yellow Sea – where many of the migrating birds stop to rest – had robbed them of about two-thirds of the intertidal mudflats over the past 50 years.

Far eastern curlew numbers had crashed by about 80% in the past 30 years, he said, and the species was listed as critically endangered in Australia in 2015.

He said the hunting records were still too sparse to be confident of the impact on the shorebirds, but at least three-quarters of the 61 species that use the flyway were likely being hunted. Other hunted shorebirds that visit Australia and that appear on an international list of vulnerable species are the bar-tailed godwit, black-tailed godwit, red knot, curlew sandpiper, red-necked stint, Asian dowitcher and grey-tailed tattler.

Prof Richard Kingsford, a UNSW ecologist who coordinates an annual waterbird survey, said: "This study has filled a major gap. It's great that we are getting a handle on this issue, but it's not a good story. We know these birds are in trouble anyway, so this is a big concern."

Dr Steve Klose, manager of the migratory shorebird program at BirdLife Australia, said the flyway could be seen like a pipeline and potential "leaks" from hunting had "moved into focus" in the past two years. "We can see that the flow to Australia is diminishing and we have suspicions that there are holes somewhere. We know populations are going down and we are heading for extinctions," he said.

By Graham Readfearn

Wellington Point station master Christina Gardner pays homage to Australian native curlew birds

Angela Kelly



ON TRACK: Wellington Point station master Christina Gardner paints the curlews on platform 2.

Commuters catching a train from Wellington Point station are in for an artistic treat as a wildlife mural comes to life on platform two. Station master Christina Gardner is painting the bird life at the station including a family of bush stone-curlew that have called the station home for many years.

"I watch the curlew nest in August to October, the mother sits on her eggs four about five weeks and I usually snap a pic and put up the photos for commuters to see," she said. Ms Gardner said the idea for the painting project was planted during a time of uncertainty when the global COVID-19 pandemic struck.

"When customers began saying their farewells when they had to start working from home, I saw an opportunity to deliver the artwork. "I wanted to give customers a nice surprise when they returned to the station and so I started designing the mural," she said.

Ms Gardner is an artist who enjoys painting wildlife and used to sell her cards and art at markets. She has worked at the station for about a year but has fond memories of her childhood visiting her grandparents in their farmhouse opposite the station.

Starting her shift at the station at 5am, Ms Gardner finishes her duties and then starts work on her passion project. She said she hoped to have it completed in a couple weeks.

"I've continued the tradition in keeping customers updated with sightings of curlew hatchlings, making sure the birds have water, and reminding customers to take care near the nesting site," she said.

Capalaba MP Don Brown said he was delighted to see the artwork being delivered by one of the station's own. "There is a great sense of community spirit in our community and it is fantastic to see the interest this mural has sparked," he said.

To date, the Queensland Rail's Positive pARTnerships program has delivered 176 urban art projects covering more than 26,000 square metres of the Queensland Rail network, including the Pillars Project series beneath the Merivale Bridge in South Brisbane and the Barracks and Airport line murals, seen by almost one million people each year.

NSW buys Outback Station in State's Largest Single Property Purchase for a National Park



Narriearra Station covers more than 150,000 hectares across far north west New South Wales. *(Supplied)*

Key points:

- Narriearra station is the state's largest single-land purchase for conservation
- The area is home to 25 threatened species and valuable wetlands
- Narriearra has significant Aboriginal artefacts and campsites used by Burke and Wills

It's the vast embodiment of outback beauty and heartbreak — a sweeping western NSW cattle station that is, by turns, arid no-man's land and lush waterbird haven, home to ancient Indigenous artefacts, the ghostly trail of Burke and Wills and now the nation's newest national park.

"It can be very good and then it can be vile," said Bill O'Connor, 84, owner of Narriearra station, which has just become the largest block of private land bought for a national park in the state's history. With nearby Sturt National Park, Narriearra will create a conservation area of close to half a million hectares, or twice the size of the Australian Capital Territory. The 153,415-hectare station sits in the north-west corner of the state, with the dog-proof fence of the NSW-Queensland border forming its northern boundary.

Flowing south from Queensland, the Bulloo River ends on the station in an expansive floodplain and wetlands that attract tens of thousands of water birds during inland flooding. The property is also home to Indigenous artefacts, tools and stone arrangements. Explorers Burke and Wills traversed it in 1860, with an engraved post marking one of the ill-fated expedition's two camp sites.

Minister for Energy and Environment Matt Kean said the Government's acquisition of the property would ensure about 25 threatened animal species and important wetlands were preserved. "I set a target of 200,000 hectares of new pasture that we will add [to national parks] during my term as the Minister for Environment," Mr Kean said. "We've now beaten that target and I hope that we'll continue to go even further."

In one family for a century

Mr O'Connor, whose father purchased the property in 1919, said life there hadn't always been easy and, although the landscape hosted a diverse array of flora and fauna, nature wasn't always kind. "There's a strong connection to the land through all my brothers and sisters and of course my children — most of them have spent a fair bit of their time here anyway, if not all," Mr O'Connor said.

He said he'd tried to sell Narriearra to the Government when it seemed impossible to make a living off the land, but this time he had been approached with an offer. "It was still in a bad way as far as drought went — they'd have to borrow a lot of money to get back in to stock — so it just looked like the best way out of it was to sell," he said.



Bill O'Connor says life hasn't always been easy on Narriearra station. (Supplied: Morgan O'Connor)

Bird watchers' paradise

Dr Barry Traill, Australian director of conservation organisation, Pew Charitable Trusts, said the sale of Narriearra station was "very special" for threatened water birds, in particular the Grey Grasswren. "Nearly 90 percent of its habitat in New South Wales is on Narriearra station," Dr Traill said.



The acquisition of Narriearra Station by NSW National Parks will see a focus on protecting the Grey Grasswren bird (Supplied: Jeff Hardy)



The Grey Falcon is another threatened bird species that will be protected through the purchase of Narriearra Station. (Supplied: Angus Emmott)

Dr Traill said the purchase would also encourage greater tourism to the outback, which was often overlooked by governments. "Outback Australia is one of the great remaining intact natural places on Earth and we don't often think of that in that way that's something that's now rare and special in the world," he said. "There are millions of people that are very keen on bird watching in Australia and just having some species like the grey grasswren is a magnet for people to go out to the landscape and spend some local dollars and help the community through tourism," said Dr Traill.

Land council welcomes 'good news'

Roxann Robertson from the Tibooburra Local Aboriginal Land Council said the purchase of Narriearra station was good news for the future of conservation.

The Government invited the land council to be involved in naming the new national park.

Ms Robertson said the land council had always had a good relationship with national parks authorities and she had "no doubt" that would continue as ownership of Narriearra station shifted hands.

Posted 27 June 2020, updated 28 June 2020

[ABC Broken Hill](#) By [Saskia Mabin](#)

Editor's note: Although this article is not directly related to waders, any area that has the potential to protect waders must be encouraged. These inland areas, during a big wet, become a magnet for all sorts of water birds and a refuge for those waders who's migration is to track through the inland.

Count Programme

by Linda Cross

It is with disappointment that I report the stepping down of 3 counters from the count programme. Long-time members Ivell and Jim Whyte have ceased counting as Jim has had health issues. They first started counting in October 1993 surveying Dynah Island and the Nudgee area until January 2000 when they became standby counters for many sites in Moreton Bay. In August 2004 they took over surveying Luggage Point (a particularly difficult and muddy site) completing the last count in January 2020. Ivell and Jim have also been heavily involved in regional surveys undertaken by QWSG and they have submitted (or have been involved in) 414 counts that have been added to the database. Apart from the 27 years of counting, Ivell and Jim have also been heavily involved with many other aspects of the QWSG's activities from count coordinators, banding, artwork, displays to name just a few.

Gerry Woodruff from Mackay has also ceased counting due to health reasons and lack of help during counts. Gerry counted Shellgrit Creek entrance in Mackay in October 2011 until June 2020 and contributed 88 counts for that site as well as participating in 25 other counts that have been added to the database.

We would like to sincerely thank Ivell, Jim and Gerry for their contribution to the count programme and hope that they enjoy the rest and relaxation into the future.

Thankfully, we have found two replacements for Luggage Point and welcome Elliot Leach and Gus Daly into the count programme taking over from Ivell and Jim. Elliot was accompanied on his first count in July by Andy Jensen to show him the ropes before Gus joins on future counts. We welcome both Elliot and Gus into the count programme and hope they will enjoy the challenge. It is pleasing to have a couple of younger people join the programme.

I have mentioned previously the difficulties that the QWSG count programme face regarding ageing counters and urge younger members of our organisation to consider helping monitor shorebirds on a more regular basis. QWSG has the most extensive shorebird database in Australia and it would be a great loss if we could not continue to have such an asset available to protect the birds.

There have been a few early reports about returning migratory shorebirds including juvenile Curlew Sandpiper, slight increase in Red Knot (with remnant breeding plumage) and a few Sharp-tailed Sandpipers. It will not be long before more birds start to return to our shores, so clean off those scopes and binoculars in readiness and remember to look out for leg flags and juvenile birds. Counting juvenile birds in the flock gives an indication of the breeding success. Juvenile Bar-tailed Godwit 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 January 2020.

Species	FNQ	CQ	GSS	SC	NMB	CMB	SMB	TH	Totals
Bush Stone-curlew	1								1
Beach Stone-curlew			2	3	2				7
Pied Oystercatcher		2	28	12	15		222	3	282
Sooty Oystercatcher				2					2
Pied Stilt		29	349	6	448	156	273	105	1366
Masked Lapwing	17	5	48	5	90	45	45	2	257
Pacific Golden Plover			1	7	3	9	2		22
Grey Plover			26						26
Kentish Plover				1					1
Red-capped Plover	4	103	111	34	58	212	60		582
Double-banded Plover		2		12	17	17	94		142
Lesser Sand Plover	1			3		228	17		249
Greater Sand Plover	4		5	5		10			24
Black-fronted Dotterel	1		2		11	10	18		42
Comb-crested Jacana			3	6					9
Eurasian Whimbrel	5	1	10	8	126	21	61	8	240
Far Eastern Curlew	6		158	1	108		95		368
Bar-tailed Godwit	20	1	632	35	535	95	599	12	1929
Black-tailed Godwit			1		1				2
Ruddy Turnstone					1		20		21
Great Knot	132		4		1	6	49		192
Red Knot	1						2		3
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper							1		1
Curlew Sandpiper						1	1		2
Red-necked Stint	66	1	1		15	468	296		847
Terek Sandpiper					1	17	2		20
Grey-tailed Tattler	17		4	1	157	102	238		519
Marsh Sandpiper			3						3
Common Greenshank						7	5		12
Unidentified Sand Plover				1	12		1		14
Total Wader Species	13	8	18	17	17	16	20	5	29
Total Wader Numbers	275	144	1388	142	1601	1404	2101	130	7185

FNQ – Far North Queensland.	Total for 3 sites in Cairns and Cooktown.
CQ – Central Queensland.	Total for 3 sites in Yeppoon. (No counts for Bundaberg, Gladstone or 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 15 sites in Redcliffe, Deception Bay, Bribie Island and Toorbul.
CMB – Central Moreton Bay.	Total for 7 sites in the Port of Brisbane and Pine River.
SMB – Southern Moreton Bay.	Total for 17 sites in Victoria Point, Thornlands, Cleveland, 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.

Most counts took place a day or two either side of the scheduled count date (6 June 2020) but the Noosa River count was a week before on 29 May. The Port of Brisbane count was conducted on 28 June due to the Covid-19 restrictions. Regrettably, 14 sites were not counted for the National Winter count.

In the first table, 20 migratory (same as last year) and 9 resident species (2 less than last year) were recorded during the winter count. Migratory waders accounted for 64.5% of the count. Of those 27% were Bar-tailed Godwit which suggests that the species had a good breeding season last year and Red-necked Stint numbers were 12%. Resident wader numbers were 35.5% of the count with Pied Stilt accounting for 19% of the total. The combined south, central and north Moreton Bay sites recorded 71% of the total winter count.

The Moreton Island and St. Helena Island seasonal surveys had to be postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions. Moreton Island sites (5 on the island and 3 other sites within Moreton Bay) were counted on 23 July and St. Helena Island sites (4 in total) were counted on 24 July. A separate table for these counts appears here.

A total of 9 migratory and 5 resident species were recorded for both seasonal counts.

Species	Moreton Island	St. Helena Island	Totals
Beach Stone-curlew	4	2	6
Pied Oystercatcher	162	13	175
Pied Stilt		44	44
Masked Lapwing	3	6	9
Grey Plover	47		47
Red-capped Plover	38		38
Double-banded Plover	193		193
Lesser Sand Plover	8		8
Eurasian Whimbrel	5	50	55
Far Eastern Curlew	110		110
Bar-tailed Godwit	207	46	253
Ruddy Turnstone		6	6
Red-necked Stint	275		275
Sanderling	13		13
Total Wader Species	12	7	14
Total Wader Numbers	1065	167	1232

The Kentish Plover that was first sighted on 22 February this year and reported in the previous issue of the newsletter can still be found in the Noosa river. It was last recorded on the 27 July 2020 count.

Count Site	Date	Quantity
Wave Break Sand Island, Gold Coast	3 August 2020	38
Port of Brisbane complex	26 July 2020	37
King Street mudflat, Thornlands	25 July 2020	21
Sandbank off Amity Point	23 July 2020	106
Mirapool Beach, Moreton Island	23 July 2020	42
Day's Gutter, Moreton Island	23 July 2020	40
Geoff Skinner Reserve East	11 July 2020	45
Geoff Skinner Reserve East	6 June 2020	70
Manly Harbour	4 June 2020	11

As recorded in both National Winter Count tables, Double-banded Plover are still overwintering on our shores and will depart around the time you receive this newsletter. They were recorded at 20 sites during the last few months with numerous comments mentioning breeding plumage in the July counts. Most counts were in single digits but there were 8 sites that recorded double digit counts and 1 site with over 100 birds. I have listed the higher counts in a table here.

A few extracts of higher counts for some migratory species appear below. Additional high wader counts (migratory and resident) can be found in the "Interesting wader sightings" section, although in low numbers, which is expected for this time of the year.

30 Grey Plover – Mirapool, Moreton Island – 23.07.20

228 Lesser Sand Plover – Port of Brisbane complex – 28.06.20

19 Greater Sand Plover – Port of Brisbane complex – 26.07.20
 148 Far Eastern Curlew – Maaroom – 06.06.20
 680 Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Harbour – 04.06.20
 69 Ruddy Turnstone – Geoff Skinner Reserve East – 25.07.20
 142 Great Knot – Cairns Esplanade – 09.05.20 (105 on 24.07.20)
 108 Curlew Sandpiper – Port of Brisbane complex – 26.07.20
 494 Red-necked Stint – Port of Brisbane complex 26.07.20
 17 Terek Sandpiper – Port of Brisbane complex – 28.06.20
 350 Grey-tailed Tattler – Manly Harbour – 25.07.20

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:

Beach Stone-curlew – pair possibly nesting at Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island on 21.06.20.
Pied Oystercatcher – a pair mating at Buckley’s Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island on 06.06.20.
Pied Stilt – 4 newly fledged young at Buckley’s Hole, Bribie Island on 07.06.20. 3 juveniles (probably a result of nesting) at Kianawah Road Wetland on 06.06.20. Numerous juveniles reported at Manly Harbour through May, June and July, which is a result of the species nesting earlier this year reported in an article that appeared in the previous newsletter (issue 112).
Red-capped Plover – a pair nesting with 2 eggs at Manly Harbour on 05.08.20 and 3 pair nesting on 06.08.20, report of nest predated on 08.08.20.

We would like to remind members that the new counter for Tweed Heads (Erina Forrest) is looking for anyone in the Gold Coast/Tweed Heads area that would be willing to help her conduct the counts. Please contact Erina by email at erina.forrest@gmail.com

Counters not entering their counts online, please continue to send them to me at my email or postal address as follows: xenus69@bigpond.com

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

A reminder that Leg flag sightings must not be entered online during count entry. Please note that you can now enter flagged and banded sightings on the new website. If you prefer, you can still email sightings to his email address phillipcross50@gmail.com Please contact Phil or myself for the Leg Flag Observation Report Form.

Happy counting.
 Linda Cross.

Interesting wader sightings – as per IOC species list January 2020

Please note: Whimbrel is now called Eurasian Whimbrel

3 Beach Stone-curlew – Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island – 21.06.20
 134 Pied Oystercatcher – Manly Harbour – 26.05.20
 2 Sooty Oystercatcher – Manly Harbour – 08.08.20
 433 Pied Stilt – Manly Harbour – 04.07.20
 3 Red-necked Avocet (species missing from counts for months) – Trute’s Bay, Tweed Heads – 11.07.20
 42 Masked Lapwing – Bishop’s Marsh, Toorbul – 06.06.20
 14 Red-kneed Dotterel – Lytton – 06.06.20
 26 Grey Plover – Boonooroo site 1 – 06.06.20
 132 Red-capped Plover – Port of Brisbane complex – 28.06.20
 14 Black-fronted Dotterel – Lytton – 06.06.20
 6 Comb-crested Jacana – Ewan Maddock Dam – 06.06.20
 99 Eurasian Whimbrel – Toorbul – 06.06.20
 6 Red Knot – Manly Harbour – 07.08.20
 5 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Bundaberg Port – 26.07.20
 13 Sanderling – Mirapool Beach, Moreton Island – 23.07.20
 3 Marsh Sandpiper – Boonooroo site 1 – 06.06.20
 7 Common Greenshank – Manly Harbour – 19.07.20

Not waders but of interest anyway – as per IOC species list January 2020

Please note: Gull-billed Tern is now called Australian Tern. The old name of Gull-billed Tern now relates to the race *affinis*. Pied Cormorant is now called Australian Pied Cormorant.

62 Plumed Whistling Duck – Bishop's Marsh, Toorbul – 26.07.20
 151 Black Swan – Garnet's Lagoon No. 1 and No. 2 combined, Hervey Bay – 06.06.20
 8 Raja Shelduck – Endeavour River claypan, Cooktown – 06.06.20
 4 Brolga (includes 2 young) – Garnet's Lagoon No. 2, Hervey Bay – 06.08.20
 9 Australasian Shoveler – Garnet's Lagoon No. 1 and No. 2 combined, Hervey Bay – 06.06.20
 1 Gull-billed Tern (*affinis*) – Toorbul – 26.07.20
 21 Lesser Crested Tern – Manly Harbour – 08.08.20
 2 Black-necked Stork – Cairns Esplanade – 06.06.20
 1,300 Australian Pied Cormorant – Sandbank off Amity Point – 23.07.20
 4 Great Cormorant (possibly sitting on nest) – Garnet's Lagoon No. 1 and No. 2 combined, Hervey Bay – 06.06.20
 2 Great Cormorant – Port of Brisbane complex – 26.07.20
 14 Glossy Ibis – Redcliffe Airport Northside, Redcliffe – 27.07.20
 640+ Eastern Cattle Egret – Garnet's Lagoon No. 1 and No. 2 combined, Hervey Bay – 06.08.20
 2 White-necked Heron – Kinka Wetlands, Yeppoon – 06.06.20
 63 White-faced Heron – Geoff Skinner Reserve East – 06.06.20
 1 Collared Sparrowhawk – Kinka Wetlands, Yeppoon – 25.07.20
 1 Black Kite – Kedron Brook Wetlands – 02.08.20

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. phillipcross50@gmail.com

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.

The updated QWSG website now has a tab to 'report a banded / leg flag sighting' on the main page, you may have to scroll down the page to find it.

GREEN leg flag sightings seen in QLD

A quantity of 4 plain flags, 6 misread, 1 unread and 108 engraved flags have been added to the database since the last newsletter; so, things have been much quieter compared to the previous quarter's total.

A total of 10 different species with a flag were recorded - Bar-tailed Godwit, Double-banded Plover, Far Eastern Curlew, Great Knot, Grey-tailed Tattler, Pied Oystercatcher, Pied Stilt, Red-capped Plover, Ruddy Turnstone and Whimbrel.

Thank you to the observers who reported these sightings – Tony Cotter, Arthur Keates, and Dez Wells.

GREEN leg flag sightings seen INTERSTATE

Nil

GREEN leg flag sightings seen OVERSEAS

In South Korea

Bar-tailed Godwit - All the following were seen at Aphae Island by Andreas Kim

AYD – 19.5.2020

EC – 17, 19, 20 & 21.5.2020

PR – 17, 19 & 20.5.2020

In Russia

All the following were seen at Khairusova and Belogovaya Rivers Estuary
Great Knot

AJV – 11 & 16.7.2019 – Ekaterina Khudyakova
 ATY – 12, 13, 16, & 17.7.2019 - Ekaterina Khudyakova
 AYV – 30.6.2019 - Ekaterina Khudyakova
 AZB – 29.7.2019 – Anton Ivanov
 AZB – 4.8.2019 – Anton Ivanov
 BBZ – 30.6.2019 - Ekaterina Khudyakova, Dmitry Dorofeev & Anna Shupikova
 BEA – 23.7.2019 – Anton Ivanov & Dmitry Dorofeev
 BEB – 5.7.2019 – Dmitry Dorofeev
 BER – 10.7.2019 – Dmitry Dorofeev
 BRF – 10.7.2019 – Dmitry Dorofeev
 BRF – 12.7.2019 - Ekaterina Khudyakova
 BRZ – 12.8.2019 – Dmitry Dorofeev
 BTB – 3.7.2019 – Anna Shupikova
 BTK – 13.7.2019 - Ekaterina Khudyakova
 CMY – 10.7.2019 – Dmitry Dorofeev
 CNT – 9.7.2019 – Anna Shupikova
 CNT – 11.7.2019 – Anna Shupikova & Ekaterina Khudyakova
 CNT – 17.7.2019 – Anna Shupikova
 Plain flag – 15.7.2019 – Anna Shupikova

In Japan

Grey-tailed Tattler

ANN – 23.7.2019 – Koromozaki Isshiki-cho Nishio-shi Aichi-ken – Hikaru Asai
 ADR – 25.8.2019 – Nishiashirai beach Asahi-shi Chiba-ken – Takumi Kato

YELLOW (WA) leg flag sightings seen in Qld

Nil

ORANGE (Victoria) leg flag sightings seen in QLD.

Nil

OVERSEAS FLAGGED birds seen in QLD

Nil

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.

H1 – 4.6.20 – Tweed River entrance – Kathy Wilk & Robert Mackenzie

Caspian Tern Orange flag (Victoria)

E6 - 21.6.20 + 1 Unread ELF & 1 Plain flag - Kakadu Beach Bribie – Michael Strong

Wader ID Days

Due to issues surrounding the Covid-19 virus, at this stage there are no scheduled ID days during spring. However, depending on circumstances, notice of an ID day at the Manly, Toorbul or Kakadu roosts will be posted on QWSG's website.

Regardless, numbers will be limited and attendees will be required to register and, in accordance with Birds Qld policy, sign a health declaration before taking part.

The Return of Bar-tailed Godwit AWN

Sharp eyed Arthur Keates has seen one of our satellite tracker-tagged Godwits at Manly Boat Harbour on the 17th August 2020.

Jon Coleman, the QWSG banding coordinator reports “Yes, the device is still transmitting and interestingly the bird did the same aborted migration to PNG coast and back to Townsville last year before then coming back to Manly.”



QWSG SPONSORS CHILDREN'S BOOK "THE CALL OF THE FAR EASTERN CURLEW"

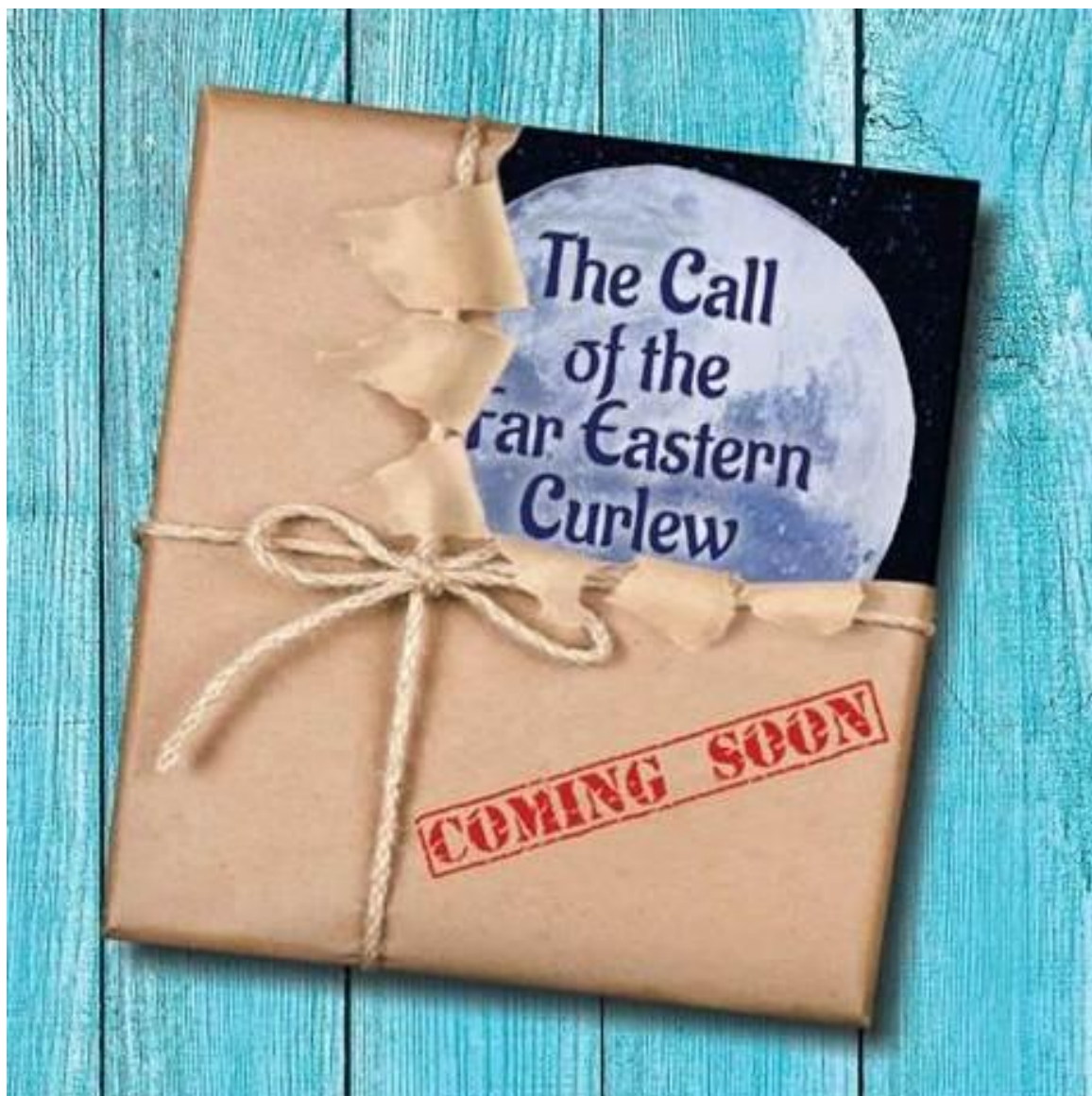
QWSG has provided financial support to locals Katrina Logan, author, and Geoff Logan, illustrator, for the publication of a children's book that tells the story of a young boy, Parker, who is fascinated by birds, especially migratory shorebirds.

Parker is in awe of the critically endangered, Far Eastern Curlew, but he is worried that he sees fewer of them each year in Moreton Bay. His concern increases when he sees more and more disturbance while he watches them feeding on the mudflats.

Encouraged by his father, Parker sets out to raise awareness of the plight of these long-distance travellers.

To be published in mid-October, the book can be ordered online through the author's Facebook page:

https://www.facebook.com/katrinaloganauthor/posts/?ref=page_internal



QWSG Web Site Update

The QWSG has been updating and expanding its web site over the last few months and the result is now ready to be seen.

Your QWSG Committee decided that the web site had become a little dated and needed to have a couple of major improvements that would help with the running of the group.

We approached a couple of specialist companies for ideas and quotes before finally settling on Working Planet Design out of Buderim. We have been more than happy with the level of service and commitment given to us by Nahum Szumer (workingplanetdesign@gmail.com).

The result has not been without its hiccups and we are sure that there are still a couple of glitches to sort out, so please bear with us.

The first major change has been that we now have an online facility to accept your membership payments. This still has some improvements to come though most of these are behind the scenes. So, if you do have any queries about this facility please contact Brenda Smith email membership@wader.org.au.

The second change is that we have also set up a page for the online recording of your flag sightings. This is great because you can now get the information to Phil Cross with out the hassle of paper. It will also help at the receiving end as it should mean easy input into the database for Phil or any future Flag Sightings Officer.

The counters will already be aware of the changes to the input to the Counters Page.

We hope to have more regular updates to the web site so that it is a little more relevant to the day to day activities of the group.

Once again, many thanks to Nahum for overseeing these changes, plus thanks to Peter Driscoll who lead the update for QWSG. Behind the scenes Linda and Phil Cross, Judith Giles, Brenda Smith and many others have helped to sort out problems as they have arisen, but also have foreseen and steered us around obstacles before they have become problems.

Another updated web site

A fresh look and feel with all the best local NRM information

For some time, the online team at Reef Catchments has been working behind the scenes to create a new-look website. Now we are pleased to announce that the website is up and running.

Please visit reefcatchments.com.au and have a look around for yourself and enjoy the newer, brighter feel of our main online resource.

Good News, the Great Sandy Roost Site Mapping is now Available

Wetlandmaps. <https://wetlandinfo.des.qld.gov.au/wetlandmaps/>

If you go to the link and scroll down the 'layer list' on the right-hand side you should see a check box. The information and metadata are linked to the Queensland Spatial Catalogue, so all of the same copyrights and accreditations still remain from the original web publishing.

Optics for sale

We do not usually have adverts in the Qld Wader newsletter, however, one of our long-term members died and his son, Trevor, is giving QWSG members a chance to make an investment for the future of their bird (wader) watching with these excellent optics.

For sale

The best Swarovski Spotting Scope with tripod and protective case. Three years old, as new condition, barely used, balance of 10 year warranty transfers.

85 mm ATX/BTX objective module, BTX ocular module, ME 1.7x extender, BR balance rail, PTH professional tripod head, CT101 carbon fibre tripod, stay on cases. \$5900.

Contact Trevor Gleeson; 0407313655; jactrev@outlook.com



For sale

Swarovski binoculars; EL 8.5x 42 WB Green. Three years old, as new condition, barely used, balance of 10-year warranty transfers. \$2300,

Contact Trevor Gleeson; 0407313655; jactrev@outlook.com

Save the Dates*

19th, 20th, 21st March 2021

For the Australasian Shorebird Conference 2021 in Brisbane,
Queensland, Australia



Hosted by the Queensland Wader Study Group on behalf of the Australasian
Wader Study Group

*Subject to the whims of Covid-19

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

president@birdsqueensland.org.au
secretary@birdsqueensland.org.au
treasurer@birdsqueensland.org.au

Please not that there is to be an AGM in December 2020 when positions and names will change

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.

Please check to see what Government restrictions apply and visit the BQ website for up to date information

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

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined recently:

Sally Anthony, Frances Barnes, Roxanne Bowers, Paul Davies, Gus Daly,

Jacqui Edwards, Amanda Freeman, Alistair Freeman, Tessa Freeman,

Jane Hall, Kathrin Kelly, Elliot Leach, Jess Leach,

Penelope Lind and family, Van-Khanh Vu, Diana Whitehead

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.

PLEASE CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR RENEWAL IS DUE!

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.

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 the QWSG's AGM for 2020

The 2020 QWSG AGM will be held on Sunday 6th Dec 2020 at 2:30 pm at Lota Camping Reserve, opposite Bart's Fish & Chips, which is at 687 Esplanade, LOTA.

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

NOMINATION FOR POSITION ON QWSG MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Name of Nominee:

Position:

Name of Proposer:

Name of Seconder:

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

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

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

<u>CHAIRPERSON:</u>	David Edwards	(07) 3262 2017	chairperson@waders.org.au
<u>TREASURER</u>	Judith Giles	0409 062 310	treasurer@waders.org.au
<u>SECRETARY:</u>	Peter Rothlisberg	(07) 3822 3759	secretary@waders.org.au
<u>MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY</u>	Brenda Smith		membership@waders.org.au
<u>NEWSLETTER EDITOR:</u>	David Edwards	(07) 3262 2017	gouldian6@bigpond.com

QWSG COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Robert Bush	0404 805 558	Jon Coleman	(07) 3299 2780
Peter Driscoll	0418 212 627	Paul Finn	0480 177 792
Sheryl Keates	(07) 3843 1874	Ross McMillan	
Brad Woodworth	0439 577 551		

<u>COUNT COORDINATOR:</u>	Linda Cross	07 5495 2758	Email xenus69@bigpond.com
<u>LEG FLAG COORDINATOR</u>	Phil Cross	07 5495 2758	Email phillipcross50@gmail.com

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

CORRESPONDENCE All correspondence to:
The QWSG Chairperson,
54, Elliott Street,
CLAYFIELD,
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,
PO Box 3138,
SOUTH BRISBANE,
QLD 4101.

Members are reminded their membership expires on the date shown on the newsletter address label, and the membership joining/renewal form is now on the back page. **Note:** that your subscription will fall due twelve (12) months after date of joining the QWSG or date of renewal, and only one further newsletter will be sent after expiry of your subscription.

Copy Deadline for the next issue of Queensland Wader is **February 14th, 2021**

Contributions should be addressed to:

David Edwards, the QWSG Editor, 54 Elliott Street, Clayfield, Qld 4011
or E-mail to: gouldian6@bigpond.com

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.

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admin@jrdsons.com.au



Count Activities – 2020

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Program 2020

COUNTERS PLEASE FOLLOW

Sat 19th Sep 2.27m at 10:49

Sat 17th Oct 2.39m at 09:44

Sat 7th Nov 2.12m at 13:47

Sat 5th Dec 2.32m at 12:39

ALL GOVERNMENT DIRECTIONS UNTIL

RESTRICTIONS ARE LIFTED.

Port of Brisbane Count Dates 2020

COUNTERS PLEASE FOLLOW

Sun 20th Sep 2.30m at 11:36

Meet 09:45

Sun 18th Oct 2.46m at 10:30

Meet 08:40 **PETER or LINDA'S DIRECTIONS with**

Sun 8th Nov 2.11m at 14:52

Meet 13:00

Sun 6th Dec 2.28m at 13:28

Meet 11:50 **REGARDS to the PORT.**

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

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 :.....)

You will receive your newsletter (colour version) by E-mail.....

Signature Date:.....

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

Direct funds transfer to:

OR

Please post this form to: QWSG Membership Secretary

Qld Wader Study Group

PO Box 3138,

BSB: 313 140 (Bank Australia)

SOUTH BRISBANE,

Account number: 08305297

QLD 4101.