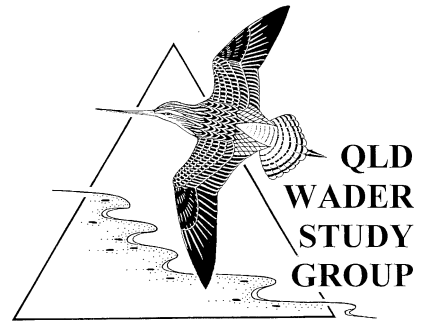


QUEENSLAND WADER



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

IN SEARCH OF RARE WADERS IN THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT

Part 1 – NEPAL

The Indian sub-continent is a popular destination for birders with a great diversity of birds (over 1200 species), large national parks, good infrastructure and interesting culture. What is a better-kept secret is that there are also many rare and restricted range waders. Three of us (Sandra, Graham and I) visited the Indian sub-continent for nine weeks from late December 2003 until February 2004 in search of new birds, and these elusive waders and here are some of our tales of that search. Graham was especially interested in the waders and he started out with a target of 13 species of wader that winter in the sub-continent or are rare elsewhere. All these species either preferred freshwater habitats or were not restricted to aquatic environments. They included mostly families that do not occur in Australia (Coursers, Ibisbill), or are poorly represented (Snipes, Lapwings, Jacanas, Thick-knees). Here are some of the tales of our search.....

Our trip started in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal and a country where two of the mega-waders, Ibisbill and Long-billed Plover occur. Kathmandu is set in a large valley at about 1300m, in the foothills of the Himalayas. The Bagmati River runs through town and its waters are used by humans and animals alike for washing and waste. On the edge of town, the river runs through the district of Chobar. Here among the cattle and rubbish we started our search for our first new wader, Grey-headed Lapwing. This is the largest of the northern (Palaeartic) lapwings with a grey head and neck. It winters in shallow flowing water or adjacent agricultural lands in the foothills of the Himalayas. After an hour walking along the river at Chobar, Sandra was the first to spot what she thought was a head of a large duck far in the distance. It got our attention, but the bird turned out to be our first Grey-headed Lapwing feeding in the shallows on the opposite bank. We quickly spotted several others and the flock totalled about 15 birds in the end. We only knew of one or two sites for this species in the sub-continent, so we were off to a great start because not only had we seen the Lapwing, but also Little Ringed Plover, Green and Common Sandpiper, Common Redshank and our own Common Greenshank.

The next day we were off to the lowlands, starting with four days at the world-renowned Chitwan National Park. First, there was the small matter of trying to find the Ibisbill along the way. Ibisbill are one of those strange species that don't fit the usual bill for waders. It's confined to large, fast-flowing rivers of the Himalayas and adjacent ranges in China. They feed in the water by catching insects attached to the underside of rocks that are larger than about two handfuls in size. So their preferred habitat is only along middle sections of the larger rivers and they are known to occur at very low densities and are one of the species everyone wants to see. Our travel organiser, Badri, had told the driver to stop just before the small town of Belku on the Trisuli River, about 100 km SW of Kathmandu. Here, the Trisuli is about 150 m wide and was being mined for gravel for road works and construction and used for washing trucks, people and animals. We duly got out at the appropriate place and my first thought was "...there's no way a rare wader like Ibisbill will be here amongst the hordes of people and activity".

However, we set the telescopes up and I went through the motions of pretending to look for Ibisbill. At the same time, Sandra was scanning the bank with her binoculars and asked us "What's this ? I think I have got one !" Sure enough, a lone Ibisbill was wading quietly along the opposite bank feeding in a small backwater. This had been one the THE birds of the trip for Graham. He had spent considerable time without luck on a previous trip to Nepal trying to find them at one of the two other sites we knew. We spent the next 30 minutes attracting a crowd of curious locals as we watched the Ibisbill intently, as it fed along the river. We were all very happy, as it was one of the waders we most wanted to see. The rest of the 8 hr trip to Chitwan went quickly and seeing species like Brown Dipper and Little Forktail at our lunch stop just added to our enjoyment of the crowded roads as they snaked along river valleys and negotiated washouts. Nothing mattered today because we'd seen the Ibisbill !!

Ibisbill in its typical habitat in Nepal



Greater Painted Snipe from SE Nepal



We arrived in the village of Meghauri on the edge of Chitwan NP and opposite the Rapti River crossing where rich foreigners enter the NP to stay at the luxurious Tiger Tops Lodge. Us poorer tourists stay at places like Chital Lodge, in mud and thatch huts with cold showers and squat toilets for \$6 a night rather than US\$350 at Tiger Tops. The owner of the lodge was a highly regarded guide called Jib and he was waiting for us outside his humble establishment when we finally negotiated the rough, pothole-filled track that led to his lodge. Before we had left Australia, Graham had tried to contact him in vain for several months. We did not know if there would be room available or even if the lodge still existed. Luckily, we did not have to worry, Jib told us in his best Nepali-English. "It will be no problems, because of course I was expecting you". We knew this was nonsense, but were happy to be the only guests as this ensured Jib could guide us in Chitwan.



Over the next three days, we made trips into the NP each day with Jib and spotted waders along the sandbanks of the Rapti River. We were hoping for Long-billed Plover as well as Little Pratincole. In the evening of the first full day, we treated to the delight of a 1000 plus flock of Little Pratincoles swooping and roosting along the rocky river bank in the late afternoon. To our surprise and delight, Graham also found a stray Ibisbill feeding in the rapids directly below our riverbank vantage point. This was much lower down than we expected given all the reports we had of this species. It gave us the joy of further studying this unusual wader as it fed around large rocks in the fast flowing river. Our other quarry, Long-billed Plover eluded us, although we tried

hard to turn the common Little Ringed Plovers and Kentish Plovers into their much rarer relative.

From there, we had planned to drive back to Kathmandu and get a flight to our next destination, Kosi Tappu, in south-eastern Nepal. Unfortunately, we only made the first town when our driver recognised another driver from his company and found out that the Maoist rebels had blown up a Nepali army truck on the main

road about 30 km east of the town, effectively blocking the road for the rest of the day. After some quick telephone calls, we turned around and started the 250 km drive to Kosi Tappu. This trip should have taken about 6 hrs, and things were going well until we saw several trucks, cars and buses stopped in the middle of a small village. Our driver asked and found out that there had been an accident and a villager had been hit by a truck while crossing the road. The response of the village was to close the road until the small matter of compensation was negotiated. Unfortunately for us, this meant that no one was going to be using the road until this matter was sorted out. The village committee put large tree trunks across Nepal's main east-west highway to make sure they were taken seriously. So, for the next three hours as the traffic built up and late afternoon turned into night, we sat in the car or walked around nearby as the highly agitated villagers made their opinions known to all. About 8 pm, after 4 hrs of sitting in the queue, there was major excitement as the word was passed that "The army is coming, the army is coming!". Everyone rush to their vehicle and there was a roar of engines as everyone started up in anticipation of a resolution. Within 5 min we were on our way, jostling with other vehicles to get past the army roadblock and moved trees. We had another hour of high speed night driving before we eventually arrived at Khosi Camp, our comfortable lodge for the next four nights.



The Kosi River is the largest in Nepal and runs through Kosi Tappu, a large wetland and woodland reserve in the lowlands of south-eastern Nepal, adjacent to the Indian border. Among the diversity of wetland and forest birds, we hoped to see Great Thick-knee. Greater Painted Snipe and Long-billed Plover were also on the reserve list and I was especially keen to see the snipe, since the Australian race has been shown to be a separate species. The next day, we started our birding by going by Landrover downstream along the bund wall that entrains the Kosi River. We saw several Common Snipe in a number of wetlands, but no Greater Painted Snipe until our guide, Som, picked up a pair

standing amongst some vegetation in a small swamp near the main river. They look very similar to our birds and I can see why they had been treated as the same species until recent genetic studies showed them to be distinct. This was a bonus and set the tone for the next three days. In that time, we saw the Great Thick-knees on an isolated bank in the river, Northern Lapwings in a rice field, further views of Grey-headed Lapwings at a lunchtime stop and excellent view of the very elegant looking River Lapwing.

We left Nepal happy after two weeks and 270 species of bird. Five of our target 13 rare waders were under the belt and we still had some chance of seeing the two we missed – Long-billed Plover and Wood Snipe in northern India. Now we flew west from Kathmandu to New Delhi and into northern India to start the next leg of our adventure chasing rare waders in the Indian sub-continent.

David Milton
Sandra Harding
Graham Palmer

Mackay Shorebird Project Final Report

The final report has been produced in draft form for WWF Australia. It will be provided to the local governments and other stakeholders. A copy of the final report on CD is available on request for QWSG members.

Please Email Sandra Harding at:
pitta@gil.com.au

Use in the subject line - QWSG Mackay Report

Mackay Trip – February 2004

The final report on the Mackay Shorebird Project was completed by Sandra Harding and David Milton towards the end of 2003 and was presented to WWF Australia, the local governments and other stakeholders. The funding for the project came from the Natural Heritage Trust and was expended with the last survey of the region in October 2003.

As reported in the Qld Wader issue 46, the QWSG committee decided to go ahead with one more survey and the dates of 7th and 8th of February 2004 were chosen in an endeavour to obtain a count of wader numbers prior to the northward migration taking place.

Ten QWSG members from Brisbane and one from Townsville were allocated sites for the weekend and as with previous surveys some changes took place prior to arriving in Mackay. Security at Brisbane and Mackay airports were kept busy with a number of the group being tested for explosives, one setting off the scanning alarm at Brisbane caused by inserts in her shoes, which she took off for the return journey, but again set off the alarm because she neglected to remove her mobile phone. Another member of the group was asked to remove a metal cylinder from his backpack, which was an aluminium water bottle and then asked to open it and sniff the contents before the security guard did the same. Raised eyebrows from the QWSG member prompted a response from the security guard that he could tell him some stories!

Recent storms, heavy rain and the forecast of coastal showers and strong south easterly winds for the week end in the Mackay region was not what this organiser wanted to hear.

Things looked ominous when five of us set off to do the first survey on Thursday afternoon at Tedlands, which is a wetland area south of Sarina. Water was pouring over the causeway and we were unable to access the back section of the site. The water level right up to the side of the road had someone making a comment that the large crocodile seen in the area in early 2003 could be eyeing us up as we stood and looked for birds, but a reassuring comment came from another saying that it would probably be under the large cattle egret rookery a short distance away. Only one large unidentified wader (probably a Whimbrel) was seen flying away from the site and vehicle access to a dam surveyed during October was not possible due to the recent rains. Two of the group set off on foot only to find that the dam and surrounding area was waterlogged and no waders were seen.

Friday morning looked much better weatherwise with only a brief shower soon after we arrived at Shellgrit Creek to hold the wader identification and count session. Eleven residents attended and enjoyed viewing thirteen species of waders totalling 452 birds before a very large high tide covered the area by 10.15am. With time to spare before we had to pick up two of the team arriving from Brisbane we headed off to survey the Mackay Port Authority site. By 11am when we started the survey it was quite hot and humid, but this did not stop some of us spending time trying to photograph a Black-winged Stilt on a nest, while others watched another Stilt chase a Whistling Kite in the air. More time was spent watching yet another Black-winged Stilt shaking both wings in some sort of display, which then led us to a discussion on whether it was to do with courtship or defence. HANZAB volume two, page 764, Figure 2 clearly shows that it was injury-feigning.

The afternoon was spent changing site allocations yet again after hearing that one of the boats for the Saturday surveys was cancelled and would not be going to the far southern sites the next day due to the strong winds and two of the Brisbane team having to cancel at the last minute due to unforeseen circumstances. The strong winds also meant that Peter Driscoll could not travel from Townsville in his ultra light to assist with an aerial survey, so he was assigned to take the place of one of the group in the helicopter going out of Airlie Beach. This meant that he would not have to travel all the way down to Mackay to assist with the survey.

On the way to collect the last of the group from the airport on Friday evening we rescued a turtle from the main highway before it sustained serious injury, or death and one of the group had his hands full trying to hold on to the squirming thing before we could place it in the waters around the Mackay Botanical Gardens prior to the education/slide session taking place that evening. A barbeque prior to the evening's events was well attended, as was the education session with just over 40 people learning about the waders of their region.

Saturday brought some heavy showers, particularly to the groups doing Armstrong Beach and Dudgeon Point sites, but the day improved and became hot and humid by the time the group doing the latter sites arrived at their last survey area, Lake Barfield.

The weather on Sunday had much improved and most of the group only had wet clothes from the amount of sweat coming from their bodies due to the hot humid conditions. The team covering St. Helens Beach (Linda's team) were greeted by local resident Marie Burns, who has helped with previous surveys of the area. This time Marie introduced another resident, Lyn Mellisant, who was very interested in learning more about the waders and who joined our team at this site.

During the St Helens Beach survey along the foreshore we encountered over 20 bush walkers from Airlie Beach and some five to ten minutes was spent discussing waders and their incredible journeys. After the count of the beach and sandbar was completed we had to wait for about 45 minutes for the very high tide to peak and fill the claypan that had to be surveyed next. We adjourned to the shaded seating area, where Marie had assembled a group of other locals keen to ask questions about the surveys we had undertaken in the area. Also waiting for us was morning tea with a feast of banana muffins, pumpkin scones, pumpkin fruitcake, and biscuits washed down with tea or coffee. Thanks to Lyn Jorgensen, who did all the baking and Marie Hayes, Di Salau, Marie Burns and Lyn Mellisant for making us feel very welcome in their little bit of paradise.



A total of 46 sites were surveyed. No leg flags were observed at any of the sites and the only breeding records were 2 immature Masked Lapwings at Lake Barfield, the Black-winged Stilt on a nest at the Mackay Port Authority site and possible nesting of the same species at Habana Warf.

A table with figures on the wader species (in taxonomic order) and numbers recorded during the reconnaissance in November 2002 plus the four additional surveys of the Mackay region area included with this article. Waterbirds were also recorded using the sites, however, again due to lack of space in the newsletter, they are not printed. Six sites could not be surveyed due to the strong winds and this fact could explain the lower wader totals than the count in January 2003.

Some interesting wader figures include: -

3 Beach Stone-curlew at Bakers Creek, north bank
 2 Beach Stone-curlew at Dudgeon Point
 2 Bush Stone-curlew at Habana Wharf claypan
 2 Bush Stone-curlew at Dudgeon Point
 257 Whimbrel at Bakers Creek mouth
 3 Black-tailed Godwit at Armstrong Beach
 1 Black-tailed Godwit at Dudgeon Point creek mouth
 51 Grey Plover at Neil's Beach, Sand Bay

19 Sooty Oystercatcher at Dudgeon Point
 320+ Pied Oystercatcher at St. Helens Beach
 20 Common Greenshank at Shellgrit Creek
 2218 Great Knot at O'Connell River Mouth
 600 Greater Sand Plovers at O'Connell River Mouth
 955 Lesser Sand Plover at Pioneer River south bank
 580 Lesser Sand Plover at Dudgeon Point
 260 Terek Sandpiper at Dunrock south arm

Not waders, but of interest anyway:

4 Radjah Shelduck at Habana Warf
 1 Radjah Shelduck at McEwans Beach Swamp
 27 Wandering Whistling Duck at Mac's Truck Stop
 3 Wandering Whistling Duck at Mackay Port Authority
 1 Wandering Whistling Duck at Tedlands
 2 Plumed Whistling Duck at Mackay Port Authority
 2 pair of Plumed Whistling Duck with ducklings (8 one group and 10 the other)
 3 Great-crested Grebe at Lake Barfield
 2 Black-necked Stork at Habana Warf claypan

1 Black-necked Stork (male) at Shellgrit Creek
 1 Black-necked Stork at McEwan's Beach Swamp
 5 Brolga at Tedlands
 2 Brolga at Lake Barfield (dancing display)
 5 Brolga at Dudgeon Point
 3 Brolga (1 immature) at Hodge's Lagoon
 1 Reef Egret at St. Helens Beach
 487 Little Tern River Mouth at O'Connell
 449 Crested Tern at Dudgeon Point creek mouth
 7 Lesser Crested Tern at Sand Bay roost 1

SPECIES	Reconnaissance Nov 2002	Jan 2003	Apr 2003	Oct 2003	Feb 2004
Black-tailed Godwit	-	331	-	116	71
Bar-tailed Godwit	1242	4360	236	1530	2343
Little Curlew	-	16	-	1	-
Whimbrel	332	813	1586	1647	975
Eastern Curlew	546	1324	448	1235	294
Marsh Sandpiper	5	50	5	2	11
Common Greenshank	88	153	80	148	90
Terek Sandpiper	21	152	179	172	329
Common Sandpiper	-	2	-	-	-
Grey-tailed Tattler	46	417	1311	929	832
Ruddy Turnstone	-	61	98	10	38
Great Knot	447	5679	229	1935	6047
Red Knot	-	31	29	251	7
Red-necked Stint	162	1995	844	1676	749
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	25	1030	4	1006	68
Curlew Sandpiper	40	90	13	191	5
Comb-crested Jacana	-	18	2	1	1
Bush Stone-curlew	-	12	5	3	4
Beach Stone-curlew	2	4	10	2	7
Pied Oystercatcher	134	662	477	223	539
Sooty Oystercatcher	10	40	33	20	35
Black-winged Stilt	15	268	39	8	56
Pacific Golden Plover	59	457	208	775	39
Grey Plover	91	113	89	39	175
Red-capped Plover	57	356	231	419	157
Double-banded Plover	-	-	1	-	-
Lesser Sand Plover	33	1817	895	499	1887
Greater Sand Plover	14	493	170	1462	1078
Black-fronted Dotterel	4	20	2	19	1
Red-kneed Dotterel	-	4	-	3	-
Masked Lapwing	14	81	118	76	51
Australian Pratincole	-	4	-	-	-
Unidentified larger wader	-	-	21	-	1
Unidentified medium wader	60	53	108	202	-
Unidentified small wader	21	-	179	-	35
Unidentified Sand Plover sp.	-	714	140	-	-
Unidentified Tattler sp.	-	9	-	-	-
Unidentified Snipe sp.	-	-	-	1	-
Unidentified wader	-	-	200	150	-
Total waders	3868	21629	7990	14751	15925

We would like to thank the following people for allowing survey teams onto or through their property to conduct the counts. Their cooperation is very much appreciated:

Joe & Phyllis Abela – owners of Habana Wharf
Mick & Shirley Hodge – owners of Hodge's Lagoon at Shoal Point
Vic Welsh – owner of Tedlands Wetlands
Mackay Port Authority – Mackay Port Wetlands
Landowner – access to Dudgeon Point

Thanks to Jim Ryman, the owner of Bucasia Beach Store, for his time and use of the boat to count Bakers Creek on all four surveys.

We would like to sincerely thank the following people for their assistance with this survey:
Derek Ball and the staff from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services, Stuart Fyfe of Mackay City Council, members of the Mackay Conservation Group, members of the Bird Observers Club of Australian Mackay branch and Maureen Cooper for their continued support.

Our sincere thanks to everyone for their assistance during all past surveys.

The participants for this survey are listed below: -

- QPWS staff: - Derek Ball, Andrew Dinwoodie, Tim Holmes, Ross Monash, Barry Nolan, Michael Overland.
- QWSG Members: - Michele Burford, Linda Cross, Phil Cross, Peter Driscoll, David Edwards, Joyce Harding, Peter Rothlisberg, Ivell Whyte, Jim Whyte.
- MACKAY CONSERVATION GROUP: - Maureen Cooper.
- BOCA Mackay: - Marj Andrews, Dell Williams.
- Other helpers: - Edna Barker, Leonie Daws, Faye Griffin, Jim Ryman, Desley Williams.

By Linda Cross.

New Zealand Bird Banding Scheme

Thank you for the request to comment on a New Zealand colour marking proposal for Red Knot and Bar-tailed Godwit.

Comments are provided in my Wetlands International capacity in relation to implementation of the East Asian-Australasian Shorebird Action Plan and my past involvement with developing the "Colour Flagging Protocol for Migratory Shorebirds in the East Asian Australasian Flyway".

I consider the research proposal by the project proponent to be of high scientific and conservation merit. I am keen that a colour marking schema is made available to enable the proposed research to be conducted.

The proposal under consideration involves two species (Bar-tailed Godwit and Red Knot) that migrate the length of the Flyway. It can be anticipated that marked birds will occur on migration in Australia, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, China, Japan, the Korean peninsula, Russia, Alaska and some of the Pacific Islands. Birds migrating from New Zealand will be breeding in Russia and Alaska. There is the possibility the some birds may change their non-breeding grounds from New Zealand to Australia (however existing records tend to indicate that birds return to New Zealand once they know how good it is!).

The proposal does propose a significant challenge to one of the key principles of the "Colour Flagging Protocol". The Protocol advocates researchers use flags in Flyway migration research and colour bands in site studies and individual marking studies. This was on the basis that flagging significantly increased the potential for re-sightings for the public and as such was a more powerful tool to use in Flyway migration research.

The justification provided by the project proponent for the use a flag in combination with colour bands is:

- A detailed study of survival rates requires individual markings.
- The leg flag draws attention to the banded bird.
- During migration, in the event of an incomplete band combination being recorded, the white leg-flag enables the bird to be identified as from New Zealand.
- The use of the leg-flag means that as few colours as possible can be used in the band combination.
- The leg flag means that the scheme does not overlap with any other smaller-scale banding projects in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway that may colour-band knots or godwits.
- Both godwits and knots have been studied for the past 6 years in Europe and West Africa using an equivalent scheme, with no problems. They are still resighting birds banded in the first season, and Red Knots have an annual survival rate of 86%, implying little or no impacts on survival.

I consider these sound justifications.

- As researches and banding scheme administrators I would like us to establish a set of principles for cases when approval would be given to using the combination of colour bands and flags. My suggestions for discussion are that approval be limited to:
 - Proposals of high scientific and conservation merit.
 - Studies that will yield sufficient re-sightings to enable sound conclusions.
 - The flag combinations used follow the existing schema for the region.
 - The schema being adopted by all researchers within the colour flagging region.

- Approval being restricted to species that will be marked in sufficient numbers to provide sound scientific conclusions from the research.
- Documentation is provided on how re-sightings will be stimulated in the flyway and feedback provided.
- Documentation is provided on how issues of animal ethics will be addressed and how any adverse impacts of the marks will be collated and reported.
- Details in the project proposal on the timeframe for analysis and reporting of outcomes.

More broadly: For some time I have discussed the possibility of establishing a listserver for researchers and banding schemes to enable discussion on this type of matter. The concept is that this forum would be restricted to the Banding Schemes and key contacts identified by Colour Flagging Groups (people to whom this message has been sent). I am ready to move on this but would appreciate your comments on the value of such a forum - no point in investing time if it is not used!

I would also appreciate any comments to improve the accuracy of the attached "Colour Flagging Protocol for Migratory Shorebirds in the East Asian Australasian Flyway". It is proposed to post the updated version on the AWSG web site: <http://www.tasweb.com.au/aws/index.htm>

Regards Doug.-----

Manager, Wetlands International – Oceania

PO Box 787, Canberra, ACT 2601

SOUTHERN GULF BIRDS and WETLAND FORUM

5-6 MAY 2004

This forum was held at Karumba on the 5th & 6th May 2004. While the southeastern Gulf of Carpentaria, generally referred to as the Southern Gulf is the most important wetland in Queensland, it has not attained a protected status. Responsibility for management of wetlands lies mainly with landholders. This forum aimed to raise the profile of the wetland, waterbird and shorebird values. The QWSG contributed to the forum by providing three posters prepared by Ivell Whyte. QWSG members, Peter Driscoll, Ivell Whyte and Joyce Harding attended the forum. This report provides a summary of the issues, speakers, presentations and field trips.

Peter Driscoll's work in the Gulf established the area's importance for shorebirds.

"At least 16 species in the South East Gulf have populations at some time of the year that meet the criterion of more than 1% of their Flyway population. At least another 5 species will qualify as having either internationally or nationally significant numbers....". (Driscoll 2001)

For this reason the Southern Gulf is eligible to be nominated under the Ramsar Convention. These wetlands have significant values including economic and cultural values which should be appropriately recognised under an international convention. Conservation and management of the wetlands can be achieved without changing land ownership.

The problems and immensity of the Gulf region can only be fully realised by flying over them. Salt and mud flats, rivers, mangroves and grassland stretch to the horizon in every direction. An increasing weed problem, mainly rubber-vine is a major concern.

Speakers at the forum covered many aspects but it was evident that the many problems in the region have only been lightly dealt with. Landholders gave general support for "Conservation Agreements" on their own properties but most were undecided on committing to a Ramsar declaration. They recognised the need for protecting wetlands in the Gulf region but preferred their own strategies.

The Forum was well attended with representatives from Indigenous people, graziers, council and government officers and local industries (about 100 people). It was disappointing however, that there was no representation from the Queensland Environment Protection Agency. A wide range of topics were discussed including land management, water resources, climate change and research.

Why there is so little data

Lack of detailed data about aspects the environment were considered a major problem. The extremes of seasonal changes caused by flood and dry and difficulties of transport over great distances makes the logistics and cost of extensive and detailed studies particularly difficult.

In the future, water resource allocations for agriculture could alter water flows into the Gulf particularly affecting the prawn and fishing industries. Construction of dams and weirs for irrigation and more intensified diversified land-use would change water flows and the natural wetland regimes. Controlled and altered water supplies, combined with rising sea levels from climate change exacerbates the problem. It is doubtful if the State has the will or resources to manage or even recognise the push for closer development in the region.

Learning about the Shorebirds

A flight over the area on the morning of Thursday 6th May was interesting, highlighting the difficulties that would be faced in mounting an expedition to count, monitor or flag waders in the region. For example, access to the sandbanks where waders roost would have to be reached by boat and then if disturbed the birds would disperse over a vast area. It would be difficult and expensive to undertake a useful expedition.

Australian Pratincoles on the plains between Normanton and Karumba were estimated to number thousands. They were well scattered along the road, in grass and near water. Large numbers of Brolga were seen, also many Sarus Crane on the Karumba Plains wetlands adjacent to the road. Counts were made by us (IW, JH) from the Karumba road when we passed some wetlands at midday on 4th May. There was considerable midday heat-haze and we were unable to count the distant locations. Other species – Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Great Knot, Marsh Sandpiper were seen on these wetlands early in the morning (4th May) by other observers.

7-8am 6/5/04 – from plane

On the flight an estimated 3000 Black-tailed Godwit and 2500 Great Knot noted by Peter Driscoll(PD) were seen which were more than expected. PD did not see this number on a previous flight a few days earlier. Small flocks of other waders were seen lifting from roost sites along the foreshore. 200-300 Pelican were nesting on Pelican Island.

Three posters were displayed at the forum outlining the interests of the Queensland Wader Study Group in the future of the birds and wetlands of the Southern Gulf. Illustrations and photos used were gratefully obtained from Birds Queensland Library (Jim Whittle and Neville Male), Ian Sutton - Mackay, Noela Gallherher, and Kerry Brown - Normanton.

By Joyce Harding

Shorebird expeditions in China in 2004

Article written for the AWA NGO Wetlands Update.

The Australasian Wader Studies Group (AWSG) aims to ensure the future of waders and their habitats in Australia and to do this requires wader studies to occur not only in Australia but also in the rest of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. Expeditions undertaken in Australia to band and colour flag waders have helped to discover the routes and staging areas in the flyway used by waders while on migration. The AWSG has actively sought to expand expeditions to include visits to Asia.

This year AWSG members participated in fieldwork in China during the northward migration. A recent report from China follows.

This report gives details of the final banding results from the Chinese activities at Chongming Island in the Yangtze estuary near Shanghai and Yalu Jiang near Dandong, in the Yellow Sea during this northward migration.

Overall, the Chongming Island team caught about 1600 waders in just over two weeks (30th March to 14th April). There were 21 recaptures of Australian-banded birds, 17 from North-West Australia and four from Victoria. The North-West Australia birds were 12 Great Knot and five Bar-tailed Godwits. It was interesting that the Bar-tailed Godwits were caught later than Great Knot, corresponding to their different departure dates from Broome (late March for Great Knot, early April for Bar-tailed Godwit). The four birds from Victoria were four different species - Grey Plover, Great Knot, Red Knot and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper.

Many of the above birds were of known age when banded and therefore we now know their specific age. Two of the recoveries were of Great Knot just two years old, which is an unexpectedly early age for them to have migrated north. Several more were three years old, including the Red Knot from Victoria. This is a more normal age for northward migration to start. The Chinese have recorded the weight at capture of all of

the above birds. In all cases the weight was below that recorded when the birds were banded in Australia. In one case, the weight was 30% lower. As almost all these birds had been banded outside the migration season and were therefore close to their 'fat-free' weight it seems that most of the birds captured in China were probably migrants, which had just arrived there, some having eaten into their muscle and other reserves having presumably consumed all their pre-migratory fat deposits.

The Chinese have been putting leg flags on all new birds caught. Therefore, on and after the return southward migration we should be looking very strongly for white over black double leg-flagged waders.

Banding activities have now ceased at Chongming, apparently because they ran out of money to pay the ex-hunters who were catching the birds for them, in clap-nets. However, it was obviously a very productive exercise.

Fieldwork activities in China transferred to the northern end of the Yellow Sea, where AWSG members, Peter Collins and David Melville (led by Director Chu Guozhong, Director of the National Bird Banding Center of China) were present until the end of April.

Leg-flag sightings at Yalu Jiang 14 to 22 April, 2004

Country of flagging	Number of birds seen	Species	Locations
<i>Australia</i>	49	Bar-tailed Godwit	28 Victoria 21 NW Australia
	11	Great Knot	All NW Australia
	3	Eastern Curlew	2 Victoria 1 NW Australia
TOTAL	63		
<i>New Zealand</i>	17	Bar-tailed Godwit	16 North Island 1 South Island
TOTAL	17		
<i>China</i>	11	Bar-tailed Godwit	2 Chongming Island 9 Yalu Jiang (all from 2002)
	1	Great Knot	1 Chongming Island
	2	Grey Plover	2 Yalu Jiang (one from 2002)
	2	Dunlin	2 Yalu Jiang (probably from 2004)
TOTAL	16		

The total catch of waders for four nights was:

- Grey Plover - 5
- Dunlin – 46
- Kentish Plover – 3
- Lesser Sand Plover - 1
- Bar-tailed Godwit - 1

Interesting sightings:

- 3 first-summer Spoon-billed Sandpipers showing no trace of breeding plumage
- 5 Spotted Greenshanks

While the fieldwork held challenges for those involved with unfavourable weather at times, the AWSG is very pleased with work this year in China. An international program of research and conservation will be an important focus for future activities by the AWSG.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently :

David ABLETT, Lindsay BOYD, William BRAY, Marie BURNS, Rita CAMERON,
Leonie DAWS, Peggy HARDING, Mr Dave HOUGHTON, Geoff McLAUGHLIN,
Nick MURRAY, Kath SHURCLIFF, Brian TYNAN, Susan YOUNGBERRY

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.

WADER WATCH Linda and Phil Cross, Joyce Harding

Leg Flag Banding Legend (colour = where banded)

- Green = Brisbane/Queensland
- Orange = Victoria
- Yellow = Northern Western Australia
- White = New Zealand (some species banded in New South Wales)
- Blue = Japan

There are more leg flag sightings detailed in this newsletter.

Green leg flag sightings

WADER WATCH Phil and Linda Cross

Green leg flag sightings

- 2 Eastern Curlew – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 6.3.04
- 1 Eastern Curlew – Manly Boat Harbour – Barry & Joanna Morgan et al – 16.5.04
- 5 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul - Dez Wells – 30.12.03
- 2 Bar-tailed Godwit – Fisherman Island – David Edwards et al – 22.2.04
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Nudgee Beach – Ivan Fien – 23.2.04
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Scarborough Point – David Edwards – 26.2.04
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Boat Harbour – Sandra Harding et al – 6.3.04
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Fisherman Island – David Edwards & Ralf Reeger – 7.3.04
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Amity Point – Martin Waugh – 8.3.04
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul Sandfly Bay – Dez Wells – 13.3.04
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – David Edwards, Linda Cross et al – 13.3.04
- 3 Bar-tailed Godwit – Amity Point – Martin Waugh – 20.3.04
- 4 Great Knot – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 30.12.03
- 1 Great Knot – Toorbul – Esther Townsend – 7.3.04
- 1 Great Knot – Toorbul Sandfly Bay – Dez Wells – 13.3.04
- 1 Great Knot – Toorbul – David Edwards, Linda Cross et al – 13.3.04
- 1 Great Knot – Toorbul – Wader ID Day – 27.3.04
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – area around Brisbane Airport – Ivan Fien – 2.2.04
- 2 Grey-tailed Tattler – Fisherman Island – David Edwards & Ralf Reeger – 7.3.04
- 2 Grey-tailed Tattler – Fisherman Island – David Edwards & Ivell Whyte – 4.4.04
- 1 Lesser Sand Plover – Fisherman Island – David Edwards et al – 22.2.04

Interstate & overseas Green leg flag sightings

- 1 Whimbrel – Hongsung, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Ji In-sook & Ham In-ja – 19.4.04
(Not many Whimbrel have been flagged by QWSG and not for many years)
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Hongsung, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Kim Ju-heon – 24.4.04
- 1 Great Knot – Hongsung, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Kim Hyun-tae – 17.4.04
- 2 Red Knot – Tabora Wildlife Refuge, South Kaipara Harbour, New Zealand – Gwen Pulham – 8.1.04

Orange leg flag sightings

- 1 Red-necked Stint – Deception Bay – Linda Cross – 6.3.04
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Fisherman Island – David Edwards – 7.3.04
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Fisherman Island – Arthur Keates et al – 15.5.04
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton, Sandra Harding et al – 16.5.04

Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings

- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – Amity Point – Martin Waugh – 20.3.04
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – Toorbul – Wader ID Day – 27.3.04

Other wader leg flag sightings

The sighting of an Eastern Curlew with yellow flag over black flag recorded in the previous newsletter (Qld Wader No. 47) is **incorrect**. Discussions between the observer (Bob Gleeson) and Clive Minton (AWSG) have concluded that the yellow flag was probably a dirty white one, giving it the appearance of yellow in colour. The sighting is recorded again below with the correct colour combination.

- 1 Eastern Curlew – white flag over black flag upper left – Mathieson Homestead – Bob Gleeson – 30.11.03.
This bird was flagged at Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China and is a first sighting of this colour combination in Queensland.
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – orange flag over green flag – Point Halloran – Smallegange Beiteska – 28.2.04

Other leg flag sightings and banded birds

- 1 Caspian Tern – orange flag lower left leg – Toorbul – David Edwards et al – 13.3.04
- 1 Little Tern – orange flag left leg and white over green right leg – Tweed River Entrance – Marion Williams – 6.3.04
- 1 Little Tern – green over green flag lower left leg and green on lower right leg – Toorbul – Ron Dowling, David Milton et al – 13.3.04

Interesting sightings

- 1031 Eastern Curlew – Mangrove Point, Hervey Bay – Bob & June Gleeson et al – 23.1.04
- 238 Black-tailed Godwit – Pine Rivers Northside – David Edwards – 21.3.04
- 128 Pied Oystercatcher – Manly Boat Harbour – Barry & Joanna Morgan et al – 3.4.04
- 1 Grey Plover – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 21.3.04
- 2245 Great Knot – Bushland Beach, Townsville – Jock & Rosemary Payet – 11.1.04
- 1200 Great Knot – Ross River, Townsville – Greg Calvert & Malcolm Turner – 11.1.04
- 2 Wood Sandpiper – Young Avenue, Yeppoon – John Thomson – 7.3.04
- 2 Common Sandpiper – Caboolture River Mouth – Ivan & Joyce Fien – 6.3.04
- 1 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Cairns Esplanade – Keith Fisher – 8.2.04
- 6 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Deception Bay – Rob Kernot & Linda Cross – 6.3.04
- 2 Sanderlings – Amity Point – Martin Waugh – 3.4.04
- 16 Black-fronted Dotterel – Deception Bay – Phil & Linda Cross – 21.3.04

Not waders but of interest anyway

- 1 Australian Bustard – Young Avenue, Yeppoon – John Thomson & Rob MacFarlane – 4.4.04
- 1 Black-necked Stork (male) – Bishop's Marsh – Esther Townsend – 11.1.04
- 1 Black-necked Stork – Young Avenue, Yeppoon – John Thomson & Maree Burke – 21.3.04
- 1 Black-necked Stork – Young Avenue, Yeppoon – John Thomson & Rob MacFarlane – 4.4.04
- 1 Black-necked Stork (female) – Ukerebagh Passage, Tweed Heads – Marion Williams & Laurel Allsop – 16.4.04
- 23 Brolga – Young Avenue, Yeppoon – John Thomson – 7.3.04
- 2 Reef Egrets (one begging from the other ? young bird?) – Tweed River Entrance, NSW – Marion Williams – 16.4.04
- 1 Marsh Harrier – Cobaki Retirement Village Wetland, Tweed Heads – Ian Watson & Eddie Kleiber – 13.3.04
- 1 Wedge-tailed Eagle – Young Avenue, Yeppoon – John Thomson – 7.3.04
- 70 Whiskered Tern – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Ivor Davies & Marg Beame – 11.1.04
- 75 White-winged Black Tern – Caboolture River Mouth – Ivan & Joyce Fien – 6.3.04
- 22 White-winged Black Tern – Maroochy River – Shirley Rooke – 8.3.04
- 500 Common Tern – Maroochy River – Shirley Rooke & Judy Hewitt – 19.3.04
- 1200 Crested Tern – Dudgeon Point, Mackay region – Michael Strong – 10.3.04
- 295 Black Swan (2 nests) – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 7.2.04
- 110 Chestnut Teal – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 21.3.04
- 1 Cotton Pygmy Goose (male) – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 3.4.04
- 2 Mallards (a pair) – Young Avenue, Yeppoon – John Thomson & Rob MacFarlane – 4.4.04
- 3 Plumed Whistling Duck – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 3.4.04
- Wandering Whistling Duck at five sites – Kingscliff and Banora Point Sewage Plants in Tweed Heads, Garnett's Lagoons in Hervey Bay, Young Avenue Yeppoon and Cairns Airport. Up to 13 seen during March counts and up to 26 seen during April counts. A few others and myself observed a pair with 4 ducklings during the Hervey Bay excursion part of Fraser Island Bird Week at Garnett's Lagoons on 14.5.04

Count Programme by Linda Cross

I would like to remind everyone that there is no count set down for June, but please remember that the National Winter Count is on Sat 24th July.

Dawn Beck has been joining us at the Port of Brisbane counts on a regular basis and we somehow managed to entice her into the count programme earlier this year. Dawn has already given us two months of counts at the two sites she covers at Point Halloran. Dawn is also a Birds Queensland member and is already well known among the group and we welcome her commitment to the count programme.

We would also like to welcome Michael Strong to the count programme. Michael has been bird watching in the Caboolture/Bribie area for a long time and offered to supply us with counts of any roost sites he visits, which is mainly Kakadu Beach roost on Bribie Island. Although we have counters already surveying Kakadu Beach, it is much appreciated to get additional counts to add to the database, particularly as this is a new man made roost. Michael also conducted a count of one of the sites recently identified during our surveys in Mackay (Dudgeon Point), when he was in the area. This will also be valuable information for this newly identified site.

Sadly, we are also losing a counter that has spent many years surveying one of the Pumicestone Passage sites. Jill Dening has been a dedicated counter covering the Donnybrook site for over 8 years and has decided to take a well-earned rest, so we are looking for someone to take her place. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Jill for her commitment and support for the programme over this long period of time.

Jill has offered to survey the site during the national summer and winter counts if another replacement cannot be found to continue the work, but hopefully there are some members out there who are eager to join the programme because we still have a number of sites that are not currently being surveyed and would love to hear from you. The following Brisbane area sites are available, but many other sites also need to be counted along the Queensland coastline. We are waiting for your call.

**Donnybrook
Luggage Point
Pine Rivers Wetlands Reserve
Sandstone Point**

The Double-banded Plover is once again on our shores with records as follows: -

4 at Inskip Point on 4.3.04	17 at Geoff Skinner Reserve on 20.3.04
1 at Hastings Point, NSW on 4.3.04	34 at Geoff Skinner Reserve on 3.4.04
1 at Kakadu Beach on 6.3.04	30 at Fisherman Island on 4.4.04

During the northward migration there were some large numbers of waders observed at sites that are not known for such high numbers, which I have listed below as a matter of interest.

2510 Bar-tailed Godwit – Geoff Skinner Reserve – Michele Burford & Peter Rothlisberg – 6.3.04
140 Pacific Golden Plover – Shellgrit Creek, Mackay – Les & Dawn Thyer – 20.2.04 & 22.3.04
82 Pacific Golden Plover – Deception Bay – Rob Kernot & Linda Cross – 6.3.04
105 Pacific Golden Plover – Maroochy River North Shore – Shirley Rooke & Judy Hewitt – 19.3.04
87 Pacific Golden Plover – Geoff Skinner Reserve – Michele Burford & Peter Rothlisberg – 20.3.04
90 Pacific Golden Plover – Point Halloran – Dawn Beck – 3.4.04
97 Pacific Golden Plover – Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 4.4.04
60 Common Greenshank – Geoff Skinner Reserve – Michele Burford & Peter Rothlisberg – 6.3.04
43 Ruddy Turnstone – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 6.3.04
1075 Grey-tailed Tattler – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 21.3.03
1000+ Greater Sand Plover – Dudgeon Point Mackay region – Michael Strong – 10.3.04
970 Lesser Sand Plover – Geoff Skinner Reserve – Michele Burford & Peter Rothlisberg – 6.3.04

Once again the shy **Beach-stone Curlew** has been spotted in a few places.

- 1 Beach-stone Curlew – Ross River, Townsville – Greg Calvert & Malcolm Turner – 11.1.04
- 2 Beach-stone Curlew – Seaforth Beach creek mouth, Mackay region – Peggy Harding – 17/18/19.2.04
- 1 Beach-stone Curlew – Finlayson Point, Mackay region – Peggy Harding – 5.3.04
- 7 Beach-stone Curlew (3 separate pair of adults, 1 pair with a juvenile bird) – Cairns Airport – Keith Fisher – 6.3.04
- 1 Beach-stone Curlew – Amity Point – Martin Waugh – 3.4.04
- 1 Beach-stone Curlew – Gables Point Rocks, Hervey Bay – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 3.4.04
- 1 Beach-stone Curlew – Kakadu Beach roost – Roy & Pam Hallett – 20.4.04

Five more of this vulnerable species was seen in the Great Sandy Strait during Fraser Island Bird Week. Two on the beach by Kingfisher Bay Resort on 11.5.04, which flew to Duck Island and were seen later on that day during the Ramsar cruise and three more seen on sand flats around Little Woody Island shortly after.

There have been a few **breeding records** detailed on the count sheets, which I also include in this article.

- 5 Black-winged Stilt chicks – Pine Rivers Northside – 6.3.04
- Black-winged Stilt (lots of nests and eggs) – Kedron Brook Wetlands – 7.3.04
- 1 Red-capped Plover chick – Bermuda Avenue claypan, Deception Bay – 21.3.04
- 2 Jacana young – Garnett's Lagoons – 3.4.04

I would again like to remind counters that we wish to update details on count sites and would like all counters to please record any major changes on their sites. Please include any comments in the notes section of the count sheet. If you run out of room turn over and use the back of the form. We would also like to update the latitude and longitude of all the sites using **WGS 84**. If you have a GPS, or can borrow one, please also supply us with this information.

Happy counting.
Linda Cross.

WADER ID DAY REPORTS

TOORBUL WADER ID DAY REPORT 13 MARCH 2004

As Phil and I left home we discussed the possibility of only a handful of people waiting for us at Toorbul for yet another wader identification day. How wrong we were. It is increasingly obvious that some people can never get enough of waders. A total of 38 members and guests enjoyed the afternoon session. Among the group, two travelled from Tweed Heads, one from Jimboomba, one from North Stradbroke Island and a number from the Sunshine coast.

Weather conditions were almost perfect for checking out the waders, fine, dry and sunny, with light winds. The tide height was quite low and the birds stayed for the whole of the high tide.

Sixteen wader species were seen at the main Toorbul roost, with some having extensive breeding plumage giving us the opportunity to see their transformation from non-breeding to breeding. No Broad-billed Sandpipers were seen during the day.

One of the QWSG counters for Toorbul (Dez Wells) conducted counts at two of the other roosts along the esplanade before joining us at the main Toorbul site, where we were also given instructions from Dez to count the birds, which we did.

The following leg flagged birds were observed at the **Toorbul roost**: -

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit with a green flag (banded in Moreton Bay) on the upper right leg
- 1 Great Knot with green flag (banded in Moreton Bay) on the upper right leg
- 1 Caspian Tern with orange flag lower left leg and metal band lower right leg
- 1 Little Tern with green over green flag on lower left leg and green flag on lower right leg

Total count of species seen at and around the main Toorbul roost: -

20 Black Swan, 1 Pied Cormorant, 3 Little Egret, 2 Great Egret, 1 Australian White Ibis, 1 Osprey, 1 Whistling Kite, 1 Brahminy Kite, 509 Bar-tailed Godwit, 285 Whimbrel, 72 Eastern Curlew, 24 Common Greenshank, 15 Terek Sandpiper, 58 Grey-tailed Tattler, 130 Great Knot, 69 Red-necked Stint, 4 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 3 Curlew Sandpiper, 2 Pied Oystercatcher, 2 Sooty Oystercatcher, 1 Grey Plover, 40 Lesser Sand Plover, 2 Great Sand Plover, 2 Masked Lapwing, 1 Silver Gull, 1 Gull-billed Tern, 11 Caspian Tern, 1 Common Tern, 31 Little Tern, 2 Crested Pigeon, 2 Peaceful Dove, 1 Mangrove Honeyeater, 1 Willie Wagtail, 2 Torresian Crow 2 Double-barred Finch, 2 Welcome Swallow and 25 Common Starling.

Total count of species at the other two roosts along the esplanade by Dez Wells: -

9 Australian Pelican, 1 Australian White Ibis, 303 Bar-tailed Godwit, 125 Eastern Curlew, 10 Common Greenshank, 38 Great Knot, 37 Red-necked Stint, 3 Pied Oystercatcher, 1 Masked Lapwing, 1 Silver Gull and 2 Common Tern. Dez also observed green flags on a Bar-tailed Godwit and Great Knot.

Species seen at Bishop's Marsh: -

2 Black Swan, 2 Pacific Black Duck, and 2 Black-necked Stork (1 male, 1 female).

Linda Cross.

TOORBUL WADER ID DAY REPORT 27 MARCH 2004

Once again Toorbul proved to be a great place to wader watch. With 46 people in attendance, everyone was able to have a good view of the waders. This time of year always throws up one or two problems for the part-time wader watchers because of the acquisition of breeding plumage.

However, today was a good day with the presence of Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits allowing the comparison of both breeding and non-breeding plumages. We were able to compare Curlew and Whimbrel, unfortunately there were only Lesser Sand Plover but the range of plumage tested the newbies. The other comparison we could make was that of the Oystercatchers, not difficult but good to see both birds at close quarters.

The plumage of the Red-necked Stints was the most advanced that I remember seeing for some time and made the drawings in the field guides of breeding plumage seem real. In amongst the Grey-tailed Tattlers were some Terek Sandpipers which were greatly appreciated by many of the observers. Though there were no Red Knot their lack was made up for with the presence Great Knot with their Bronze wing patches flashing in the sun.

The following leg flagged birds were observed at the Toorbul roost: -

1 Great Knot with green flag (banded in Moreton Bay) on the upper right leg and metal band on lower left leg
1 Grey-tailed Tattler with blue flag (banded in Japan) on the upper left leg and metal band on the lower right leg
1 Caspian Tern with metal band lower left leg

Total count of species seen at and around the main Toorbul roost: -

19 Black Swan, 8 Australian Wood Duck, 1 Pacific Black Duck, 2 Little Pied Cormorant, 1 Australian Pelican, 9 White-faced Heron, 2 Little Egret, 5 Great Egret, 5 Australian White Ibis, 2 Straw-necked Ibis, 19 Royal Spoonbill, 1 Osprey, 1 Whistling Kite, 2 Brahminy Kite, 2 White-bellied Sea-Eagle, c60 Black-tailed Godwit, 538 Bar-tailed Godwit, 341 Whimbrel, 52 Eastern Curlew, 1 Marsh Sandpiper, 7 Common Greenshank, 13 Terek Sandpiper, 65 Grey-tailed Tattler, 431 Great Knot, 95 Red-necked Stint, 3 Curlew Sandpiper, 2 Pied Oystercatcher (on oyster beds in passage), 1 Sooty Oystercatcher, 4 Red-capped Plover, 28 Lesser Sand Plover, 2 Masked Lapwing, 2 Silver Gull, 1 Gull-billed Tern, 22 Caspian Tern, 23 Little Tern, 3 Spotted-turtle Dove, 2 Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, (H) Collared Kingfisher, 1 Spotted Pardalote, 1 Little Wattlebird, (H) Striped Honeyeater, (H) Mangrove Honeyeater, (H) Rufous Whistler, 2 Magpie-lark, 1 Torresian Crow and 1 Mistletoebird.

Species seen at Bishop's Marsh: -

1 Black Swan, 3 Intermediate Egret, 1 Straw-necked Ibis, 1 Whistling Kite, 3 Brolga, 1 Purple Swamphen, 2 Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike and 1 Richard's Pipit.

David Edwards

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

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MEMBERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE QWSG

<u>CHAIRPERSON:</u>	David Milton	(07) 3390 2179	
<u>TREASURER:</u>	Sheryl Keates	(08) 8948 1794	or tattlers@tpg.com.au
<u>SECRETARY:</u>	Margaret Bernard	(07) 3376 1241	
<u>NEWSLETTER EDITOR:</u>	David Edwards	(07) 3262 2017	
<u>COUNT COORDINATOR:</u>	Linda Cross	(07) 5495 2758	

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Michele Burford	(07) 3822 3759	Phil Cross	(07) 5495 2758
Peter Driscoll	TBA	Jill Dening	(07) 5494 0994
Paul Finn	(07) 3349 3162	Andrew Geering	(07) 3376 1241
Joyce Harding	(07) 3372 1424	Sandra Harding	(07) 3390 2179
Peter Rothlisberg	(07) 3822 3759	Ivell Whyte	(07) 3802 0757

CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence to:
The QWSG Chairperson,
336 Prout Rd.,
BURBANK
QLD 4156

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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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. Only one further newsletter will be sent after expiry of your subscription.

Copy Deadline for the next issue of Queensland Wader is **August 18th 2004**

Contributions should be addressed to:

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

Computerised contributions should be in IBM Word, ASCII or Rich Text.

Opinions expressed in Queensland Wader are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily those of the Queensland Waders Study Group, nor the Queensland Ornithological Society Inc.

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Other Conservation Activities of Interest



QWSG is a special interest group of the Queensland Ornithological Society 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, Peter Crow (07) 3398 5118; Secretary, Rod Cox (07) 3398 8775; Treasurer, Les Taylor (07) 3878 1381.

Monthly Meetings

Birds Queensland - 7.45pm

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

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

Arrive after 7.15pm for a 7:40pm start.

QWSG MERDCHANDISE

Should you wish to purchase any of the QWSG Merchandise, items may be purchased at QOSI meetings held 1st Thursday of the month at the Queensland Museum **OR**....

Contact Linda Cross on 07 5495 2758 or E-mail at xenus@big.net.au

Postage is not included in the prices quoted.

Polo Neck Shirts \$30:00 Limited stock.

Books

\$19:80 Shorebird Conservation in the Asia-Pacific Region.

\$ 3:30 A Guide to Waders of Moreton Bay (through Birds Queensland)

\$24:00 Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds

\$14:00 A Birdwatcher's Guide to Redcliffe, Pine Rivers and Caboolture Shire. Wildlife Preservation Society of Caboolture.

No longer in stock: Birds of Bribie Island, Pumicestone Passage and Environs
Wildflowers of Bribie Island

However, they can be obtained from BIEPA by contacting Kathleen Catalan on 07 3408 7338

CD \$22:00 Bird calls of the Broome region (includes 42 Wader Species).

Cloth Badges

\$8.00 We now have the new bottle green cloth badges, made to same design that appears on our Polo Shirts. They can be sewn onto your cap, hat, jacket, jumper & bag. If you are interested please contact Linda.

FISHERMAN ISLAND – PORT OF BRISBANE COUNTS

The counts are conducted on the day before or after the QWSG monthly count. The date and times for the POB counts appear below.

Because this area is a construction site please wear closed, strong shoes or boots. It is also open so water, a hat and sunscreen are a very good idea if not essential.

If you are interested please contact Michele Burford on 3822 3759 (Home), 3826 7236 (Work), or email her at Michele.Burford@csiro.au

POB COUNTS – 2004

NEW TIME and DATE

Sunday 6th Jun 1.71m at 11:57 Meet 10:10

(There is to be a B-B-Q kindly supplied by the Port of Brisbane for QWSG)

Sunday 25th Jul 1.86m at 15:21 Meet 13:30 (1.30pm)

Saturday 21st Aug 1.91m at 12:56 Meet 11:15

Sunday 19th Sep 2.09m at 12:36 Meet 10:45

Sunday 17th Oct 2.30m at 11:36 Meet 09:45

Sunday 14th Nov 2.49m at 10:37 Meet 08:45

Sunday 19th Dec 2.06m at 15:37 Meet 13:45 (1.45pm)



Activities 2004

Monthly Count Programme

High Tides – Count Programme – 2004

No count in June

Sat 24th Jul 1.80m at 14:15
Sun 22nd Aug 1.92m at 13:47
Sat 18th Sep 2.10m at 11:52
Sat 16th Oct 2.30m at 10:52
Sat 13th Nov 2.44m at 09:51
Sat 18th Dec 2.20m at 14:42

National Winter Count

FISHERMAN ISLAND – PORT OF BRISBANE COUNTS

NEW TIME and DATE

Sunday 6th Jun 1.71m at 11:57 Meet 10:10
(There is to be a B-B-Q kindly supplied by the Port of Brisbane for QWSG)
Contact Michele for details: Michele.Burford@csiro.au

WADER ID DAYS for 2004

We are having difficulty in finding a good day for the next ID days because of the poor heights and times of the high tides in the last months of the year. We are hoping that we will be able to hold one during the first week-end of October then another on the last week-end of October. Pencil in these dates and check the next Queensland Wader.

PLEASE CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR RENEWAL IS DUE!



MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION

I / We wish to join / renew: (Single \$15; Family \$25; Student/Pensioner \$10)
Title..... First name:Surname Name:.....
Address:..... Membership: \$.....
..... Postcode:..... Donation: \$.....
Payment enclosed: \$.....
Phone: (Home) (Work)
Fax / e-mail:
TOTAL \$.....
How did you hear about QWSG

What activities do you wish to participate in? (Please circle)
WADER COUNTS, FIELD TRIPS, SCIENTIFIC DATA COLLECTION, SURVEYS, CLERICAL,
OTHER (specify.....)

SIGNATURE: DATE:.....

Post to: QWSG Treasurer, PO Box 958, NIGHTCLIFF, NT 0814

Cheques to be made out to: Queensland Wader Study Group