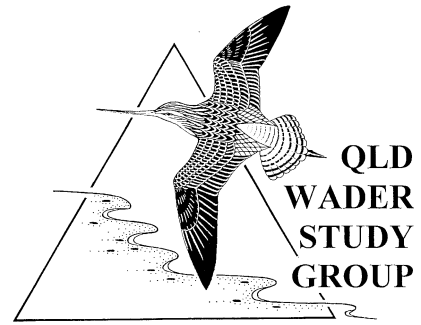


QUEENSLAND WADER



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

QWSG PLANS FURTHER ROOST SITE MAPPING IN NORTHERN GREAT SANDY STRAIT

The QWSG is developing a proposal for a project in partnership with the Burnett-Mary Natural Resource Management Group and the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to undertake further roost mapping in the northern Great Sandy Strait and adjacent coastal region during 2006 – 07. The plan is to:

- (1) Identify and map roosts on the coast from Point Vernon in Hervey Bay to Tannum Sands, south of Gladstone. This project will complete the mapping of roosts in the proposed new Northern Great Sandy Strait Marine Park.
- (2) Identify and map nesting sites of resident wader species on the islands in Great Sandy Strait.
- (3) Map resident and migratory wader use of the beach north of Wathumba Ck on the west coast of Frazer Is and the east coast of Fraser Is south from Dilli Village to Hook Point. These surveys are planned to help understand the potential benefits of restricting vehicle beach access for waders. The area north of Wathumba Ck to Sandy Cape on Fraser Is has been closed to vehicles for some time and there appears to be a substantial increase in wader use of the beach. This study will be undertaken in partnership with the Qld EPA, who will provide logistical support for the island surveys and the mapping on Frazer Is.

At the moment, the project will comprise undertaking some preliminary roost site identification during the coming summer (December – January). Much of the area to be covered has not been surveyed since Peter Driscoll drove his dinghy up the Queensland east coast in the mid-1990s. The area is not expected to have large numbers of waders, but roosts will often be difficult to access for mapping. We hope to sort out the logistical issues during the preliminary surveys and then undertake the mapping during both the northward (March) and southward (September-October) migration periods in 2006. This is because previous work in Mackay would suggest that the region will get significant wader use during these migration periods.

Interested members who would like to participate in these activities and mapping are most welcome. We aim to have all out-of-pocket costs for participants covered by the project. There will be another article in the next newsletter providing further details of the project, assuming the Burnett-Mary NRM agree to the proposal and provide financial support for the project.

In order to collate existing information on resident wader breeding and migratory wader roost use in the northern Great sandy Strait, QWSG has sub-contracted Kirsty Balmer to help. Kirsty is a 4th year student at University of Queensland and will be contacting members and wader experts in the region to discuss and record people's knowledge. If you know of any resident wader breeding sites along the coast from Tannum sands south to Pt Vernon, or on the islands in the GSS, please contact Kirsty on email: kirstybalmer@optusnet.com.au or phone: (07) 3885 3244.

WORKSHOPS

Tin Can Bay workshop

The QWSG provided a presentation to interested members of the community about the wader roost site mapping project in the Great Sandy Straits. This was held at the Seafood festival at Tin Can Bay on Saturday 17 September 2005. Ivell Whyte prepared a very comprehensive powerpoint presentation and delivered this in difficult conditions. Joyce Harding was also there and helped Ivell with the presentation. Sandra Harding kept the screen in place and not blown away in the wind (gale force 40kt winds). Thanks to Sue Sargent and Rachel Lyons for organising the QWSG involvement at this event.



Maryborough / Hervey Bay workshops

David Milton went to a meeting in Maryborough in late September and gave two talks about the roost mapping undertaken in the southern half of the Great Sandy Strait during the WWF-managed Shorebird Project funded by the Natural Heritage Trust. These talks were made with the presentation prepared by Ivell Whyte. The first talk was at the Maryborough office of the Qld EPA and was attended by EPA staff, councillors and planners from Tiaro Shire and Hervey Bay City Councils. Following this meeting, discussions were held with Sue Sargent from Burnett-Mary NRM and Kirsten Wortel from the EPA about the current proposal.

The second talk was made in the park at Point Vernon to the Hervey Bay Birdwatchers group. Many of the members of this group are active QWSG members and counters and they were important members of the team that mapped the roosts in January 2005. A group of 11 members attended the meeting and heard how their efforts had contributed to the mapping project. We tried to show examples of what the final GIS-based mapping looked like, but the bright sunlight and open conditions made the laptop display very challenging to see. However, the group seemed to appreciate the talk and are now aware of the results and how it should be used by local governments for coastal planning.

David Milton, Sandra Harding and Ivell Whyte

Committee Meeting

There is usually a committee meeting of the QWSG every two months, because arrangements for these meetings are made on an *ad hoc* basis after each meeting it is impossible to announce the times of these meetings in Queensland Wader.

For further information you can contact the QWSG Chairperson, David Milton, on (07) 3390 2179.

BIRD INFLUENZA

We have received a few enquiries from members and the general public regarding the bird flu epidemic in relation to migratory waders, and thought it would be a good idea to give you some information about it.

The following information has been taken from the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) New South Wales, Avian Influenza Information Sheet and there are a number of other websites that you can go to for further information on this subject.

What is Avian Influenza?

Avian Influenza (AI) is caused by a virus belonging to the family Orthomyxoviridae that can be highly contagious among birds. There are a number of strains of AI many of which are low pathogenic (LPAI). However, AI viruses are highly transmutable and can mutate into high pathogenic forms (HPAI), which are highly contagious under certain conditions and may cause up to 100% mortality in domestic poultry.

The current HPAI strain of concern is H5N1, which is highly pathogenic to both domestic fowl and wild birds. This strain was first identified in Hong Kong in 2003 and has been responsible for a number of outbreaks over the past 3 years in Asia and Europe. It can be contracted by humans who are in close contact with infected birds, however it cannot be transmitted from human to human. There have been no instances where a human has become infected with an AI virus from a wild bird.

Which species are affected?

All commercial, domestic and wild bird species are susceptible, but disease outbreaks have been most prevalent in domestic poultry. Infection may be carried by migratory waterbirds. Many species of waterfowl such as geese, ducks and waders carry AI viruses without showing any sign of disease.

Birds from the family anatidae (ducks and geese) are the most common carriers of AI viruses and often display no external symptoms. The anatidae species found in Australia are nomadic within Australia, but do not display the long migratory patterns of other waterbirds. The migratory shorebirds, or waders are also known to carry AI viruses, though this is less common than in the anatids. While there is the potential for an AI to be brought into Australia through migratory water birds, then transmitted to more susceptible species through contact at shared water sources, it is unlikely that a bird carrying an HPAI would survive or be in a condition to migrate long distance. Further, wetlands where migratory waders are present are not shared with domestic poultry in Australia. To date there is little evidence to support wild migratory birds as a vector for the spread of disease between populations.

Do migratory birds pose a risk?

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) has made a formal statement advising that it does not believe migratory birds to be a threat to Australia in terms of bird flu. The DEC supports this view.

AQIS has been monitoring the situation over the past 3 years and has not seen any sign of the H5N1 strain of virus. It is very unlikely that an infected bird would survive and be capable of managing the long migratory flight.

Many of the migratory shore birds use coastal and estuarine habitat and are unlikely to come into contact directly with domestic poultry, another factor reducing the risk of disease outbreak in Australia.

References and Further Information

A number of organisations both international and within Australia provide fact sheets and up to date information on disease outbreaks. The following sources will help you answer any questions:

World Health Organisation:

http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE):

http://www.oie.int/eng/en_index.htm

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO):

http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/subjects/en/health/diseases-cards/special_avian.html

Wetlands International:

<http://www.wetlands.org/IWC/Avianflu/default.htm>

BirdLife International:

http://www.birdlife.org/action/science/species/avian_flu/index.html

Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry:

<http://www.daff.gov.au/birdflu>

Animal Health Australia:

<http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/>

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

<http://www.health.gov.au>

The Australasian Waders Study Group

<http://www.tasweb.com.au/awsg/flyways.htm>

NSW Department of Primary Industries:

<http://www.agric.nsw.gov.au/reader/avian-influenza>

Department of Health NSW:

http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pubs/2004/bird_flu_cdfs.html

Climate smart adaptation

Queensland is getting hotter, and our temperatures are rising more rapidly than both the global and national averages. The state's climate is highly variable, and this trend is expected to continue. We can benefit now by implementing responses that help us manage existing climate variability, regardless of future climate change.

This discussion paper deals with adapting to climate change. It provides information about Queensland's future climate, and explores some of the possible impacts of climate change and some responses.

How can you get involved?

The Queensland Government would like feedback on how climate change might affect businesses, communities and individuals. It is interested in ideas on what can be done to prepare for climate change, and how we can work together to benefit from it.

Your ideas will help shape the development of a Queensland climate change adaptation action plan during 2006. This plan will complement the *Queensland Greenhouse Strategy* which will focus on exploiting the opportunities created by climate change and include initiatives to help us adjust to its potential environmental, social and economic impacts.

The closing date for submissions is 3 March 2006.

[Submissions can be made online](#)

Alternatively you can post, fax or email this and any attachments to:

Postal address:

Climate Change Adaptation Project
Natural Resource Sciences
Department of Natural Resources and Mines
80 Meiers Road
Indooroopilly Qld 4068
Fax: 07 3896 9843

Presentations

Community meetings on the discussion paper will be held across the State in November and December 2005.

Rockhampton

Tuesday, 15 November 2005, 3.00 to 5.00 pm
Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries Conference Centre

Longreach

Tuesday, 22 November 2005, 4.00 to 6.00 pm
Longreach Civic and Cultural Centre

Mackay

Tuesday, 29 November 2005, 3.00 to 5.00 pm
Magpies Rugby League Club

Townsville

Wednesday, 30 November 2005, 3.00 to 5.00 pm
Seagulls Resort

Caloundra

Wednesday, 7 December 2005, 3.00 to 5.00 pm
Caloundra Civic and Cultural Centre

QUEENSLAND WADER

Community meetings are also planned for Cairns, Roma, Toowoomba, Bundaberg and Logan in February 2006. The venues and times of these meetings will be posted later.

Birds find safer sanctuary on Moreton Bay's shores - Qld.

Media statement

From Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women, Desley Boyle

Each year more than 40,000 visitors arrive in Moreton Bay, hungry and exhausted after flights of up to 25,000km. These frequent fliers reach Australia unannounced and navigate almost magically to pin-point landings on the bay's mudflats and inlets.

"Like all long-distance travellers arriving home, migratory shorebirds crave a feed and a rest, but the bay's proximity to such a large population centre as Brisbane means that disturbance and habitat interference can make their life very difficult," Environment Minister Desley Boyle said today.

"The Queensland Government, councils from Caloundra to the Gold Coast, the Port of Brisbane and local conservation groups have combined to make life for shorebirds a lot easier.

"As manager of the Moreton Bay Marine Park, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service has been working with councils, the Queensland Wader Study Group and other stakeholders to better protect shorebirds and inform the local community about their special value to the region.

"The result of this energetic partnership is the Shorebird Management Strategy for Moreton Bay, which identifies habitat loss, disturbance, and lack of public awareness as the main threats to the local shorebird population," Ms Boyle said.

- The five elements of the strategy are:
- Habitat protection
- Protection from disturbance
- Protection of critical shorebird sites
- Community education
- Research and monitoring

"The strategy is the blueprint for managing shorebirds in coastal areas around the bay, including the Marine Park, and outlines a range of site protection measures such as fencing of sites, seasonal closures, the installation of hides and other infrastructure to help protect shorebird populations and manage threats to their survival.

"A campaign of signs and public information is being rolled out to educate people about shorebird conservation and to show how simple things like driving boats too close, or letting dogs chase flocks of birds, denies the birds the chance to rest and regain strength. Likewise, nest sites and chicks of resident birds clustered above the high water mark are vulnerable to interference by walkers and drivers, and predation by cats and dogs.

"While there are already many thousands of bayside residents who love and appreciate the bay's changing population of shorebirds, there are others who need to get the message about playing their part in minimising threats to the birds," she said.

The bay's waters, including the Marine Park, are recognised under the global Ramsar convention (an international agreement for the protection of migratory bird habitat).

More 40 shorebird species, including the Bush Stone-curlew, Asian Dowitcher, Painted Snipe, South Island Pied Oystercatcher, Australian Pratincole, Pacific Golden Plover, Whimbrel and Banded Lapwing, can be found in Moreton Bay. Its shores are ideal feeding and roosting habitats for migratory shorebirds, which rest in the bay during our summer months before migrating to the northern hemisphere, and for the resident breeding shorebird population.

The Shorebird Management Strategy will ensure that continuing research and monitoring will encourage government and community to maintain a watch over these world travellers whose epic journeys $\frac{3}{4}$ some travel as far as the moon in their lifetimes $\frac{3}{4}$ should never be in vain.

The Shorebird Management Strategy for Moreton Bay is available at:

http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/publications/p01627aa.pdf/Shorebird_management_strategy_Moreton_Bay.pdf

Shorebird Conservation in Mackay

The Mackay region has long been recognized as a priority area for shorebirds in Queensland, however it was not until the Queensland Wader Study Group undertook surveys between Cape Palmerston and Repulse Bay between 2002-2005 that important roost sites were comprehensively surveyed and mapped as part of the WWF-Australia National Shorebird Project, funded by the Natural Heritage Trust.

The January 2003 survey found that at approximately 22 000 migratory shorebirds over-summer in the region. Nine species were recorded in internationally significant numbers - bar-tailed godwit, eastern curlew, great knot, grey-tailed tattler, greater sand plover, lesser sand plover, whimbrel, pied oystercatcher and sooty oystercatcher.

Shorebird habitat in the Mackay region is facing increasing pressure from a range of threats. Sandra Harding and David Milton on behalf of the QWSG in the Mackay Shorebird Project Final Report (2003) identified human disturbance as one of the main threats at all high tide roost sites close to urban areas, mainly people walking, with and without dogs, vehicles on beaches, and boats. Specific management recommendations were made for a number of sites subject to threats typical of shorebird habitat throughout the region.

The WWF Mackay Shorebird Project was extended to identify and implement priority on-ground habitat management actions. To date, on-ground actions to date have included installation of seven 'Shorebirds between the land and sea' signs, designed and illustrated by QWSG member Ivell White, and funded by the Mackay City Council. Approval has been granted both in Mackay and Sarina to restrict vehicle access to important high tide roosts at St Helens Beach, Blacks Beach Spit and Armstrong Beach. There are plans to produce more signs, including smaller signs warning not to disturb shorebirds at specific high tide roosts. It remains to be seen however whether these actions will result in reduced disturbance levels.

The Mackay Whitsunday Natural Resource Management Group Inc. has funded the Shorebird Program as a result of the significant community support for shorebird conservation in the region. Program coordinator, Matt Bloor, has been organizing shorebird training sessions and surveys at important roost sites to obtain further information on how shorebirds use different roost, feeding and breeding sites and critical periods of shorebird use. It is hoped that a Mackay Branch of the Queensland Wader Study Group can be formed to promote shorebird conservation in the region and undertake monthly counts at priority high tide roosts.



Town Beach Shorebird Sign

Shorebird conservation in the Mackay region is continuing with some exciting projects. The Australian Wader Study Group has selected Mackay as a site for their Monitoring Yellow Sea Migrants in Australia Project (MYSMA), prompted by the ongoing reclamation of Saemangeum in South Korea, a development which is likely to have substantial effects on flyway populations of a number of shorebird species, in particular the great knot. Queensland Wader Study Group members will assist AWSG and Mackay volunteers with comprehensive surveys in early 2006. Wetlands International is working with the Mackay Whitsunday NRM Group to raise community capacity and improve management of wetlands as part of the Wetland Management Solutions Project and is investigating the potential for nominating a site for the Shorebird Site Network.

For further information, contact Matt Bloor, Mackay Whitsunday Shorebird Program.
Ph: 0400 256 803 | Fax: (07)4944 7811 | Hm: (07)4955 7294 | email: mattbloor@dodo.com.au

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.

Could all counters and observers please try to ensure that what they are looking at is flags and not coloured or metal bands. Also look at both tibia and tarsus on both legs of the birds to ensure flag combinations are not overlooked. It is very important to try and get the colour combination accurately as this will establish where the bird was flagged.

A note from Adrian Riegen in New Zealand advised that 10 Bar-tailed Godwits were fitted with transmitters on the breeding grounds in Alaska. These all had a single black flag fitted with a two-digit code etched in white. Two of these have been seen in NZ and they are keen to hear of any more. All the transmitters failed on the godwits before they left Alaska and they are not sure if this meant the birds had died or the transmitters had failed. The two birds seen in NZ certainly proved that those birds had survived.

We have also had a request from Clive Minton to ask members to thoroughly scan all the main Great Knot roosting flocks for white/black (Chongming Dao flags). The white flag will be on the tibia and the black flag on the tarsus. Please report all flag sightings to us.

Green leg flag sightings

- 1 Eastern Curlew – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton, Barry & Joanna Morgan – 18.09.05
- 1 Eastern Curlew – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 22.10.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton, Barry & Joanna Morgan – 18.09.05
- 3 Bar-tailed Godwit – Reeders Point, Moreton Island – Graham Palmer et al – 17.10.05
- 4 Bar-tailed Godwit – Fisherman Island – Andrew Geering et al – 23.10.05
- 1 Great Knot – Toorbul – Jill Denning – 07.09.05
- 2 Great Knot – Toorbul – David Milton, Phil Cross et al – 10.09.05
- 4 Great Knot – Toorbul – Dez Wells et al – 23.10.05
- 1 Great Knot – Fisherman Island – Sandra Harding et al – 23.10.05
- 2 Grey-tailed Tattler – Fisherman Island – David Milton et al – 23.10.05
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – Toorbul – Dez Wells et al – 23.10.05

Interstate & Overseas Green leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, South Auckland, North Island, New Zealand – Tony Wilson – 30.10.04
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, South Auckland, North Island, New Zealand – Robin Doughty – 15.12.04
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Tern Mountain, Chefornek, Yukon Delta, Alaska, USA – Kriszta Sebe, Denes Laczik & Alexandra Hoffman – 07.08.05
- 3 Bar-tailed Godwit – Tern Mountain, Chefornek, Yukon Delta, Alaska, USA – Denes Laczik – 08.08.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Tern Mountain, Chefornek, Yukon Delta, Alaska, USA – Alexandra Hoffman – 06.09.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Avon-Heathcote Estuary, Christchurch, South Island, New Zealand – Jan Walker, Sheila Petch & Felipe Moniz – 16.09.05

QUEENSLAND WADER

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, South Auckland, North Island, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 24.09.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Bells Island, Waimea Inlet near Nelson, South Island, New Zealand – Willie Cook – 30.09.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Totara Ave, Golden Bay, South Island, New Zealand – David Melville – 07.10.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit (male) – Hooper's Inlet, Dunedin, South Island, New Zealand – David Melville – 19.10.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Bells Island, Waimea Inlet, Nelson, South Island, New Zealand – David Melville – 31.10.05
- 1 Red Knot – Taramaire, Firth of Thames, South Auckland, New Zealand – Phil Battley – 17.11.04
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, South Auckland, North Island, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 02.10.05
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, South Auckland, North Island, New Zealand – Tony Habraken, Gillian Vaughan & Ian Southey – 16.10.05
- 1 Red Knot – Clarks Bay, Manukau Harbour, South Auckland, North Island, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 30.10.05

Orange leg flag sightings

- 1 Eastern Curlew – with orange flag right tibia and orange flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 13.08.05
- 1 Eastern Curlew (orange flag right tibia and orange flag left tibia) – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight & Paul Hollin – 14.08.05
- 1 Eastern Curlew – with orange flag right tibia and orange flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 28.08.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 08.10.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 17.10.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 22.10.05
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – Dez Wells et al – 23.10.05
- 1 Great Knot – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 28.08.05
- 1 Great Knot – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 17.09.05
- 1 Great Knot – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight, Bill & Avis Gould – 23.09.05
- 1 Red Knot – Deception Bay – Phil & Linda Cross – 18.09.05
- 1 Red Knot – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight, Bill & Avis Gould – 23.09.05
- 1 Red Knot – Wynnum forshore – Esther Townsend – 02.10.05
- 1 Red Knot – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 04.10.05
- 1 Red Knot – Deception Bay – Linda Cross – 22.10.05
- 1 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Cairns Esplanade – Brian Venebles – 02.09.05
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 25.08.05
- 1 Curlew Sandpiper – Luggage Point – Ivell Whyte – 18.09.05
- 1 Lesser Sand Plover – Fisherman Island – Andrew Geering et al – 23.10.05

White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings

- 1 Red Knot – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight, Bill & Avis Gould – 23.09.05

Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – with blue flag right tibia – Toorbul – Dez Wells et al – 23.10.05
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – with blue flag left tibia – Toorbul – David Milton, Phil Cross et al – 10.09.05
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – with blue flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight & Bill Gault – 24.10.05
- 1 Ruddy Turnstone – with blue flag left tibia – Fisherman Island – Sandra Harding et al – 23.10.05

Other wader leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit with orange & green flag right tibia & white flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 28.08.05 (This colour combination not allocated to a country. Possibly a bird flagged by Phil Battley in New Zealand)
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit with dark green or black (probably black) flag on right tibia – Shorncliffe – Stuart & Alison Chambers – 14.10.05 (possibly one of the 10 birds flagged in Alaska)
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit with white right tibia orange flag right tarsus – Acacia St, Wellington Point – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 22.10.05 (This colour combination is Korea)
- 1 Great Knot with white & black flag right tibia – Toorbul 1km north – Dez Wells – 25.08.05 (This colour combination is Chongming Dao, China)
- 1 Great Knot with dark blue or green on left tibia and yellow on left tarsus – Armstrong Beach, Mackay – Floss Wainwright & Ken Cowell – 18.10.05 (The blue/yellow colour combination was allocated to Yellow River Delta, China)

QUEENSLAND WADER

1 Great Knot with black flag right tibia – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 23.10.05 (A black flag on the right tibia is used by the Philippines along with a blue flag on the tarsus)

Other leg flag sightings and banded birds

1 Caspian Tern with orange flag on right tarsus – Toorbul – Jill Denning – 24.08.05

1 Caspian Tern with orange flag on right tarsus and metal band on left tarsus – Buckley's Hole Bribie Island – Dez Wells & Grey Nye – 25.08.05

1 Caspian Tern with orange flag on right tarsus and metal band on left tarsus – Toorbul Sandfly Bay – Dez Wells – 17.09.05

1 Caspian Tern with orange flag on right tarsus and metal band on left tarsus – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 17.09.05

1 Caspian Tern with orange flag on right tarsus and metal band on left tarsus – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 04.10.05 & 08.10.05

1 Caspian Tern with orange flag on right tarsus – Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 09.10.05

1 Caspian Tern with orange flag on left tarsus and metal band on right tarsus – Toorbul – Dez Wells et al – 23.10.05

1 Caspian Tern with orange flag on left tarsus and metal band on right tarsus – Toorbul 1 km north – Dez Wells et al – 23.10.05

1 Little Tern with orange flag on right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 28.08.05

Interesting sightings

Please note these sightings are not authenticated records.

** = to be submitted to BQ RAC ** = to be submitted to BARC*

60 Sanderling – Rooney Point, Fraser Island – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 23.03.05

65 Masked Lapwing – Shellgrit Creek, Mackay – Les Thyer – 20.05.05

103 Red-capped Plover – Kinka Beach Sandbar, Yeppoon – Alf Keller & Barry Ellis – 24.07.05

148 Red-capped Plover – Kinka Beach Sandbar, Yeppoon – Alan Briggs, Paula Ryan et al – 18.09.05

126 Red-capped Plover – Salt Works, Bowen – Jon Wren – 20.09.05

9 Black-tailed Godwit – Maaroom- John Bell & Glen Hastie – 24.07.05 (unusual at this site)

52 Black-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – Jill Denning – 17.09.05 (unusually high number for site)

305 Red-necked Avocet – Deception Bay – Phil & Linda Cross – 18.09.05

106 Pied Oystercatcher – Reeders Point, Moreton Island – QWSG – 17.10.05

2 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island – Frank Bigg, Michael Willis & Michael Strong – 21.08.05

2 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Caboolture River Mouth – Ivan & Joyce Fien – 22.10.05

1 Broad-billed Sandpiper (juvenile) – Fisherman Island – Danny Rogers – 23.10.05

1 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Toorbul – Jill Denning – 24.10.05

1983 Red-necked Stint – Fisherman Island – QWSG – 23.10.05

13 Sooty Oystercatcher – Finlayson Point, North of Mackay – Peggy Harding – 21.10.05

91 Ruddy Turnstone – Fisherman Island – QWSG – 23.10.05

1251 Curlew Sandpiper – Fisherman Island – QWSG – 23.10.05

2 Grey Plover – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 23.10.05

7 Latham's Snipe – Garnett's Lagoon No 2 – John Knight & Bill Gauld – 24.10.05

29 Marsh Sandpiper – Shellgrit Creek, Mackay – Floss Wainwright & Ken Cowell – 16.10.05

45 Marsh Sandpiper – Saltworks, Bowen – Jon Wren – 25.10.05

Not waders but of interest anyway

600 Little Tern – on beach between Wathumba Creek & Rooney Point, Fraser Island – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 23.03.05
9 Glossy Ibis – Garnett's Lagoons – John Knight – 20.08.05
116 Black Swan – Toorbul – Esther Townsend – 22.08.05
148 Chestnut Teal – Luggage Point – Ivell & Jim Whyte – 18.09.05
1 Great Cormorant – Tony's Island, Tweed Heads – Laurel Allsopp – 28.08.05 & 10.10.05
1 Great Cormorant – Tweed River Entrance – Marion Williams & Laurel Allsopp – 25.09.05 & 10.10.05
420 Gull-billed Tern – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight – 28.08.05
4525 Crested Tern – Noosa River Sandbanks – Jill Denning – 22.10.05
1 Brown Booby – Dalrymple Pt to Doherty Creek, Bowen – Jon Wren – 20.09.05
1 Spotless Crane – Cobaki Retirement Village, Tweed Heads – Ian Watson & Eddie Kleiber – 05.10.05
1 Rufous Songlark – Tweed Heads Sewerage Works – Ian Watson & Matthew Angus – 12.10.05
1 Emu – Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – Alf Keller – 23.10.05
59 Whiskered Tern – Garnett's Lagoons 1 & 2 – John Knight & Bill Gauld – 24.10.05

Count Programme by Linda Cross

It is unfortunate that I start this article with the news that we have lost another four counters from the count programme during the last few months.

Keith Fisher, who counted Cairns Esplanade and Cairns Airport for many years has moved to the Atherton Tablelands and is now (along with his wife Lindsay) looking after Kingfisher Park Birdwatchers Lodge at Julatten. It is a long way from the waders, but an absolutely fabulous place, as Phil and I can contest to, having stayed there a couple of times. For those of you reading this newsletter and not having visited the place, we certainly recommend it. I will miss not getting the counts from Keith, particularly the airport count with so many Beach Stone-curlew records. Our best wishes to you both in your new venture.

Another loss to the count programme is Martin Waugh, who until a couple of months ago counted Amity Point on North Stradbroke Island. Although Martin would have continued doing the counts at this site, it is the site itself that has been lost. Martin wrote a short article about the future of this site, which appeared in our issue 51 newsletter detailing the problems. Additionally boats arriving from the water and people walking along the spit continually disturbed the birds.

The third loss to the programme is Rod Edwards, who was a standby counter until he took on the monthly count of the man made Empire Point roost since it was built. Rods work and family commitments require more of his time and he is unable to continue surveying this site on a regular basis. We hope that we might be able to put him back on our standby counter list, which does not have many people on it.

The fourth loss is Robert Black, who took over counting the sites in Yeppoon earlier this year and unfortunately due to work commitments is unable to continue with them.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Keith, Martin, Rod and Robert for their past commitment to the count programme and hope that one day they might like to return to survey other sites.

Thankfully one of our members (Virginia Ridgley) actually contacted me and offered to take over Empire Point roost from Rod. Virginia is no stranger to QWSG having been involved with the education sub-committee activities teaching school children about waders. Virginia has already conducted two counts and we feel sure she will find it rewarding. Welcome to the count programme Virginia.

We would also like to welcome Allan Briggs, Paula Ryan, Barry Ellis and Alf Keller from the Birds Australia Capricornia group, who very kindly stepped into Robert Black's shoes a couple of months ago to count the Yeppoon sites.

There are another group of counters that have been surveying some of the sites in Mackay that were identified during our trips to the region in 2003/04. They were all involved in the surveys during our visits at the time and are continuing to supply us with regular counts. Welcome to Matt Bloor, Marie Burns, Marj Andrews, Dell Williams, Tim Holmes, Andrew Dinwoode, Faye Griffin, Ken Griffin, Desley Williams and Maureen Cooper. As the bundle of count sheets sent to me date back to October 2004, I am listing some of their interesting sightings here instead of with the Wader Watch section.

QUEENSLAND WADER

1 Pied Oystercatcher chick at Dudgeon Point on 13.11.04
1 Beach Stone-curlew and breeding Red-capped Plover at St. Helens Beach on 13.11.04
1 Bush and 1 Beach Stone-curlew at Dudgeon Point claypan on 07.01.05
10 Sooty Oystercatcher and 2 Grey Plover at Dudgeon Point on 07.01.05
10 Sooty Oystercatcher at Dudgeon Point on 13.11.04

There have been some records of Double-banded Plover still at sites. 16 seen at Maroochy River North Shore on 19.08.05, 51 at Fisherman Island on 20.08.05, 6 at Sandbank No 2, Caloundra on 23.08.05, but the latest record is 24 at Kinka Beach Sandbar on 18.09.05

Looking at the count sheets for August, September and October one can see the southward migration well underway with some good records being reported from many sites. Some species counts have been very good and I have listed some of them below showing the sites where they have been seen, giving the single highest count recorded in brackets.

Eastern Curlew – Mirapool (1115), Mathieson Homestead (800), Geoff Skinner Reserve (763), Toorbul combined 3 roosts (689), Mangrove Pt south claypan, Hervey Bay (584), Thornlands (352), Maaroom (265)

Whimbrel – Toorbul (390), Mathieson Homestead (385), Pine Rivers Wetland Reserve (189)

Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Boat Harbour (2261), Reeder's Point, Moreton Island (2200), Mathieson Homestead (1770), Toorbul (1450)

Common Greenshank – Ross River Mouth (178), Mathieson Homestead (110), Geoff Skinner Reserve (54)

Pacific Golden Plover – Fisherman Island (485), Shellgrit Creek, Mackay (230), Noosa River Sandbanks (72), Pioneer River Mackay (70), Point Halloran (62), Black's Beach, Mackay (60), Geoff Skinner Reserve (53)

Great Knot – Ross River Mouth (1404), Mathieson Homestead (700), Toorbul (323), Fisherman Island (154)

Red Knot – Mathieson Homestead (400), Fisherman Island (192), Deception Bay Mangrove roost (c143), Reeder's Point, Moreton Island (71), Pine Rivers Wetlands Reserve (53), Toorbul (52), Manly Boat Harbour/Toorbul (24), Shellgrit Creek, Mackay (18)

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Luggage Point (657), Fisherman Island (614), Ross River Mouth (530), Toorbul (390), Salt Works Bowen (238), Pioneer River, Mackay (200), Toorbul (122), Mirapool (103)

Grey-tailed Tattler – Mathieson Homestead (1300), Fisherman Island (721), Toorbul (315), Acacia St, Wellington Point (253)

Terek Sandpiper – Mathieson Homestead (600), Maaroom (150), Manly Boat Harbour (140)

Breeding records

2 Red-capped Plover chicks at Maroochy River North Shore on 21.08.05

Red-capped Plover sitting on 2 eggs at Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon on 23.10.05

1 Pied Oystercatcher chick at Mirapool Beach on 17.10.05

1-day-old Bush Stone-curlew chick at Finlayson Point, North of Mackay on 21.10.05

Masked Lapwing chicks and nests with eggs recorded from Toorbul, Maaroom, Cobaki Retirement Village Tweed Heads, Pioneer River Mackay, Seaforth beach north of Mackay, Point Halloran, Sandbank No 1 Caloundra from 25.08.05 through to 22.10.05.

The count dates for 2006 have been selected and appear on the back page of the newsletter. **The National Summer Count will be in January.** Please mark your calendars.

Both Phil and I would like to thank everyone for their hard work during 2005 and take this opportunity to extend our best wishes to you and your families for the festive season.

Happy counting.
Linda Cross.

WADER ID DAY REPORTS

AREA 5, THE PORT OF BRISBANE CORPORATION – 6 NOVEMBER 2005

Heavy showers greeted QWSG members (two coming from Tweed Heads NSW), and BQ members who attended this outing to the new wader roost constructed by the Port of Brisbane Corporation. The roost had been officially opened two days earlier on 4th November.

QUEENSLAND WADER

Unfortunately bird numbers using the site were low, which is probably due to the current port expansion that has suitable habitat catering for a large number of wader species, (recorded during the monthly counts QWSG conduct inside the reclamation area). The roost has been designed and built in readiness for when the port expansion is complete in many years to come.

Thankfully the bird hides gave us shelter from the weather while we viewed the species present at the roost. A very agitated Black-winged Stilt drew our attention, which suggested that they might be nesting on the site. The showers disappeared and it was decided that we should visit the Lytton roost in the hope that other species of waders would be present.

The Lytton roost provided three additional wader species for attendees to identify. It is a reliable site to compare Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwit helping new wader enthusiasts to see the different diagnostic features of these two birds. There was also a Great and Red Knot close to each other, which was very useful when pointing out the differences to identify these two species. Again, like Area 5, a Black-winged Stilt was also very agitated and attacked other birds while it's partner appeared to be nesting on one of the small raised grassed area within the water covered roost.

Birds seen at Area 5: -

Chestnut Teal, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Australian Pelican, Great Egret, Intermediate Egret, Striated Heron, Nankeen Night Heron (flew over), White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Eastern Curlew, Common Greenshank, Ruddy Turnstone, Red-necked Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Pied Oystercatcher, Black-winged Stilt (possibly nesting), Red-capped Plover, Masked Lapwing, Silver Gull, Caspian Tern, Magpie-lark, Welcome Swallow and Fairy Martin.

Birds seen at Lytton: -

Chestnut Teal, White-faced Heron, Little Egret, Great Egret, Intermediate Egret, Australian White Ibis, Royal Spoonbill, Osprey, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Eastern Curlew, Great Knot, Red Knot, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Black-winged Stilt (nesting), Red-capped Plover, Masked Lapwing, Collared Kingfisher, Torresian Crow, Tawny Grassbird and Golden-headed Cisticola.

Linda Cross.

TOORBUL WADER ID DAY REPORT 10 SEPTEMBER

This wader identification attracted a total of 21 members and guests providing them the opportunity to view the enhanced wader roost. It will be interesting to see if the enhancement will be beneficial to the waders, and regular counts will help answer that question. Weather conditions were fine, dry and sunny with a moderate breeze.

The following leg flagged birds were observed: -

1 Grey-tailed Tattler with blue flag (banded in Japan) on the upper left leg.

2 Great Knot with green flag (banded in Moreton Bay) on upper right leg.

Sixteen wader species were recorded at the main Toorbul roost and a count was conducted recording 20 bird species for a total of 1163 bird as follows:

2 Osprey (flying over), 5 Black-tailed Godwit, 102 Bar-tailed Godwit, 323 Whimbrel, 169 Eastern Curlew, 6 Common Greenshank, 1 Terek Sandpiper, 7 Red-capped Plover, 300 Grey-tailed Tattler, 1 Ruddy Turnstone, 90 Great Knot, 28 Red Knot, 4 Red-necked Stint, 82 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 20 Curlew Sandpiper, 5 Pied Oystercatcher, 2 Masked Lapwing, 1 Silver Gull, 7 Gull-billed Tern, 8 Caspian Tern

Phil & Linda Cross.



Checking the birds at Toorbul Roost

WADER ID DAYS for EARLY 2006

Saturday 21st January 2006 at Manly

High tide at 13:30 of 1.98m. Meeting time will be at 12:00 noon.

From the Royal Esplanade, Manly turn in to road leading to the Royal Queensland Yacht Clubhouse. Before the entrance turn right to the road that runs to the east of the RQYC, Manly. Park at the end of this road. We will be meeting there to enter the site. This is **Private Land** and we will be entering by key, so please be on time.

Remember to bring water and food as it is the middle of the day. It is a good idea to have a hat, sunscreen and insect repellent. Most importantly bring your binoculars or telescopes. Hopefully we can provide the answers to all your questions.

Please contact either Phil & Linda Cross 07 5495 2758 or David Edwards 07 3262 2017 if you have any question

Saturday 18th February 2006 at Toorbul

High tide at 12:15 (plus 40 mins later for Toorbul) of 2.04m. Meeting time will be at 11:30am. See directions below.

Sunday 19th March 2006 at Toorbul

High tide at 11:54 (plus 40 mins later for Toorbul) of 1.91m. Meeting time will be at 11:00am.

Take the Bruce Highway north from Brisbane to the Donnybrook/Toorbul turn-off near the Big Fish. Turn off here and head east over the highway overpass. Continue on this road to Toorbul. Turn right at the T-junction then first left and then right, which brings you onto the Esplanade. Follow this road to the end (approximately 2kms), we will be on the left.

Remember to bring water and food as it is the middle of the day. It is a good idea to have a hat, sunscreen and insect repellent. Most importantly bring your binoculars or telescopes. Hopefully we can provide the answers to all your questions.

Please contact either Phil & Linda Cross 07 5495 2758 or David Edwards 07 3262 2017 if you have any question

Check all those Leg Flags

I wonder if I could please ask you to try and get some people in QWSG to very thoroughly scan all the main Grey Knot roosting flocks in Moreton Bay to look for White/Black Chongming Dao Flags?

We are now getting a huge number of reports of Chinese-flagged birds from all over the flyway. Particularly prominent are Great Knot in NW Australia (like ten seen in one day at 80 Mile Beach on Tuesday). Some years ago I remember looking at the recoveries of Great Knot and finding evidence that the Queensland birds might use a more easterly northward migration route than those from NW Australia and probably different stopover sites e.g. the Philippines. We could test this by looking at the proportion of Great Knot in Moreton Bay which are carrying Chongming Dao White/Black flags.

Obviously searches of other species would also be valuable, especially Bar-tailed Godwits.

There is no particular urgency about this as long as it is carried out before the end of February, when birds start to move northwards. But we have Kejia Zhang from CMD in Australia with us for the next month and it would be nice if we had some hot news from Queensland within that period!

Many thanks. Best wishes,
Clive Minton

Flag sightings report from the Flyway

A record 436 new flag sightings were processed by the Leg Flagging Database, managed by the AWSG, during the three month period July- September.

Highlights include:

The first overseas flagged Common Greenshank to be seen in Australia. It was seen at Eighty Mile Beach in NW Australia on 19th July and was therefore probably an immature bird flagged at Chongming Dao on southward migration in August-September 2004.

Earlier this year the first Australian flagged Common Greenshank was seen overseas - in Taiwan, China.

The Russian led expedition to Chukotka in far northeast Siberia was especially productive for flag sightings. A Red Knot from Chongming Dao and another from North Island, New Zealand were located, the latter at a nest with a brood of chicks. Four flagged Red-necked Stints were also found - one from Japan, one from NW Australia and two from Victoria, Australia. A Dunlin flagged at Chongming Dao in China was also seen.

Indonesia has been especially active and has reported 34 flag sightings of Red-necked Stint and Curlew Sandpiper on southward migration in August-September. These include birds flagged in Hong Kong and Chongming Dao, China, as well as in northwest Australia, Victoria and South Australia. This information is changing our previous views that waders fly over Indonesia without stopping until they make a landfall in northern Australia. It seems that at least some of the smaller waders do use Indonesia as an important stopover location on southward migration.

Within Australia there was another record of a Red-necked Avocet which had moved almost 1500 km. This is a "resident" species, but clearly moves around quite extensively in relation to water conditions in different parts of the continent.

The dividends from the hugely successful banding and flagging at Chongming Dao are now rolling in with a report of a white over black flagged bird being seen somewhere almost every day. Recently received reports include 9 Bar-tailed Godwits, 7 Great Knots, 3 Black-tailed Godwits, 2 Red-necked Stint, a Red Knot, a Greenshank, a Dunlin and a Redshank.

Still to be processed, and therefore not included in the above totals are 208 flag sightings of Bar-tailed Godwits seen in southwest Alaska during the extended period of intensive fieldwork there throughout August and September 2005. These birds came from nine different flagging locations. There are 114 sightings of birds from three different Australian locations and 90 from various parts of New Zealand. It is notable that yet again there were no sightings of yellow flagged Bar-tailed Godwits from northwest Australia, even though more Godwits have been flagged there than at all other locations added together. The *menzbieri* subspecies of the Bar-tailed Godwit forms the bulk of the population which occurs at NW Australia and these all seem to go to the Yakutia region of Siberia to breed. In contrast the *baueri* subspecies which spends the non-breeding season in eastern Australia and New Zealand goes to Alaska to breed.

Clive Minton

The Tattler No 45

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently :

David and Jillian PRAEGER

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.

Another bad joke to fill up a couple of lines!

Did you ever notice that when Bar-tailed Godwits migrate in their Vee formation, one side of the line is longer than the other? Know why that is?

There's more Godwits in it!.....Sorry!!

Plans for Chukotka Expedition

Dear colleagues,

I am happy to inform you that the plans for Chukotka expedition are confirmed and that we can, as usual, invite some self-paying volunteers to join Bird Conservation expedition of Russian Academy of Sciences for the period of about 1.5 month from late June till early August 2006 in Chukotka.

Our program this year will include:

1. General bird fauna inventories of the areas never visited by ornithologists before;
2. Spoon-billed Sandpiper breeding grounds monitoring;
3. Survey of geese & ducks moulting concentrations with the focus on the Emperor Goose;
4. Sea bird cliff nesting colonies inventory;
5. Traditional knowledge and subsistence hunting surveys in the villages of indigenous peoples;
6. Pelagic sea bird counts from the boats
7. Wader ringing and colour marking.

Expedition will start from Anadyr and then will be divided in several smaller subgroups (so each participant will be able to join part of activities mentioned above, not all of them), which will work along the coasts of South Chukotka. Main landscapes: shrub tundra lowlands, Koryak Mountains and cliffs nearby to Navarin Cape. Estimated costs of participation of one volunteer will be around 2,100-2,200 Euro including return flight from Moscow and all local costs including, accommodations, food and all sorts of local transport. More details to be clarified later.

Please take into account that in addition to great birds, wonderful pristine landscapes and a lot of fun, which we normally have in our expedition teams, we also should be prepared to work for long far from civilisation with basic food and facilities staying in tents, a lot of walking, mosquitoes, cold, rainy, foggy weather, etc.

If you are interested in participation please indicate this by sending me an e-mail to the address: ees@gcnet.ru and I will contact you back with more details.

Best regards,

Dr. Evgeny Syroechkovskiy, Jr.

Head of Arctic Expedition of IPEE Russian Acad.Sci and Goose, Swan and Duck Study Group of Northern Eurasia.

Flagged shorebirds sighted in Alaska

The following are all the leg flag sightings in Alaska of birds banded overseas. This data which has been sent to the central flag sighting database is summarised in Table. This doubles the sum total of flag sightings of Bar-tailed Godwits we have previously received from Alaska. Note the strong showing for the birds individually flagged/colour banded by Phil Battley, in New Zealand. Note also the continued complete absence of yellow flagged Bar-tailed Godwits from NW Australia (where far more Godwits have been flagged than anywhere else!).

Bar-tailed Godwit flag sightings in Alaska Aug. /Sept 2005

Flag colour	Sightings	Origin
Orange	108	Victoria, Australia
Green	5	Queensland, Australia
Orange/Green	1	New South Wales, Australia
White	31	North Island, New Zealand
White/Green	19	South Island, New Zealand
White + colour bands*	40	New Zealand
White/Black	2	Chongming Dao, China
Green/orange	1	Yalu Jiang, China
Blue + colour bands	1	Japan
Total	208	

*Phil Battley research project

The Tattler No 45

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of
Queensland Wader Study Group

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

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Forward application to:
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NT 0814

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 **Feb 18th 2006**

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 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, 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 7:45pm start.

QWSG MERCHANDISE

Should you wish to purchase any of the QWSG Merchandise, items may be purchased at BQ Inc meetings held 1st Thursday of the month at the Royal Geographical Society Rooms **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

No longer in stock: Birds of Bribie Island, Pumicestone Passage and Environs
Wildflowers of Bribie Island
However, can be obtained from BIEPA by contacting Kathleen Catalan on 07 3408 7338

No longer in stock: A Birdwatcher's Guide to Redcliffe, Pine Rivers and Caboolture Shire.
However, can be obtained from WPSQ Caboolture branch by contacting Brian & Eileen Rigden on 07 5496 6644

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.*

POLO SHIRTS, CLOTH BADGES & METAL BADGES

We are currently looking at organising new stock of polo shirts and badges from new suppliers and would like to hear from members who are interested in purchasing any of the two items mentioned. This will be particularly helpful for us when placing the order in relation to sizes, colour etc. People who contacted us previously with their choice of colour and size need to contact us again please as there will be colour changes.

The polo shirts will be two or three tones in colour and can be purchased with a pocket or without a pocket. At this point in time we do not have a costing for them and are therefore unable to give you a price. **We have 5 Polo Shirts left from previous stock (all are large size - 4 Beige and 1 Jade) and we are clearing them out at below cost price of \$15 + postage and handling. If anybody is interested please contact Linda.**

We have new metal QWSG logo badges available for sale. The badge has been made like the logo that appears on the front top right corner of this newsletter with pale grey for the sand, blue ocean/sky and the godwit is pale grey, black/brown with a little white. They are 3-½ cm in size and are very stylish. Price is \$5 + postage and handling.

QUEENSLAND WADER

Please contact Ivell Whyte on 38020757 or Linda Cross on 54952758



Activities 2005 - 06

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2005 - 06

Sun 18 th Dec	2.34m at 11:08	
Sat 14 th Jan	2.38m at 09:39	National Summer Count
Sat 11 th Feb	2.31m at 08:43	
Sat 11 th Mar	2.17m at 07:34	
Sat 1 st Apr	2.03m at 11:25	
Sat 13 th May	1.88m at 09:12	
No count in June		
Sat 15 th Jul	1.88m at 12:46	National Winter Count
Sat 12 th Aug	2.03m at 11:38	
Sat 9 th Sep	2.16m at 10:30	
Sat 7 th Oct	2.25m at 09:24	
Sat 4 th Nov	2.27m at 08:17	
Sat 9 th Dec	2.29m at 12:25	

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2005 - 06

Sat 17 th Dec	2.39m at 10:31	Meet 08:40
Sun 15 th Jan	2.38m at 10:15	Meet 08:25
Sun 12 th Feb	2.34m at 09:19	Meet 07:30
Sun 12 th Mar	2.23m at 08:15	Meet 06:30
Sun 2 nd Apr	1.83m at 12:04	Meet 10:15
Sun 14 th May	1.82m at 09:50	Meet 08:00
Sun 18 th Jun	1.81m at 15:07	Meet 13:20
Sun 16 th Jul	1.90m at 13:41	Meet 11:50
Sun 13 th Aug	2.05m at 12:26	Meet 10:35
Sun 10 th Sep	2.22m at 11:16	Meet 09:25
Sun 8 th Oct	2.35m at 10:09	Meet 08:20
Sun 5 th Nov	2.40m at 09:03	Meet 07:15
Sun 10 th Dec	2.18m at 13:06	Meet 11:15

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

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,

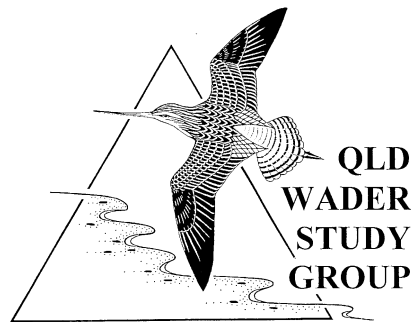
OTHER (specify.....)

SIGNATURE: DATE:.....

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

Cheques to be made out to: Queensland Wader Study Group

QUEENSLAND WADER



Issue number 056

June, July, August 2006

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

Burnett-Mary Shorebird Project Successfully Completes First Roost Mapping Field Survey

The QWSG has completed the first field survey of wader roost sites in the southern section of the Burnett-Mary Natural Resource Management region (Fig. 1). Wader roosts from Pt Vernon in northern Hervey Bay north to the Burnett River mouth and Moore Park were surveyed during the weekend of 25-26 February 2006.

The survey confirmed many roosts identified during a reconnaissance undertaken in December 2005 and found some new roosts. This comprehensive identification of the roosts can be achieved by having many people out in the field at the one time. The QWSG members were supported by many local bird watchers. The key to this survey was the organisation and planning done in the lead up to the survey. Kirsty Balmer undertook this work with funding from the project. A great many boats and small teams of people were needed to cover the groups of sites (Eli Creek, O'Reagans Creek, Toogoom Ck, Coonarr Ck, Theodolite Ck, Burrum River, Elliot Heads, Burnett River and the Port, Skyring estuary and Moore Park). Each team had a map and GPS reference points to help them locate the roosts. Many thanks to the participants who were: Don and Lesley Bradley, Linda Cross, Rob Kernot, Jill Denning, Barbara Dickson, Judy Coles, Ivell and Jim Whyte, Heather Smith, Dez Wells, Andrew Geering, Floss Wainwright, Ken Cowell, Joyce Harding, John Bell, Dennis and Lorna Johnson, Bob and June Gleeson, Sandra Harding, Chris Barnes, David Milton, Peter Fraser, Peter Pearson and John Gatley.

A total of 26 QWSG members and interested locals participated in the surveys. A total of 29 wader roosts were identified and mapped with GPSs and the coordinates marked on aerial photographs. These photographs are now with the Burnett-Mary NRM GIS (Geographic Information Systems) officer, Ms Alice Fisher. Alice will use these maps and the coordinates to make a series of shapefiles that the local governments in the region can include in the own town planning GISs. Once they have these shapefiles, the planners will have a better knowledge of where waders are roosting in their region. Thus, we hope that this will lead to better coastal planning for another section of the coast. QWSG have already completed a similar mapping exercise in the southern Great Sandy Strait with financial support from the federal government's Natural Heritage Trust. This current project is building on that base and allowing us to extend the mapping further north. The project plans to map all wader roosts between Pt Vernon and Tannum Sands, south of Gladstone by mid 2007.

Highlights among the 3450 waders of 25 species counted include 745 Bar-tailed Godwit, almost 600 Eastern Curlew and 550 Lesser Sand Plovers. The roost with the largest count was O'Reagans Ck mouth north of Pt Vernon. Here, Joyce Harding and John Bell saw 400 Bar-tailed Godwit and 300 Great Knot among over 820 birds. Five Beach Stone Curlew were seen, 2 at Eli Ck mouth by Bob and June Gleeson, and 3, including a juvenile at Dr May's Is in the mouth of the Elliot River. These latter birds were recorded by Ivell and Jim Whyte, Heather Smith and Dennis and Lorna Johnson. Linda Cross and Rob Kernot were also lucky enough

to see a Wood Sandpiper in a small creek draining into their site south of the Bundaberg Port Authority wetlands.

A talk was also held at the Elliot Heads Community Hall on the project and about waders. Ivell and Linda presented powerpoint presentations that were enjoyed by about 15 people. David Milton was interviewed for the local Channel 7 news and they filmed Ivell and Linda's talks.

The next survey will need more people as we intend to cover more sites. This survey will be held on the weekend of 21 and 22 October 2006. During this survey we plan to get a second count at the sites already visited and to map and count the more remote northern sites. This will hopefully locate and map all the roosts in the region. Kirsty will be in touch with people who have helped so far and will be interested in finding more people who are willing to participate in the survey. If you are interested please contact Kirsty on kirstybalmer@optusnet.com.au or phone 07 3885 3244.

Sandra Harding, David Milton and Kirsty Balmer

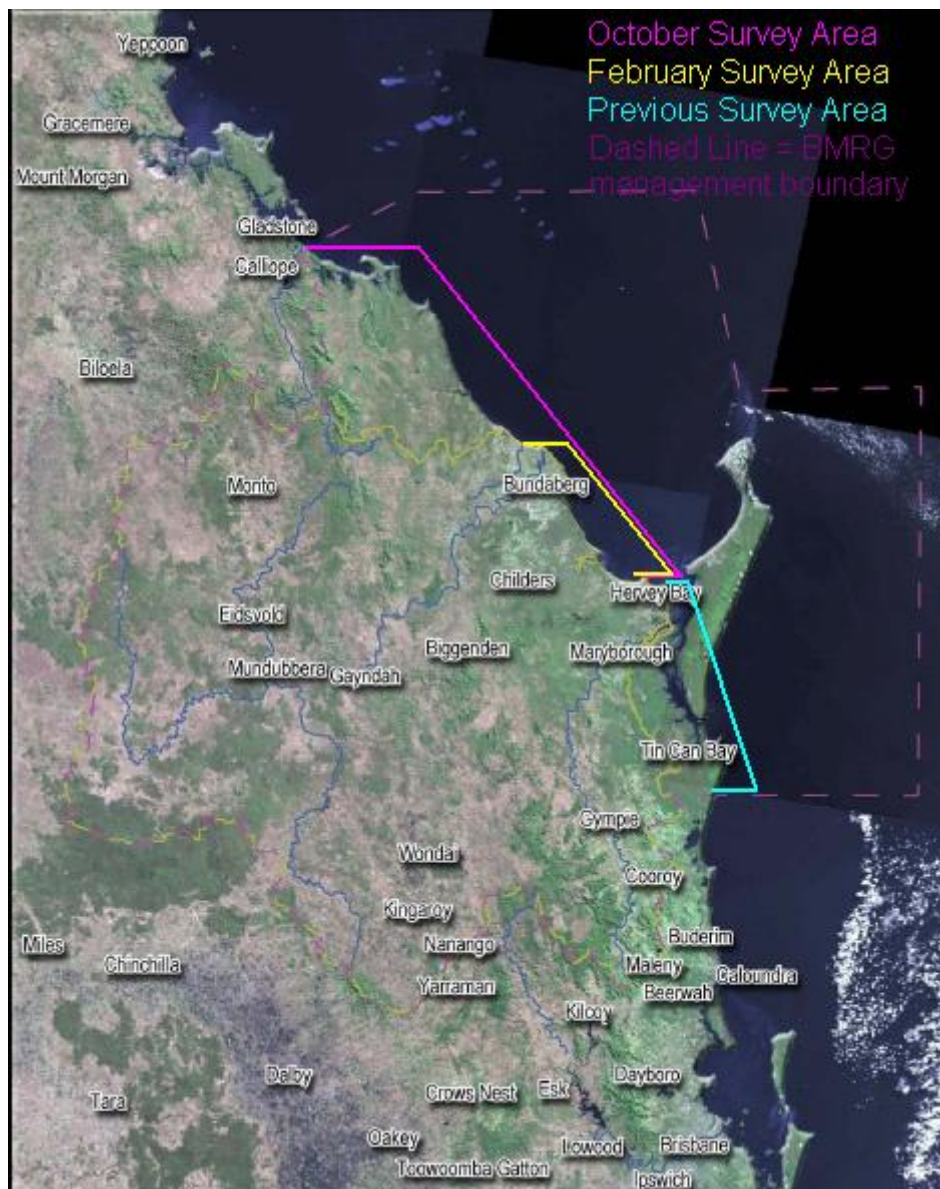


Figure 1. Map of the Burnett-Mary Natural Resource Management Group region showing the area surveyed during the February field activity in yellow.

Editor's Note: Sorry the map is dark.

The dashed outer line is the BMRG management boundary.

The line from Gladstone to Bundaberg is the October Survey

The line from Bundaberg to Hervey Bay is the February Survey

The line from Hervey Bay to Tin Can Bay is the Previous Survey

Port of Brisbane Corporation Count Results – 2005

Once again QWSG conducted thorough monthly counts for the Port of Brisbane Corporation (PBC) at the Port of Brisbane situated at the mouth of the Brisbane River during 2005. As per the previous year's counts, they were conducted on the day before, or after the scheduled monthly count day set down for the QWSG count programme.

The methodology used for the counts remains the same as previous years, with numbers being listed under the appropriate habitat the birds were using, (Dry open Area, Wet Margin, Broken Ground and Bund Wall). A total of 51,416 waders were counted during 2005, which does not include the waterbirds. This number was less than the previous two year counts of (56,124 for 2004 and 57,302 for 2003). It is possible that the reduced numbers of waders is due to the filling in of the older sites, as the formation of the new ponds appears to be attracting more waders, with a wader count total for the first three months of 2006 reaching nearly 30,000 birds.

Significant changes took place in the PBC reclamation area during the year as some of the older sites were partially filled in and new sites being constructed within the new expanded outer bund wall.

S1 – the majority of this 21 hectare site has been filled, with only a very small area remaining at the southern end of it (around 5%), which was used by the breeding Red-capped Plover and Black-winged Stilt. Chestnut Teal also used the area for breeding with 4 ducklings being counted in March.

S2 – most of this 18 hectare site has also been filled, with a portion being left (around 30%), that attracted 278 Red-necked Avocets in September, 1435 Curlew Sandpiper, 1252 Red-necked Stint in November and 1729 Red-necked Stint in December.

S3A – this 18 hectare site was productive for migratory and resident waders during the year. Best numbers were 754 Pacific Golden Plover, 924 Lesser Sand Plover and 308 Greater Sand Plover in January. The February count produced 1076 Red-necked Stint, 698 Grey-tailed Tattler and 610 Curlew Sandpiper using the site. Good numbers of Red-necked Avocet were also attracted to it during the year, with the best count being 521 in May.

S3B – a smaller 10 hectare site along side S3A, with fewer species and numbers, but a few good figures include 666 Pacific Golden Plover in November and 511 of the same species in December.

J Paddock – this site was completely filled by the middle of the year, with only a handful of birds using it for the first four months.

Area 5 – the 12 hectare sited has now been transformed into a wader roost and was officially opened in April 2005. The site is not drawing any significant numbers of waders at present, however, a count of 885 Black-winged Stilt was recorded for June, and the site does have the potential to attract waders once the port expansion is completed in many years to come.

Claypan – the largest site to count, which is still the favourite spot for Eastern Curlew and Whimbrel, with the biggest number being 280 Eastern Curlew in November and 122 Whimbrel in December. This site also recorded 6 Red-kneed Dotterel in May and 161 Red Knot in September.

Visitors Centre – although the lake site does not attract many wader species a Latham's Snipe was recorded for February and the area continues to support a good number and variety of water birds. Breeding records for Dusky Moorhen and Purple Swamphen are numerous, and a single Chestnut Teal breeding record (5 ducklings) was recorded in August. An immature Buff-banded Rail was recorded in March, which would also suggest breeding of this species at the site.

New sea wall & internal bunds – progress of the formation of the new reclamation ponds has been quicker than we expected, and the birds are moving in just as quick using any space they find suitable. A large number of species have been recorded using all four habitats. Best counts are 40 Grey Plover in February, 119 Pied Oystercatcher in March, 803 Grey-tailed Tattler in April, 51 Double-banded Plover in August, 88 Ruddy Turnstone, 559 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 1083 Red-necked Stint, 1239 Curlew Sandpiper and 1 Broad-billed Sandpiper (juvenile) in October, 59 Grey Plover in November and 5 Broad-billed Sandpiper in December.

Flagged birds were seen as follows:

January	1 orange flag, Greater Sand Plover. 3 green flags, Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Great Knot (1) and Grey-tailed Tattler (1).
February	3 orange flags, Lesser Sand Plover (2) and Caspian Tern (1). 7 green flags, Bar-tailed Godwit (5) and Lesser Sand Plover (2), 1 white flag, Grey Plover.
March	4 green flags, Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Grey-tailed Tattler (2) and Lesser Sand Plover (1).
April	1 green flag, Lesser Sand Plover.
June	1 white and orange flag, Red-necked Stint.
November	6 green flags, Bar-tailed Godwit (3), Great Knot (2) and Greater Sand Plover (1).
December	1 orange flag, Curlew Sandpiper.

Breeding records:

Red-capped Plover species were recorded at S1 in January (1 chick), FPE in September (2 chicks), S1 in November (2 chicks and 1 juvenile) and S2 in December (4 juveniles).

Black-winged Stilt species were recorded at S1 in November (nest with 2 eggs) and S3A in November (1 chick).

Some other interesting sightings during the counts were:

January	270 Little Tern S3A
February	461 Silver Gull S2 and 372 Little Tern FPE Bund Walls
March	359 Silver Gull FPE Bund Walls
May	1 Azure Kingfisher Area 5 and 1 Australasian Gannet Flying over FPE Bund Walls
June	1 Brown Falcon S3A and 131 Chestnut Teal Area 5
July	92 Australian Pelican FPE Bund Walls
August	312 Little Black Cormorant Area 5 and 127 Royal Spoonbill Visitors Centre Lake
September	1011 Little Black Cormorant FPE Bund Walls and 143 Royal Spoonbill Visitors Centre Lake
October	1 Great Cormorant Area 5 and 4 Chestnut Teal ducklings S2
November	851 Little Tern FPE Bund Walls
December	3117 Little Tern and 596 Silver Gull and 97 Australian Pelican FPE Bund Walls

Wader species (in taxonomic order) and numbers using the PBC sites during 2005 are included with this article. Many other waterbirds were also recorded using the sites; however, lack of space in the newsletter does not allow the printing of them.

Our thanks to the Port of Brisbane Corporation for their ongoing support to the QWSG and supplying the vehicles and equipment during the counts. Very special thanks to Wayne and Renee Young for the continual sacrifice of their time on the weekends of the counts, and organising the barbeques that followed some of them.

We would also like to thank the following people who assisted with the counts during 2005. Without their help it would not be possible to acquire the excellent results for the PBC and our own database. My apologies if I have omitted anyone from the list.

Laurel Allsopp, Dawn Beck, Margaret Bernard, Michele Burford, Lynn Cole, Phil Cole, Ken Cowell, Linda Cross, Phil Cross, Joe Desmond (WBM Oceanics), David Edwards, Andrew Geering, Joyce Harding, Sandra Harding, Martin Havlicek, Dave Houghton, David Milton, Dan Pedersen (PBC), Danny Rogers (AWSG), Peter Rothlisberg, Kath Shurcliff, Heather Smith, Floss Wainwright, Ivell Whyte, Jim Whyte, Kelly White (USA), Kevin White (USA), Marion Williams, Renee Young, Wayne Young (PBC).

We are still contracted with the PBC to count in 2006 and now that the new reclamation ponds are constructed within the area, large numbers of waders have been recorded using them during the first few months of this year. To continue the excellent job of monitoring these birds we require a large support group from which to call on, as we sometimes have people away on holiday and need to fill their shoes. We would love to hear from anyone interested in joining us during the monthly counts at the PBC, even if you cannot assist every month.

Beyond the mesh fence is a surprisingly interesting area that you just cannot get access to at any other time. The opportunity to see large numbers and diversity of birds using a variety of habitats should not be missed by any birdwatcher.

In the context of all the changes that have happened at the sites (ponds filling, others opening and the shorebird roost site coming on-line, the Port of Brisbane Corporation have had Brett Lane review their existing Shorebird Management Plan to bring it up-to-date. This review also includes a review of regional plans (such as the Moreton Bay Shorebird Strategy) to ensure it's works mesh with these plans.

The Corporation is providing Brett with comments on the first draft at present. This will then be circulated (June/July) to stakeholders, such as the QWSG, for comment so they can finalise the plan.

Please contact Peter Rothlisberg on	email	peter.rothlisberg@csiro.au
	Home:	3822 3759 Work: 3826 7225

If you are unable to contact Peter please contact		
Linda Cross on	email	xenus@big.net.au
	Home:	5495 2758

A Table of the Port of Brisbane QWSG 2005 Wader Data can be seen on page 6.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Port of Brisbane Corporation has finished construction of the 12Ha Port of Brisbane Constructed Roost. This site was originally a dredge tail water pond and has been reconfigured and redesigned to make one of the largest constructed roosts on the east coast. The monitoring data gathered by the QWSG within the reclamation ponds at the Port of Brisbane situated at the mouth of the Brisbane River over the past 3 years was used to determine the type and proportion of the habitats presented within the roost site. Further, the experiences of the QWSG members was instrumental in the design and fit out of the two excellent hides that the Corporation has built within the site.

The site offers the opportunity to get close to a range of waterbirds, shorebirds and waders with the best viewing time at high tide. There is also a viewing platform for unique aspects out onto the intertidal feeding areas, St Helena Island and the Moreton Bay Marine Park.

Interested parties are advised that the site is available for access free of charge via the Port of Brisbane Visitors Centre, Number 1 Whimbrel Street, Port of Brisbane. Visitors are asked to sign in, including an agreed code of conduct, and pick up a key to access the site and hides. Binoculars and bird ID books are also available for loan free of charge. This is a great place for a relaxed Sunday drive or if you have visitors in town. The Port of Brisbane Visitors Centre is open 6 days per week, Sunday - Friday. Bookings or more information 3258 4677.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently :

Alan McLEOD
Patricia STOCKWELL
Jon COLEMAN
David BALLHAGEN
Graham & Brenda SMITH

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.

Committee Meeting

There is usually a committee meeting of the QWSG every two months, because arrangements for these meetings are made on an *ad hoc* basis after each meeting it is impossible to announce the times of these meetings in Queensland Wader.

QUEENSLAND WADER

For further information you can contact the QWSG Chairperson, David Milton, on (07) 3390 2179.

Saemangeum and now the Geum estuary

From: orientalbirding@yahoo.com

Sent: Wednesday, 5 April 2006 1:14 AM

Dear All,

More on Saemangeum (pronounced Say-man-gum) , the 40,100 ha reclamation project in South Korea which will convert tidal-flats supporting an estimated 400,000 shorebirds a year into a wasteland, awaiting conversion into rice-fields or golf-courses, industrial complexes or "nature parks" (see: <http://www.birdskorea.org/saemref.asp>).

Proponents of the project have announced that they will hold some ceremony to celebrate the completion of their 33km long seawall on April 24th 2006 - right before the very highest tides of the spring, during the peak of shorebird northward migration.

540 m-wide sluice gates will then remain open after sea wall closure for a year or two (instead of a 30km wide natural estuary mouth), with greatly reduced water exchange and tidal-range. Forecast models show the whole Saemangeum basin first being flooded with water - leaving very few tidal-flat areas for foraging birds - before most is left to dry ready for so-called development.

Incredibly, wider-scale forecast models (produced more than a year ago by a government related institute) suggest that this single massive reclamation project will lead to a 30 cm rise in sea level in much of the Yellow Sea, causing a Sea-wide loss of a further 5% of tidal-flats (and presumably leading to more intense flooding of salt-marsh which support breeding colonies of Saunders's Gull).

Moreover, this project will then be followed next month (according to local activist Mr. Chu Yong-Gi), by the start of reclamation of the neighbouring Geum estuary - another key site for Great Knot and also for Eastern Oystercatcher (supporting 50% of the minimum total population estimate of the distinctive *osculans* taxon).

It is absolutely clear that the impacts on a broad range of shorebirds and other specialised tidal-flat species by these reclamation projects will be enormous.

This April 24th timing of the Saemangeum seawall completion, the total disregard for its region-wide impacts, followed by the rather secretive intention to reclaim the Geum, not only reveal absolute ignorance of the area's international importance to migratory shorebirds and other waterbirds, but also the obvious hollowness of all PR claims that this kind of reclamation is being conducted with due concern (actually any concern) for the environment.

For all us who are genuinely concerned with tidal-flat conservation and for the future of extraordinarily charismatic species like Spoon-billed Sandpiper and Great Knot, there is a clear need to continue challenging these projects, both of which fly so very clearly in the face of domestic obligations to various international conservation conventions.

One modest response so far has been the development of a Saemangeum Shorebird Monitoring Program (<http://www.birdskorea.org/timetoact.asp>), now being conducted by members of the Australasian Wader Studies Group (AWSG) and the domestic group Birds Korea. Working with other individuals and groups, the Program team aims to gather shorebird data through this spring, and again in 2007 and 2008, at both Saemangeum and the Geum.

Counts in the area conducted from March 31st show that shorebird numbers are already building rapidly, with the first Mongolian Plover, Red-necked Stint and Common Greenshank recorded on April 2nd, the first Ruddy Turnstone on April 3rd, and the first Terek Sandpiper and Black-tailed Godwit on April 4th. During four and a half days of counts, internationally important numbers of Dunlin, Far Eastern Curlew and Great Knot have already been recorded, while Bar-tailed Godwit have started to increase dramatically (at one roost 230 birds on April 2nd had built to 930 by April 3rd). In addition, at least three Bar-tailed Godwit individually marked in New Zealand have already been documented.

Numbers of shorebirds are expected to peak in late April, when it is anticipated that over 200 000 will be present. In addition, small numbers of Saunders's Gull have been seen daily, while on April 3rd, 15 Hooded Crane and 4 Black-faced Spoonbill were also seen within the Saemangeum system.

With such a massive conservation challenge ahead we continue to invite all interested persons to join us, in whatever way, in documenting and publicising the loss of South Korea's most important estuarine system - Saemangeum - the site identified by Mark Barter in his key 2002 study as the single most important known site for shorebirds in the Yellow Sea. We invite all persons to help us increase pressure to maintain tidal-flow in the Saemangeum system; and to help domestic groups in Korea to stop the reclamation of the adjacent Geum estuary.

The evidence we gather and the analysis we present through the Saemangeum Shorebird Monitoring Program will be provided (freely and openly) in the coming months and years to raise awareness of the impacts of reclamation domestically; and also as an example of the impacts of reclamation on shorebirds region-wide. In turn, we intend that this will help encourage much greater commitment by all contracting parties to international conservation conventions, including Ramsar.

Please mail your concerns to South Korean embassies where you live; put us in touch with environmental media where you live; offer technical support and advice to the Monitoring Program; and please help us to ensure that the terrible costs of the Saemangeum and the Geum reclamations become known, and the potential benefits of conservation become much better recognised.

Respectfully,

Nial Moores

Birds Korea: The national and international network dedicated to the conservation of birds and their habitats.

[Http://www.birdskorea.org](http://www.birdskorea.org)

[Http://www.birdskorea.or.kr](http://www.birdskorea.or.kr)

spoonbillkorea@yahoo.com

Northern birds are fatter!

Public release date: 4-Apr-2006

"The further birds migrate north for the summer, the faster they put on weight", says Dr Williams (Simon Fraser University, Canada) who has been tracking migrating birds for several years. "This research may have implications for the designation of protected areas which will ensure birds can complete their spring and autumn migrations." Dr Williams will present his research on Tuesday 4th April at the Society for Experimental Biology's Annual Main Meeting in Canterbury [session A4].

"Our data can be used to assess habitat quality and the importance of specific sites for migratory birds, and this can contribute to decisions about whether migratory sites are protected and which sites are prioritised for protection", explains Williams.

Two techniques were used to study Western Sandpipers on their spring journey along the Pacific 'Flyway' from Mexico to Alaska: 80 birds were fitted with radio-telemetry tracking devices and a further 400 had blood samples taken to give measurements of fattening rate. Williams found that birds fatten more rapidly as they move further north – as they get closer to the breeding grounds - and that the longer the birds spend hanging around at San Francisco Bay (one of the more southerly refueling sites), the lower their fattening rates.

Such differences in fattening rates cannot simply be explained by differences in the availability of food. "Our current thinking is that the difference in fattening could be caused by differences in behaviour (birds simply feed more intensively in the north) or changes in physiology that the birds experience as they move further north", says Williams. "We know there are major differences in gut structure and digestive enzymes between non-migrating and migrating birds, so there might also be similar alterations in migrating bird's physiology further north, which allow more efficient digestion."

www.birding-aus.org

birding-aus.blogspot.com

The Road to Ramsar COP 10

Changwon City, South Korea

Christine Prietto, Hunter Wetlands Centre Australia, Australian Wetlands Alliance

In November of 2005 I attended the Ramsar Convention's 9th Conference of Parties (COP9) in Kampala, Uganda. I attended as a Non-government observer representing the Hunter Wetlands Centre (Shortland Wetlands) and the Australian Wetland Alliance. The COP is run every three years to allow its member countries (146) to gather to review the progress on the strategic plan and to update the plan for the coming three years.

Non-government organisations attend the COP as observers. NGOs organise regular meetings during the COP to agree on resolutions to support. It has become a tradition for them to collaborate on the development of an NGO statement for presentation at the close of the conference. In drafting their statement for COP9, NGOs chose to focus on the importance of facilitating participation of NGOs worldwide in the business of the Ramsar Convention and especially in the COP process.

South Korea will be the host of COP 10 in 2008 and I believe there is an opportunity to use this event to galvanise support for a new commitment to wetland conservation in Australia. Korea is "close to home" and shares a close connection with Australia through migratory bird agreements and other shared initiatives. The Korean Federation for Environmental Movement (KFEM) and the Korean Wetlands Alliance have been active NGO partners with government in the bid to host COP 10. They are keen to communicate with other NGOs over the next three years to assure a high level of NGO participation.

Although the Ramsar Convention operates at a global level, the implementation of the Convention's objectives in member countries can impact significantly on the ground. Resolutions which are hotly debated during COPs are most often those that focus on issues which are causing day to day problems on the ground. It is the role of NGOs to push for resolutions that encourage a better deal for all wetlands and their wildlife and human communities.

Issues that occupied a lot of discussion at COP10 included the 1) Ecosystem Services Framework for wetlands introduced in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2) the consideration of new criteria for listing wetlands as Ramsar sites that recognised culture as a value on its own, 3) the protection of groundwater, aquaculture developments and mangrove management, and 4) dealing with Ramsar sites which no longer meet the criteria for designation. Those areas that will be the focus of attention for COP10 will be identified over the next 2 years.

The COP offers the opportunity to give a higher profile to the major wetland challenges in the host country and the host region. Likewise the COP offers an opportunity to showcase wise use initiatives, major policy developments and significant funding commitments. Member countries commonly announce new Ramsar sites at a COP.

So what is our wish list for Australian wetlands. How could the Ramsar Convention help?

In Australia we have the networks in place to collaborate on identifying the big ticket issues for wetlands. We have vigorous NGO's that have worked for years to push for better management of wetlands and built up a significant storehouse of knowledge. We have indigenous and non-indigenous communities that are dependent on wetlands for their livelihood. The COP offers a good opportunity to concentrate our lobbying power to pressure the Australian Government to make real commitments in the lead-up to COP 10 that could be promoted during COP10. A new Commonwealth Policy for wetlands could be on the list.

There is a two year window to prepare for our involvement, but this needs a strategic and collaborative approach to achieve meaningful wins for wetlands. We need a national discussion mechanism of some kind to get the conversation going. We need NGOs of all shapes and sizes to commit now to sending along a rep to COP 10 in 2008. I hope this article stimulates discussion among all organisations with an interest in wetlands to work towards a process for achieving a strong coordinated representation from Australian NGOs at COP10.

If you agree with any or much of the above 2 paragraphs or have any comments or feedback, please email Libby at lmcintyre@cva.org.au. These will then be forwarded through to Chris Prietto for comment and discussion

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

In each Qld Wader issue there is quite a number of green leg flag sightings recorded within Moreton Bay, which is where the bird was banded originally. As we are now seeing more leg flag combinations from other countries in Queensland, and have limited space available for sightings, we will not be listing each individual sighting of the green flag records in Queensland unless there is a significant movement of the bird. Instead, we will list the number of flags for each species and the period in which they were seen.

Sighted in Moreton Bay and environs between 05.01.06 & 13.05.06

6 Eastern Curlew, 12 Bar-tailed Godwit, 4 Great Knot, 1 Curlew Sandpiper

Interstate & overseas Green leg flag sightings

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Yalu Jiang Site 2, People's Republic of China – Keith Woodley & Gillian Vaughan – 23.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Ersari, near Hongsung, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Jo Jung-jang – 21.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Yalu Jiang Site 15, People's Republic of China – Zhang Guangming – 21.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Yalu Jiang Site 6, People's Republic of China – Gillian Vaughan, Wang Tao, Yuan Xiao, Niu Dongliang & Bruce Postill – 16.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Daemoi, Janghang, Sochon, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Nial Moores Team – 15.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Abhae Island, Shinan, Junranamdo, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Go Kyeng-nam – 01.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Farewell Spit, Gobi, Near Nelson, SI, New Zealand – Rob Schuckard – 17.03.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 05.03.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Big Sand Island – Kaipara Harbour, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 04.03.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 27.02.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 19.02.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken & Ian Southey – 12.02.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, Firth of Thames, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken & Phil Battley – 01.02.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Bush End Spit, Farewell Spit, SI, New Zealand – David Melville – 30.01.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Hoopers Inlet, Dunedin, SI, New Zealand – Mary Thompson – 17.01.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, Firth of Thames, NI, New Zealand – Phil Battley – 08.10.04

1 Great Knot – Chongming Dao, People's Republic of China – Ma Quiang & Kejia Zhang – 03.04.06

1 Great Knot – Shoalhaven Heads, New South Wales – Graham Barwell – 05.02.06

1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Gillian Vaughan & Tony Habraken – 19.02.06

1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken & Ian Southey – 12.02.06

2 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 28.01.06

Orange leg flag sightings

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 29.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Geoff Skinner Reserve, Cleveland – Michele Burford & Peter Rothlisberg – 01.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul Wader ID Day – Ruth Kemp – 19.03.06

1 Red Knot – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 12.03.06

1 Red-necked Stint – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 01.04.06

1 Red-necked Stint – Luggage Point – Ivell Whyte – 11.03.06

1 Red-necked Stint – Mirrapool Beach, Moreton Island – David Ross – 13.02.06

1 Red-necked Stint – Manly Boat Harbour – Rod Gardner – 11.09.05

White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings

No sightings

Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Inskip Point – Jon Coleman – 14.04.06 (Lake Furen or Shunkunitai, Hokkaido, Northern Japan)

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia & metal band right tibia – Toorbul Wader ID Day – Brian Ryan – 19.03.06 (Shunkunitai, Hokkaido, Northern Japan)

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia, white flag left tarsus & metal band right tarsus – Toorbul Wader ID Day – Ken Cowell & Floss Wainwright – 19.03.06 (Obitsu Estuary, Tokyo Bay, Central Japan)

1 Red-necked Stint – blue flag right tibia, blue flag right tarsus & metal band left tibia – Fisherman Island – Linda & Phil Cross, Ron Hoff & Dollyann Myers – 14.05.06 (Lake Komuke, Hokkaido, Northern Japan)

Other wader leg flag sightings

(*Errata:* the record of 1 Bar-tailed Godwit with etched white C9 on black flag right tarsus – Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island – 03.12.05, which appeared in issue No 55, has been recorded incorrectly. The black flag was on the right tibia)

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – etched white C9 on black flag right tibia, metal band left tarsus & satellite transmitter – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 11.03.06 (Alaska)

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – green band over orange band right tibia & white band left tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 17.01.06 (unknown, possibly New Zealand)

1 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – white flag above black flag on right tibia & metal band on left tibia – Nudgee Beach – Jon Coleman – 23.03.06 (Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China)

1 Curlew Sandpiper – white flag above blue flag left tibia & metal band right tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Dez Wells – 11.02.06 (Taipei-Kaohsiung, Taiwan, China)

Other leg flag sightings and banded birds

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 02.04.06

Interesting sightings

Please note these sightings are not authenticated records.

* = to be submitted to BQ RAC ** = to be submitted to BARC

23 Sooty Oystercatcher – Finlayson Point, Mackay region – Peggy Harding 7 Stella Mearns - 10.03.06

15 Black-fronted Dotterel – Area 2 Brisbane Airport – Dez Wells, Ivell Whyte & Melissa Cooper – 12.02.06

7 Black-fronted Dotterel – Tin Can Bay Sewerage Works – Kelvin & Amelia Nielson & Dorothy Paschniak – 02.04.06

9 Black-fronted Dotterel – Kingscliff Sewerage Plant – Ian Watson & Matthew Angus – 01.04.06

3 Red-kneed Dotterel – Area 2 Brisbane Airport – Dez Wells, Ivell Whyte & Melissa Cooper – 12.02.06

2 Wood Sandpiper – Garnets Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 14.01.06 (3 on 11.03.06 & 3 on 01.04.06)

23 Bush Stone-curlew – Pioneer River Mouth, Mackay – Les & Dawn Thyer – 28.02.06

4 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Fisherman Island – Linda Cross et al – 12.02.06

1 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight & Chris Barnes – 27.02.06 (and 1 bird seen by John at the same site on 06.03.06 & 01.04.06)

242 Pied Oystercatcher – Manly Boat Harbour – Sandra Harding et al – 01.04.06

3 Latham's Snipe – Area 5 Brisbane Airport – Dez Wells, Ivell Whyte & Melissa Cooper – 12.02.06

1 Grey Plover (uncommon at site) – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton & Sandra Harding – 11.02.06

Not waders but of interest anyway

1 Black Kite – Caboolture River Mouth – Ivan & Joyce Fien – 01.03.06

c500 Great Crested Grebe - Kinchant Dam, Mackay region - Desley Williams & Margaret Hope - 28.04.06

285 Black Swan – Garnets Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 01.04.06

80 Wandering Whistling Duck – Garnets Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 11.03.06 (all birds still on site 01.04.06)

177 Chestnut Teal – Luggage Point – Ivell & Jim Whyte – 11.03.06

198 Chestnut Teal – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 16.03.06

678 Chestnut Teal – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 02.04.06

10 Radjah Shelduck – Dunrock Town, Mackay region – Maureen Cooper & Edna Barker – 31.08.05

1000+ Magpie Goose – Dunrock Town, Mackay region – Maureen Cooper & Edna Barker – 31.08.05

1 Black-necked Stork – Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – Alan Briggs – 11.03.06
1 Black-necked Stork – Terranora Broadwater – Ian Watson – 16.01.06 & 06.03.06
4 Glossy Ibis – Garnets Lagoons, Hervey Bay – 01.04.06
3 Glossy Ibis – Kedron Brook Wetlands – 16.03.06
126 Australian Pelican – Garnets Lagoons, Hervey Bay – 01.04.06
663 Little Tern – Fisherman Island – QWSG count – 02.04.06

Count Programme by Linda Cross

I would like to remind all counters that **The National Winter Count** is set down for **Saturday 15th July**. High is 1.88m at 12:46. Please advise as soon as possible if you are unable to do your count.

In the last issue of the newsletter I mentioned the surprisingly large numbers of some species recorded on count sheets in January. After listing some of the extracts for January and February I wondered if there would be any further significant numbers to record during the latter part of the northward migration. Although there was not as many, some are of interest and I have listed them below.

2200 Bar-tailed Godwit – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – 14.02.06
1560 Great Knot – Ross River Mouth, Townsville – 12.02.06
1385 Great Knot – Ross River Mouth, Townsville – 11.03.06
897 Pacific Golden Plover – Fisherman Island – 12.03.06
1125 Grey-tailed Tattler – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – 11.03.06
1450 Grey-tailed Tattler – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – 01.04.06
830 Grey-tailed Tattler – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – 15.04.06
737 Grey-tailed Tattler – Manly Boat Harbour – 01.04.06
730 Terek Sandpiper – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – 01.04.06
465 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Kedron Brook Wetlands – 02.04.06
1270 Curlew Sandpiper – Fisherman Island – 12.03.06
2200 Red-necked Stint – Fisherman Island – 12.03.06
1853 Red-necked Stint – Luggage Point – 11.02.06

Double-banded Plover

Not many records so far for our New Zealand visitor. The numbers are quite low, except for a recent record of 72 at Geoff Skinner Reserve. This species was also seen at Inskip Point on 10.05.06, but no count was conducted. However, there was approximately 25 birds seen roosting with Red-capped Plover and Red-necked Stint.

Geoff Skinner Reserve – 19 on 11.03.06, 12 on 01.04.06 and 72 on 13.05.06
South Stradbroke Island – 4 on 01.03.06 and 2 on 09.03.06
Fisherman Island – 2 on 12.03.06 and 24 on 02.04.06
Manly Boat Harbour – 2 on 13.05.06
Sandbank No 2 Caloundra – 5 on 14.05.06

Beach Stone-curlew

During my recent visit to Fraser Island early in May I was delighted to record an increase in the number of this particular species. Six birds were seen on Duck Island in the Great Sandy Strait on 08.05.06, and on the following day (09.05.06) four birds were seen on Duck Island and five birds on the flats on the north side of Little Woody Island, making a total of nine birds. Another bird was seen at Inskip Point on 10.05.06, which is probably one of the resident pair for the area. This brings the total to a minimum of ten birds that I saw during the few days I was there. It would have been a good exercise to survey the rest of the straits and Fraser Island to find any more, but unfortunately I was not able to do so.

Other records for this vulnerable species taken from count sheets are:

Pioneer River Mouth, Mackay – 2 on 28.02.06, 3 on 13.03.06 and 1 on 01.04.06
South Stradbroke Island – 2 on 01.03.06, 3 (one a possible juvenile) on 09.03.06 and 2 on 01.04.06
Seaforth Beach, Mackay region – 1 on 10.03.06

Sooty Oystercatcher

Another of our vulnerable resident waders, which are difficult to find unless you know where to look for them.

Finlayson Point, Mackay region – 23 on 10.03.06

Wickham Point – 5 on 11.03.06

Pioneer River Mouth, Mackay – 2 on 28.02.06 and 2 on 13.03.06

Breeding records

Only one Red-capped Plover breeding record received, which came from Seaforth Beach, Mackay region of a nest with 2 eggs on 10.03.06

Black-winged Stilt nests and young were recorded at Kedron Brook Wetlands 11.02.06, Brisbane Airport 12.02.06, and Luggage Point 11.02.06

It is just about that time of year when I get called back into my paid employment. As the season progresses it will be more difficult for people to contact me and I would like to apologise for this in advance and thank you for your understanding.

Happy counting
Linda.

WADER ID DAY REPORTS

KAKADU BEACH ROOST WADER ID DAY REPORT 3 DECEMBER 2005

When we arrived at the roost it was apparent that this wader id day would be a little disastrous. The shrubs in front of the northern bird hide covered all but two of the lower viewing slots and one would have to be around six and a half foot tall to view through the upper ones. The southern bird hide was even worse, with the shrubs completely blocking any view through the lower slots. The vegetation growth on the roost was also quite extensive, which is an obvious reason the waders are not using it.

Even with a 2.48m tide predicted for the day the waders obviously prefer to use somewhere else, such as Toorbul. A large number of waders could be seen through the telescopes using the roost at the southern end of Toorbul. For the nineteen members and guests who turned up for the start of this identification session it was very disappointing. The only birds seen on the roost were 2 adult Red-capped Plover with two fluffy chicks. However things were going to get better, but not before four of the attendees left to find birds elsewhere.

While continuing to watch the birds at Toorbul, in the hope that they would come our way, a White-bellied Sea-Eagle was spotted over the roost and 2 people walking close to the roost. We are not sure which caused the birds to evacuate the roost, but they were on the wing and headed our way. A couple of large flocks circled overhead but were reluctant to land and it took quite some time for them to eventually settle on the roost.

Once the birds settled the scopes were quickly trained on the birds and keen eyes on the lookout for something different. The majority of the flock were Bar-tailed Godwit and Great Knot. It did not take long for shouts of flags to be reported and calls of Black-tailed Godwits mixed with the Bar-tailed. The attendees who stayed with the QWSG committee got some coaching identifying the differences between the two godwit and two knot species that were present.

Some of the group headed up onto the vacant house block sites above the roost to get better views of the birds and do some counting. All but one of the group returned to the hide in readiness for the AGM, but this was cut short by a call from the person still viewing the birds (Dez Wells) saying he had a black flag with numbers on it. The count co-ordinator grabbed her scope and rushed off shouting as she went, "look for a transmitter", followed by a number of other committee members. Dez had found a Bar-tailed Godwit with a

QUEENSLAND WADER

black leg flag on the right tibia and metal band on the right tarsus. The flag had the C9 etched into it and a transmitter was also attached to the bird.

This bird, with a very long bill (probably a female), was one of ten godwits flagged in Alaska during the northern summer. It was thought that all ten birds might have died because no signal was received from any of the transmitters. However, two of the birds have been spotted in New Zealand and now this bird has been seen, which suggests that the transmitters are not working. Some reasonable photographs were obtained before we adjourned to the start of a later than planned AGM.

Birds seen (in taxonomic order):

1 Australian Pelican, 1 Striated Heron, 1 Australian White Ibis, 1 Whistling Kite, 2 Brahminy Kite, 14 Black-tailed Godwit, c860 Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, 342 Great Knot, 2 Red Knot, 2 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 2 Pied Oystercatcher, 2 Black-winged Stilt, 4 Red-capped Plover (2 were chicks), 1 Masked Lapwing, 1 Silver Gull, 1 Crested Tern and Torresian Crow.

The following leg flagged birds were observed: -

1 Bar-tailed Godwit with black flag (C9) on right tibia, metal band on left tarsus and satellite transmitter. This bird flagged in Alaska.

1 Bar-tailed Godwit with orange flag on right tibia and metal band on left tarsus. This bird flagged in Victoria.

1 Great Knot with green flag on right tibia. This bird flagged in Moreton Bay, Qld.

Thank you to Frank Bigg and David Edwards for counting the birds enabling us to fill in a count sheet to add to the database.

Linda Cross.

TOORBUL WADER ID DAY REPORT 18 FEBRUARY 2006

This wader identification attracted a total of 22 members and guests. Weather conditions were fine, dry and sunny with a moderate breeze.

Sixteen wader species were recorded at the main Toorbul roost, with some showing breeding plumage. It was good to show the attendees the difference between the Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwits. One Black-tailed Godwit was quite striking showing about 90% breeding plumage.

The following leg flagged birds were observed: -

1 Great Knot with black flag (unknown flagging country) on right tibia

2 Great Knot with green flag (flagged in Moreton Bay) on right tibia

Birds seen:

Black Swan, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Australian Pelican, White-faced Heron, Little Egret, Great Egret, Intermediate Egret, Australian White Ibis, Royal Spoonbill, Osprey, Whistling Kite, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Eastern Curlew, Common Greenshank, Terek Sandpiper, Grey-tailed Tattler, Great Knot, Red-necked Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Pied Oystercatcher, Black-winged Stilt, Red-capped Plover, Lesser Sand Plover, Masked Lapwing, Silver Gull, Caspian Tern, Common Tern, Little Tern, Crested Pigeon, Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Rainbow Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted Lorikeet, Pale-headed Rosella, Sacred Kingfisher, Striped Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Rufous Whistler, Magpie-lark, Willie Wagtail, White-breasted Woodswallow, Australian Magpie, Torresian Crow, Welcome Swallow and Common Myna

Linda Cross.

TOORBUL WADER ID DAY REPORT 19 MARCH 2006

QUEENSLAND WADER

This wader identification attracted a total of 22 members and guests, with one keen enthusiast coming all the way from Tin Can Bay. Weather conditions were fine, dry and sunny with a few clouds and a south east breeze.

Seventeen wader species were recorded at the main Toorbul roost, with quite a few species having breeding plumage.

The following leg flagged birds were observed: -

1 Great Knot with green flag right tibia (flagged in Moreton Bay)

1 Bar-tailed Godwit with green flag right tibia & metal band left tarsus (flagged in Moreton Bay)

1 Bar-tailed Godwit with orange flag on right tibia (flagged in Victoria)

1 Grey-tailed Tattler with blue flag left tibia & metal band right tibia (flagged Shunkunitai, Hokkaido, Northern Japan)

1 Grey-tailed Tattler with blue flag left tibia, white flag left tarsus & metal band right tarsus (flagged Obitsu Estuary, Tokyo Bay, Central Japan)

Birds seen:

Black Swan, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Australian Pelican, Little Egret, Great Egret, Intermediate Egret, Australian White Ibis, Royal Spoonbill, Osprey, Brahminy Kite, Australian Hobby, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Eastern Curlew, Common Greenshank, Terek Sandpiper, Grey-tailed Tattler, Great Knot, Red-necked Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Pied Oystercatcher, Sooty Oystercatcher, Black-winged Stilt, Red-capped Plover, Lesser Sand Plover, Masked Lapwing, Silver Gull, Gull-billed Tern, Caspian Tern, Little Tern, Sacred Kingfisher, Striated Pardalote, White-browed Scrubwren, Mangrove Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater (H), Magpie-lark, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Figbird, Torresian Crow, Welcome Swallow and Common Starling.

Linda Cross.

WADER ID DAYS for 2006

There will be no ID Days in the next quarter because our birds will be overseas. Look in the next Newsletter for dates to view the waders on their return.

Flagged shorebirds sighted in Alaska

The following are all the leg flag sightings in Alaska of birds banded overseas. This data which has been sent to the central flag sighting database is summarised in Table. This doubles the sum total of flag sightings of Bar-tailed Godwits we have previously received from Alaska. Note the strong showing for the birds individually flagged/colour banded by Phil Battley, in New Zealand. Note also the continued complete absence of yellow flagged Bar-tailed Godwits from NW Australia (where far more Godwits have been flagged than anywhere else!).

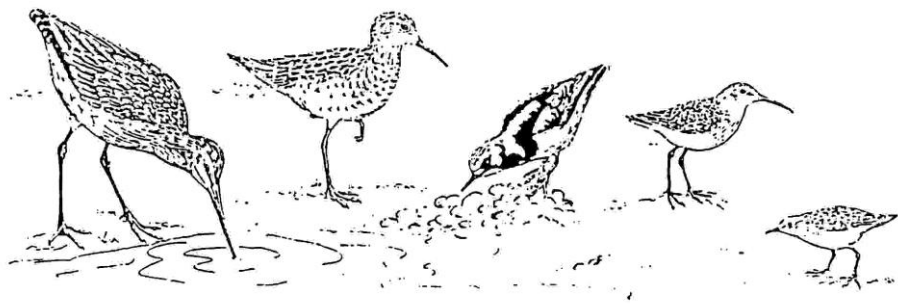
Bar-tailed Godwit flag sightings in Alaska Aug. /Sept 2005

Flag colour	Sightings	Origin
Orange	108	Victoria, Australia
Green	5	Queensland, Australia
Orange/Green	1	New South Wales, Australia
White	31	North Island, New Zealand
White/Green	19	South Island, New Zealand
White + colour bands*	40	New Zealand
White/Black	2	Chongming Dao, China
Green/orange	1	Yalu Jiang, China

QUEENSLAND WADER

Blue + colour bands	1	Japan
Total	208	

*Phil Battey research project



QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of
Queensland Wader Study Group

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QLD 4156

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual subscription rates:
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Receipt will be forwarded with next edition of Queensland Wader.

Forward application to:
QWSG Treasurer,
PO Box 958
NIGHTCLIFF
NT 0814

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 2006

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 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, David Niland (07) 3379 2344; Secretary, John Holt (07) 3359 1439; 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 7:45pm start.

QWSG MERCHANDISE

Should you wish to purchase any of the QWSG Merchandise, items may be purchased at BQ Inc meetings held 1st Thursday of the month at the Royal Geographical Society Rooms OR....

Contact or E-mail at alphabec@powerup.com.au

Postage is not included in the prices quoted.

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

No longer in stock:

Birds of Bribie Island, Pumicestone Passage and Environs

Wildflowers of Bribie Island

However, can be obtained from BIEPA by contacting

Kathleen Catalan on 07 3408 7338

A Birdwatcher's Guide to Redcliffe, Pine Rivers and Caboolture Shire.

However, can be obtained from WPSQ Caboolture branch by contacting

Brian & Eileen Rigden on 07 5496 6644

Polo Neck Shirts.

CD Bird calls of the Broome region (includes 42 Wader Species).

Cloth Badges.

POLO SHIRTS, CLOTH BADGES & METAL BADGES

We are currently looking at organising new stock of polo shirts and badges from new suppliers and would like to hear from members who are interested in purchasing any of the two items mentioned. This will be particularly helpful for us when placing the order in relation to sizes, colour etc. People who contacted us previously with their choice of colour and size need to contact us again please as there will be colour changes.

The polo shirts will be two or three tones in colour and can be purchased with a pocket or without a pocket. At this point in time we do not have a costing for them and are therefore unable to give you a price. We have 5 Polo Shirts left from previous stock (all are large size - 4 Beige and 1 Jade) and we are clearing them out at below cost price of \$15 + postage and handling. If anybody is interested please contact Linda.

We have new metal QWSG logo badges available for sale. The badge has been made like the logo that appears on the front top right corner of this newsletter with pale grey for the sand, blue ocean/sky and the godwit is pale grey, black/brown with a little white. They are 3½ cm in size and are very stylish.

Price is \$5 + postage and handling.

Please contact Dawn Beck on 07 3378 8598 or Ivell Whyte on 38020757



Count Activities 2006

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2006

No count in June

Sat 15 th Jul	1.88m at 12:46	National Winter Count
Sat 12 th Aug	2.03m at 11:38	
Sat 9 th Sep	2.16m at 10:30	
Sat 7 th Oct	2.25m at 09:24	
Sat 4 th Nov	2.27m at 08:17	
Sat 9 th Dec	2.29m at 12:25	

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2006

Sun 18 th Jun	1.81m at 15:07	Meet 13:20
Sun 16 th Jul	1.90m at 13:41	Meet 11:50
Sun 13 th Aug	2.05m at 12:26	Meet 10:35
Sun 10 th Sep	2.22m at 11:16	Meet 09:25
Sun 8 th Oct	2.35m at 10:09	Meet 08:20
Sun 5 th Nov	2.40m at 09:03	Meet 07:15
Sun 10 th Dec	2.18m at 13:06	Meet 11:15

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

Are you a member of Birds Queensland?.....

What activities do you wish to participate in? (Please circle)

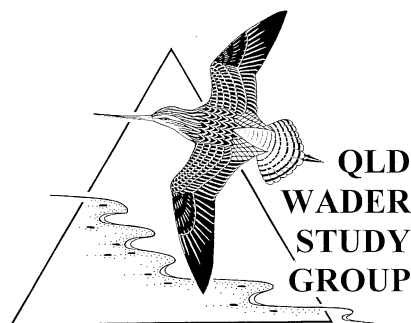
WADER COUNTS, FIELD TRIPS, SCIENTIFIC DATA COLLECTION, SURVEYS, CLERICAL,
 OTHER (specify.....)

SIGNATURE: DATE:.....

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

Cheques to be made out to: Queensland Wader Study Group

QUEENSLAND WADER



Issue number 057

September, October, November 2006

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

MEMBERS' SUGGESTIONS – ALLOCATION OF BEQUEST FUNDS FROM NIGEL ROBERTS ESTATE

There has been an overwhelming response from members making their suggested options for the allocation of funds from Nigel Roberts' bequest. The money bequeathed to QWSG was invested pending a project worthy of Nigel's name. The funds have now increased to over \$42,000 with interest. In all, a total of 67 members took the time to respond to our request for project suggestions. The 67 members did not include the QWSG committee, who had previously discussed the options. Thank you all for your responses and also to Ivell and Jim Whyte for initiating and organising the letter to the membership.

I have summarised the responses in the table below. The three preferences are not shown separately as about half of the respondents did not prioritise their suggestions, but simply ticked or crossed their listed preferences. Many members took the time to add other related suggestions and comments on the lower half of the page. Several thanked the committee for the opportunity to make their suggestions on this matter. Some expressed concern about the potential for this process to commit QWSG to fund activities that may require additional money. This concern was noted during subsequent committee discussions.

A summary of the preferences of 67 QWSG members for the use of Nigel Roberts' bequest. N = the sum of all preference ranks for each option presented, including new options submitted by members. The most preferred option is highlighted in bold.

Options	N	% total
Permanent display at Port of Brisbane Visitors Centre	29	15
A \$5000 honours scholarship	32	16
An annual scholarship for postgraduate studies	56	29
A dedication in QWSG book and purchase photos	17	9
Produce posters on waders for local distribution	13	7
Informative signage	6	3
Purchase telescopes/tripods and donate to schools	7	4
Spend money in Asia to raise shorebird conservation	21	11
Project to save threatened endemic species	9	5
Other - pay lobbyist for wader conservation influence	1	1
Other - banding and migration studies	1	1
Other - international conservation of habitats	1	1
Other - dedicated signs and naming for Manly Roost	1	1
TOTAL	194	100

The committee met on 22 June to consider the responses and unanimously agreed to support the preference of the majority of members. This was to provide funds to support postgraduate student projects (including honours) with an annual allocation of funds. However, your other preferences and suggestions will be kept in mind when considering future projects and activities for the group. I have already had discussions with Mark Barter from the Australasian Wader Study Group about how QWSG might contribute to wader conservation in eastern Asia.

The level of support for the research grant will be between \$3,000 - \$5,000/year, depending on the quality of the application and its relevance to wader conservation. There have been too few student projects on waders in Queensland in the last 10 years. Thus, the committee felt that the scope of the award should be broadened beyond waders to include studies of their wetland habitats and food organisms. Projects in these areas will improve our understanding of the ecosystems that support waders and benefit the birds as well.

The committee agreed that the soon to be released book written by QWSG members on "Shorebirds of Australia: Their Biology and Conservation" and published by CSIRO will have a dedication to Nigel as well. Other options favoured by members such as a permanent display at the Port of Brisbane were felt to be more difficult to achieve as the Port management would make the final decision on display content.

The next step in the process is for the committee to draft an advertisement to be sent to all the Queensland universities. These will be displayed in the zoology departments of each institution and will ask students to apply for funds from the Nigel Roberts wader research grant scheme. Applicants will be ranked on academic merit and the relevance of the proposed project to waders and their conservation. So, if you know of students studying waders, or thinking of studying waders, now is the time to suggest they contact QWSG, either by mail to:

Nigel Roberts Wader Research Grant Scheme,
QWSG Chair,
336 Prout Rd.,
Burbank 4156 Qld

Ph: (07) 3390 2179
Or email: pitta@gil.com.au

David Milton, Chairperson QWSG

High numbers of shorebirds in North West Tasmania

People who participated in the annual summer wader count in the northwest of Tasmania during the Australia Day holiday long weekend were treated to spectacular numbers of migratory and resident shorebirds, with the total count approaching 23,500 birds.

Highlights during the day's counting included a minimum count of 400 Bar-tailed Godwits, 1500 Red Knot, 2300 Curlew Sandpiper, 800 Pied Oystercatcher, 100 Grey Plover and estimates of up to 190 Eastern Curlew, 1300 Ruddy Turnstone, 280 Pacific Golden Plover and 16,000 Red-necked Stint (including 11,000 at Shipwreck Pt). The highest count was at Shipwreck Point on the far northwest tip of Perkins Island where almost 13,800 birds were present during the high tide roost.

The count was the highest ever for the Robbins Passage/ Boullanger Bay wetlands, and reinforces the importance of these wetlands as high national and international conservation value, with more shorebirds present in the wetlands than the rest of Tasmania combined at any time of the year. Sincere thanks to all who assisted on the day.

DELAWARE BAY 2006

By Clive Minton & Susan Taylor

We apologise that this year we were not able to send you periodic reports of events during our three and a half week visit to Delaware Bay to assist the New Jersey Fisheries & Wildlife Department Endangered Species Unit with the migratory shorebird studies. Time pressures meant that we rarely had any free time on most days. This report hopes to make good some of the communication deficiency by summarising the main results of the total northward migration season, from early May to the end of the first week in June. However it will unfortunately lack the excitement of the day to day unfolding of events, and uncertainties of eventual outcomes, which were a feature of previous years' reports.

Activities and Objectives

The intensive, co-ordinated, multi-aspect studies followed a similar course to previous years. Fieldwork activities were:

- a) regular aerial counts, supplemented by local ground counts, of the wader populations in the whole of Delaware Bay and on adjacent Atlantic coasts, particularly at Stone Harbor;
- b) monitoring the timing of arrivals, arrival weights, rates of weight gain, the timing of northward departures, and departure weights; achieved by catching and banding and by visual observations.
- c) intensive telescope scanning of feeding and roosting flocks to identify engraved leg flags. These are the basis of survival rate calculations.
- d) applying radio-telemetry devices to Red Knot and monitoring their length of stay and local/Atlantic coast movements during their stopover.

A key objective was to determine whether there is a preferential use of the beaches of the Bay over Atlantic coast marshland and barrier islands by Red Knot from wintering areas in southern South America. Also, conversely, whether there is a preferential use of the Atlantic coast marshland and barrier island habitats by Red Knot from wintering areas in Florida and northern Brazil. This is a particularly important issue as evidence to date suggests that the wintering populations of the former have a higher mortality rate and have therefore suffered the greater population decline. If a preferential use of stopover habitats can be proved then it is further strong evidence that the lack of Horseshoe Crab eggs to feed on in Delaware Bay is the prime cause of the Red Knot decline in the flyway.

Red Knot was the priority species because of the recent massive changes in its population, but Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderling were also studied in considerable detail. A small team under the auspices of the New Jersey Audubon Society (but also financed through the NJ Fisheries & Wildlife Division) operated separately, as usual, carrying out similar studies on Semi-palmated Sandpiper and Least Sandpiper.

This Year

This was the 10th year of shorebird studies on Delaware Bay and, yet again, it was markedly different from all previous years. The timing and extent of Horseshoe Crab spawning, the timing of arrivals and departures of the three main study species (and their weights), the numbers and distribution of birds around the Bay and on the Atlantic coast and the weather conditions all varied significantly from earlier seasons.

Crabs spawned well from the 11th to the 19th of May and again from the 26th of May to the 2nd of June. These periods corresponded with either calm weather conditions or offshore winds on the NJ side of the Bay and with the full moon and new moon spring tides respectively. In the intervening period (19th to 26th May) the weather was unsettled with seas far too rough for crabs to come ashore to spawn.

Overall May was colder than normal with no settled anticyclonic weather until 26th May. One benefit for the team was the absence of the usual biting insects ("no-see-ems"). The week of anticyclonic weather in the last five days of May and the first two days of June was perfectly timed as far as northward migratory departures were concerned, allowing birds to leave whenever they were ready, *ie.* when they had accumulated sufficient weight.

The first major arrivals of all three species were around 10th to 14th May. Unlike other years, there were no major arrivals apparent after about the 20th May, at least on the NJ side of the Bay. This year arrival weights and weights in mid-May were generally good, especially on Red Knot. For most of May, Red Knot weights remained slightly above the average of the previous nine years and Sanderling weights also tended to be on

or just above average. Only Ruddy Turnstones were slightly below average weights at times, particularly early in the period.

Northward departures were also much more on time than in recent years with the main Red Knot departures occurring on 28th-30th May and with many Sanderling and Ruddy Turnstone departing between 30th May and 2nd June. Almost all birds had left by 6th June, whereas in 2005 there were still many thousands of each species present on this date.

The **big problem** in 2006 was the further decline in Red Knot numbers and an apparent massive decline in Ruddy Turnstones. In contrast Sanderling numbers were rather higher than in 2005.

The main conclusions from the 2006 fieldwork were that birds that came to Delaware Bay or the nearby Atlantic coasts this year fared well, with good food available, weight regimes being more than satisfactory and departure weights/timing being much nearer to the ideal schedule. **But**, as predicted, the massive reduction in Horseshoe Crab eggs for the birds to feed on in recent years is causing a continuing decline in populations.

This is one of the most fundamental factors in wildlife – the natural regulation of wildlife numbers through the adjustment of population levels to meet the available food supplies. It is uncertain what proportion of this decline is caused by more birds dying, or by less successful reproduction or by birds going elsewhere. Continuing research may help resolve this, but it is clear that we are still on the downward slope. Turning matters around will take a long time, especially considering that the recovery in the breeding Horseshoe Crab population, even if satisfactory remedial measures are taken, will be slow because Horseshoe Crabs do not reach breeding maturity until their tenth year.

Banding

Catching and banding went very much according to plan on the New Jersey side of the Bay. Within Delaware Bay a total of 13 catches was made. A catch was made on each day a net was set, though on a couple of occasions a net had to be moved before a catch was finally made. The average catch size was 112 birds; the largest catch was 269 birds, on 17th May. Often two species were caught in targeted numbers and on one occasion all three species.

The target quota of around 350 new birds during May for Red Knot and Ruddy Turnstone was adhered to (360 and 331 respectively). A higher proportion of the quota of 700 Sanderling for both sides of the Bay was deliberately caught in New Jersey (541) because opportunities for catching Sanderling on the Delaware side of the Bay are limited. Catches were nicely spaced thus enabling arrival weights, weight gain rates and departure weights to be closely monitored. There were seven catches of each of the three study species which were greater than 30 – a figure which facilitates a fairly accurate mean weight and gives an indication of the weight profile of the population sampled.

This year increased emphasis was placed on making catches of Red Knot feeding on the Atlantic shores. However the geography of Stone Harbor, the area closest to Delaware Bay, makes catching there much more difficult. It took six attempts to make two successful catches there, totalling 100 birds (93 of them new).

A highlight of this year's fieldwork was a visit to the coast of Virginia (about three hours drive plus a one-hour ferry south of Delaware Bay). Work in 2005 by personnel from the Nature Conservancy and the Virginian Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) had shown several thousand Red Knot present on the barrier islands during the latter half of May and early June. Our help was requested to catch some of these birds, principally so that radio-transmitters could be attached.

The creeks and open sea areas were a joy to traverse as we were boated out some 10 km off shore to Hog Island. The outer barrier island has some similarities to parts of Corner Inlet in Victoria, Australia. The weather was glorious. There were some 3000 Red Knot on about five miles of ocean beach and three catches totalling 92 Red Knot and 54 Sanderling were made. We also enjoyed staying in a most beautiful Nature Conservancy house surrounded by lawns, fields and deciduous woods.

Birds caught at Stone Harbor and in Virginia were not counted in the Delaware Bay quotas. Including these, and also re-traps of birds banded previously at Delaware Bay or elsewhere in the Flyway, meant that our final catch totals were 684 Red Knot, 461 Ruddy Turnstone, 855 Sanderling and 12 other birds, giving an overall total of 2012 birds handled.

Re-captures

81 Red Knot already carrying bands were re-captured. 31 of these had been banded in New Jersey and 27 on the Delaware side of the Bay. This indicates the considerable mobility of Red Knot within the Bay, presumably to exploit the highly variable food resources optimally.

11 had previously been banded in Argentina, four in Florida and one in Brazil. One bird dated back to the initial visit to Delaware Bay in May 1997 (present age therefore a minimum of 11 years).

There were 35 Ruddy Turnstone re-captures. All of these were on the same side of Delaware Bay as they had been banded originally. Ruddy Turnstones therefore are markedly more faithful to a particular section of the Bay. There was one re-capture of a bird originally banded in Brazil. Also there was one bird which was originally banded in May 1997 and which would now be a minimum of 11 years old.

There were 64 re-captures of Sanderling. 56 of these had been banded on the New Jersey side of the Bay but seven had originally been marked in Delaware. Given that many more Sanderling have been banded in New Jersey over the years (11,621) than in Delaware (1,690), these figures indicate that Sanderling are, like Red Knot, relatively non-site faithful within Delaware Bay.

Weights

In the first four catches between 14th and 19th May, the mean weight of Red Knot was well above the average of the previous nine years, with the first two catches in particular being the highest weights ever recorded for the mid-May period. This indicates that the birds present at that time had either arrived from South America in much better condition than normal or alternatively were birds which had only come a relatively short way from wintering grounds in Florida. Evidence suggests that the latter is the more likely explanation as several Florida-banded birds were caught or seen at this time. Also population counts then, and subsequently, suggested that many of the birds which normally fed in Stone Harbor had temporally come into the Bay, attracted by the excellent early Horseshoe Crab spawning in the Cook/Kimbles beach area in mid-May.

Abdominal profile information also suggested that the Stone Harbor birds were much more advanced in their weight gain process than birds in Delaware Bay. This was confirmed by the 25th May catch sample at Stone Harbor, which had the highest average weight ever recorded for this date.

As usual, after the main migratory departures the mean weights of the remaining birds were much lower, with the final sample of 30 Red Knot on 4th June only having an average weight of 150 grams (some 30 grams below the threshold take-off weight of 180 grams). This late season reduction of the average weights, after the cream of the population has left, is because the remaining birds are probably a mixture of late-arriving individuals, young birds migrating for the first time and a small proportion of "sick" birds. It is unlikely that many of these late birds will successfully contribute to Arctic breeding activities in 2006.

Ten Red Knot were captured twice during May/early June 2006. The highest rate of weight gain by single birds was 52 grams in ten days (i.e. about 5% per day). Two other birds showed approximately 4% per day weight gain rates (38 grams in ten days and 32 grams in seven days).

All seven good samples of Ruddy Turnstone showed mean weights which were close to the average of the nine previous years. The highest average weight of 155 grams was reached on 1st June. This is about 60% above the average weight of Ruddy Turnstone outside the migratory season. Seven Ruddy Turnstones were caught twice during the May/early June period. The highest rates of weight gain were 5.7 grams per day (34 grams in six days) and 5.2 grams per day (26 grams in five days). These represent weight gain rates of about 6% per day.

The first seven catch samples of Sanderling all had average weights above the mean for the previous nine years. Peak average weights of around 85 grams were reached on 30th May and 1st June, with some individuals being over 100 grams. As usual, Sanderling remaining after the peak departures had a lower than average weight with quite a number of individual birds showing virtually no weight accumulations at all. Sanderling do tend to stay until a few days later than Red Knot and Ruddy Turnstone each year but, nevertheless, quite a few of these low-weight individuals will not be likely to contribute to successful breeding activity in 2006.

There were seven same year re-captures of Sanderling. Highest rates of weight gain were by one which gained 26 grams in 11 days and another which gained 27 grams in 13 days. These rates correspond to an increase of 4-5% per day.

Aerial surveys/population estimates

The peak aerial survey count of Red Knot on the Bay was an estimated 13,445 on 30th May. This is lower than the peak of 15,345 on the 24th May count in 2005. The peak evening high-tide roost count at Stone Harbor, where most of the Red Knot on Delaware Bay come to roost at night with the birds already present at Stone Harbor, was 16,000 on 26th May. This was again lower than the peak count of 20,000 in 2005.

In contrast, there were rather more birds feeding in Stone Harbor (up to 4,000 on many days) than in 2005 when the population was more typically less than 1,000.

A reduction in Red Knot numbers in 2006 was also recorded along the Virginia coastline – from a peak of 9,000 in 2005 to an estimated 5,000 in 2006.

If the count totals from Delaware Bay, Stone Harbor and Virginia are added together then an estimated 29,000 Red Knot population in 2005 has fallen to an estimated 21,000 in 2006. Whichever way one looks at the figures, it does seem that the Red Knot occurring both in Delaware Bay and this general region on the east coast of America during the northward migration have further decreased. We had been hoping that the decline may have been halted, given similar numbers counted in Tierra del Fuego in the last two non-breeding seasons. But it appears that we are still on a downward slope in the overall size of the population.

Ruddy Turnstone numbers crashed in 2006. From a typical peak of 43,000 in 2005 the maximum number counted during the 2006 aerial surveys was 18,585 on 30th May. This shortage of birds was apparent throughout the whole month with, for example, only 12,000 counted on 23rd May this year compared with 15,000 on 18th May in 2005 and 43,000 on 24th May, with still 42,000 on 1st June. There is no obvious reason for this marked decline. There are no counts on wintering areas to assist in interpreting the situation.

In contrast, Sanderling numbers were higher for the whole period between 16th May and 30th May than at any time in 2005. The peak count was 16,740 on 23rd May, which compares with a peak of 12,765 on 24th May 2005. As usual, the majority of the Sanderling were on the New Jersey side of the Bay.

Radio-tracking

A successful outcome of the 2006 fieldwork program was obtained from 20 Red Knot to which radio-transmitters were applied in the catch at Stone Harbor on 18th May and 45 Red Knots to which transmitters were applied at Hog Island, Virginia, on 20th and 21st May. These birds were tracked daily by aerial flights, by Sarah Carpanty of VIMS, around the whole of the shores of Delaware Bay and of the Atlantic coast between the northern parts of Virginia and the southern part of New Jersey. They were also monitored by 20 automatic radio-tracking stations installed on the New Jersey shores of Delaware Bay and around Stone Harbor and also by hand held mobile tracking stations (operated by Humphrey Sitters).

Results available so far indicate that the birds marked at Stone Harbor largely remained in that area feeding during the day. The results from the birds marked in Virginia show that most of these remained at or around Hog Island until late in the month when they departed on northward migration. It had been postulated that the Red Knot arriving on the Virginia coast may have been birds which could not quite make it to Delaware Bay or Stone Harbor, and that they would continue their migration to these locations after a short stopover. On the basis of this year's results, and the excellent weights and obviously bountiful food available on the Atlantic shore in Virginia, it is possible that these birds may be deliberately using the Virginia coast as a stopover location each year. Whilst some of these birds are undoubtedly from non-breeding areas in South America (because of Argentinian/Chilean/Brazilian flags seen) it may well be that a significant proportion are "Florida" (or "Atlantic coast") birds. Thus, when studying the Red Knot populations, it is important to include the Virginia birds in the future as they are now a significant proportion of the total population.

The New Jersey Endangered Species Unit and VIMS personnel will be visiting the Arctic in late June to search extensively for these birds carrying radio-transmitters. It is possible that this may show some difference in breeding regions between "Atlantic Coast" Red Knot and those from South America. It will be possible retrospectively (via stable isotope analysis of feathers collected from each bird) to determine the non-breeding area origin of each of the individual birds carrying a radio-transmitter.

Scanning for leg flags

A huge effort was put in on both sides of the Bay in searching for engraved leg flags on all three study species. Some scanners were able to identify more than 200 different birds in a day. Data is still being compiled but approximately 8,000 sightings of engraved flagged birds were made. Since the non-breeding area of most of these individuals can be determined by stable isotope analysis of feathers taken when birds

were originally banded it should be possible to obtain vital additional information this year on the relative survival rates of the two populations.

Gull exclosures

Work continued this year to try and develop an exclosure which would keep gulls off the beach and thereby facilitate shorebirds having a greater share of the available Horseshoe Crab eggs. The principle is that used to deter gulls from landing on swimming pools at hotels etc. in coastal areas. Fine nylon fishing line is erected on metal poles above the beach and this acts as a deterrent for birds, which are frightened when they fly into the unseen line. The hope was that gulls would be more deterred than shorebirds because when disturbed they rise more vertically. Low-flying shorebirds could potentially escape when disturbed without impinging on the nylon lines, some 8-10 feet above beach level.

An exclosure was set up in the same area of north Reeds Beach as in 2005. The total length was 150m and the width about 25m. A set of steel poles at each end and across the middle held the nylon lines in place with a space of approximately half a metre between each line. A second exclosure was set up on south Kimbles Beach, but in this case it was a single span of 100m by 25m structure parallel to the beach and at right angles to the main shoreline.

Regular observations showed that the structures at both locations were effective at keeping birds out of the area. Unfortunately shorebirds were excluded almost as much as gulls! The only exception to this was a flock of 100-300 Semi-palmated Sandpipers which regularly fed within the exclosure on north Reeds Beach. Only small numbers of Red Knot and Ruddy Turnstone (less than 100 at a time) penetrated into the exclosure where they were generally rather nervous, easily disturbed and then slow to return. A small number of gulls became habituated and regularly entered the exclosures towards the end of the period, deftly flying out between the nylon wires when disturbed.

It is clear that the current designs are not yet achieving the ideal goal of excluding gulls but letting in shorebirds. Various suggestions have been made for alternatives to be tried in 2007 (including possibly decoys and tape lures). The benefits to Horseshoe Crabs of the exclosures are also being examined. However results are not yet available of egg sampling carried out within the exclosures and on adjacent sections of the beach.

Other activities

Considerable assistance was given to a veterinary team from Georgia, which is examining the incidence of avian-borne diseases in shorebirds and gulls. Many hundreds of cloacal swabs and blood samples were collected. Data collected in 2005 has shown a relatively high incidence of previous exposure to flu type viruses in the Ruddy Turnstone population in Delaware Bay compared to populations elsewhere and to other shorebird species. It will be particularly interesting to see if a similar result comes out of the 2006 work.

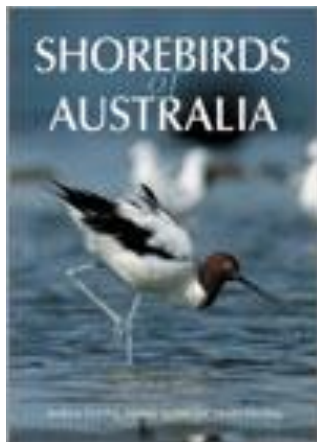
There were numerous visits by the media who now have a great interest in the Red Knot decline and the battles in recent years to try and decrease the level of Horseshoe Crab harvesting. Just before the current migration season the Atlantic Coast Fisheries Marine Council rejected a request for a complete moratorium on all Horseshoe Crab harvesting. Instead they allowed a catch of 100,000 male only Horseshoe Crabs in each state from June 7th. However, New Jersey has created legislation which may override this. There was also a visit by seven Congressional aides from Washington who came to familiarize themselves firsthand with the Horseshoe Crab problem and the shorebird studies.

In addition, a most successful one-day conference was held at the Forsyth National Wildfowl Refuge Centre. with 12 members of the New Jersey "team" making presentations. Eight of these covered various aspects of the studies carried out over the last ten years on Delaware Bay and four, for comparative purposes, covered studies in the East Asian/Australasian Flyway. The latter were by Chris Hassell (banding at Chongming Dao in China), ChungYu Chiang (shorebird studies in Taiwan), Clive Minton (the results of wader studies in Australia) and Dick Veitch (wader studies in New Zealand).

The future

It is currently planned that shorebird studies will be continued for several more years on both sides of Delaware Bay, and on the Stone Harbor and Virginia sections of the Atlantic coast. The first major target is a halt in the population declines, with actions designed in the light of the extensive research information being generated. It is clearly going to be a long-term process to significantly reverse the decline and get populations moving back towards their former levels. Convincing everybody that it will require even tougher conservation methods than currently in place is still a major obstacle to success.

The Book is Coming: the Details



Shorebirds of Australia

Andrew Geering Queensland Wader Study Group

Lindsay Agnew

Sandra Harding

Illustrations, Tables, Bibliography, Index

216 pages, 248 x 170 mm

Publisher: CSIRO PUBLISHING

January 2007 **FORTHCOMING**

Description

Shorebirds of Australia brings together the latest information about the evolutionary history, taxonomy, migration and breeding and feeding ecology of shorebirds found in Australia.

Complete with colour photographs and up-to-date distribution maps, it provides descriptions and tips to assist with the identification of all species of shorebird in Australia, which comprise about 10 per cent of Australia's total avifauna. In addition to information about their habitats, their most significant threats are mentioned, as well as actions in place to help conserve these birds.

The book is a valuable reference for a broad range of people, from the amateur birdwatcher and field naturalist to professional ornithologists and land managers entrusted with the responsibility of managing Australia's natural resources, especially its wetlands and coastal regions.

Features

- Colour photographs and up-to-date Australian distribution maps of all shorebirds in Australia (excluding vagrants)
- Overview of all aspects of the biology and conservation of shorebirds based on the latest scientific literature
- Information about the habitats of shorebirds, which will assist with the identification of these important birds
- Describes the most significant threats to shorebirds in Australia and the East Asian-Australasian Flyway and actions in place to help conserve these birds

Contents

Preface

Acknowledgements

List of authors and affiliations

Chapter 1 – Evolutionary history and taxonomy

Chapter 2 – Breeding ecology

Chapter 3 – Migration

Chapter 4 – Feeding ecology and habitat selection

Chapter 5 – Plumages and topography

Chapter 6 – Species descriptions

Chapter 7 – Threats to shorebirds and conservation actions

References

Readership

- Ornithologists, both amateur and professional
- Natural history enthusiasts and birdwatchers
- Professionals involved in the management or utilisation of coastal resources
- Environmental consultants
- Eco-tourism operators and educators
- Secondary school science teachers and students
- Undergraduate teachers and students
- Environment departments in federal, state and local governments

Large count of Pacific Golden Plover, *Pluvialis fulva*

It has been estimated that about 10% of the world population of 90 000 Pacific Golden Plover migrate to Australia during the non-breeding season, which is a total of about 9000 birds. However if counts of this species in recent years is any indication this species has declined quite dramatically at many count sites. For example, Moreton Bay in Queensland has been attributed with over 2000 birds and the Hunter River estuary in New South Wales with 800 Pacific Golden Plover 20 years ago. Neither of these sites regularly had more than 25% of those counts in recent years.

One site in NSW, the Shoalhaven River estuary, seems to have bucked this trend of late with regular counts in summer 2005 and summer 2006 of over two hundred birds and counts this year of over 315 birds (R. Worrell and M. Jarman, pers. comm.) The observations are similar to a maximum count for this site reported in 1990 (Smith, 1991) of 312 birds.

It is usually assumed that declines of migratory species that reach Australia are the result of impacts (for example habitat loss or hunting) within the migratory flyway rather than at over-wintering grounds in Australia. However, counts such as those at the Shoalhaven could be an indication that habitat changes at many sites in Australia could be affecting local populations. Pacific Golden Plover have an affinity to saltmarsh habitats, at least as roosting habitat, a habitat which has declined along the south eastern coastal areas where most Pacific Golden Plover counts are made. The Shoalhaven River estuary is one of the few estuaries in NSW where saltmarsh habitat has remained stable since counts started in Australia.

Saltmarsh habitat (high tide roost habitat) and sandflats (feeding habitat) has remained relatively stable in Shoalhaven River estuary for almost two decades. The relatively long (18 year) absence of large floods in the Shoalhaven River estuary may have encouraged stability and subtle accretion of the sediments supporting wader habitat. There are indications that saltmarsh areas at Comerong Lagoon important to Pacific Golden Plover, Eastern Curlew & Pied Oystercatcher are being invaded slowly by the Grey Mangrove *Avicennia marina*. It may be only a matter of time before a decline in the number of Pacific Golden Plovers occurs in the estuary unless management strategies are put in place.

Reference: R Smith (1991) The biology and management of Waders (Suborder Charadrii) in NSW NSW NPWS Species Management Report Number 9.

Phil Craven, NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, Nowra Phil Straw, AWSG

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently :

Amber PERRY
Owen PROUSE
Ted WNOROWSKI

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

In each Qld Wader issue there is quite a number of green leg flag sightings recorded within Moreton Bay, which is where the bird was banded originally. As we are now seeing more leg flag combinations from other countries in Queensland, and have limited space available for sightings, we will not be listing each individual sighting of the green flag records in Queensland unless there is a significant movement of the bird. Instead, we will list the number of flags for each species and the period in which they were seen.

Green leg flag sightings

2 Eastern Curlew – Manly Boat Harbour – Heather Smith, Kath Shurcliff & Dave Houghton – 12.08.06

1 Eastern Curlew – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 13.05.06

Interstate & overseas Green leg flag sightings

(Errata: the record of 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, Firth of Thames, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken & Phil Battley – 01.02.06, which appeared on page 10 in issue No. 56 is incorrect. The date should read 11.02.06. The record of 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, Firth of Thames, NI, New Zealand – Phil Battley – 08.10.04, which also appeared on page 10 of issue No. 56 is incorrect. The species should read 1 Red Knot)

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Namyang Bay (Unpyong-ri), Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Park Hun-woo – 14.05.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Simpo, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Simon Cohen, Nial Moores, Rob Schuckard, Jan van der Kam & Ken Gosbell – 28.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Shellfishery Harbour, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Danny Rogers – 17.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Shellfishery Harbour, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Nial Moores – 16.04.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, Firth of Thames, South Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Phil Battley – 08.03.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – PFB, SJM – 13.02.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Kiwi Esplanade, Manukau Harbour, NI, New Zealand – Phil Battley – 30.01.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, Firth of Thames, South Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Phil Battley – 03.11.05

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Phil Battley – 25.10.05

1 Great Knot – sandbank off airport, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Adrian Boyle, Nial Moores, David Melville & Ju Yun-gi – 16.05.06

1 Great Knot – Shellfishery Harbour, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – David Melville, Adrian Boyle & Kelly White – 15.05.06

Orange leg flag sightings

1 Eastern Curlew – Manly Boat Harbour – Heather Smith, Kath Shurcliff & Dave Houghton – 12.08.06

1 Eastern Curlew – Pine Rivers Wetland Reserve – Floss Wainwright & Ken Cowell – 12.08.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Boat Harbour – Heather Smith, Kath Shurcliff & Dave Houghton – 12.08.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – Jill Denning – 12.02.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – Jill Denning – 17.12.05

1 Red Knot – Toorbul – Jill Denning – 06.02.06

1 Red-necked Stint – Mt. Isa sewerage ponds – Barbara Giffedder – 14.05.06

White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings

No sightings

QUEENSLAND WADER

Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Toorbul – Jill Denning – 15.03.06 ((Hokkaido, Northern Japan)

Other wader leg flag sightings

No sightings

Other leg flag sightings and banded birds

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Fisherman Island – David Edwards et al – 13.08.06

Interesting sightings

Please note these sightings are not authenticated records.

* = to be submitted to BQ RAC ** = to be submitted to BARC

567 Grey-tailed Tattler – Fisherman Island – Peter Rothlisberg, Jon Coleman & Pat Stockwell – 13.08.06

13 Bush Stone-curlew – Pioneer River, Mackay – Les & Dawn Thyer – 08.08.06

20+ Bush Stone-curlew – Seaforth town area – Peggy Harding & Stella Mearns – 14.07.06

78 Red-necked Avocet – Deception Bay roost – Phil & Linda Cross – 12.08.06

104 Red-necked Avocet – Trutes Bay, Tweed Heads, NSW – Marion Williams & Laurel Allsopp – 22.07.06

172 Red-necked Avocet – Fisherman Island – QWSG counters – 16.07.06

52 Ruddy Turnstone – Fisherman Island – QWSG counters – 16.07.06

6 Sanderling – Mirapool Beach, Moreton Island – Ivell Whyte et al – 14.07.06

111 Red-capped Plover – Luggage Point – Ivell & Jim Whyte – 13.05.06

21 Red-kneed Dotterel – Pine Rivers Northside – David Edwards – 13.05.06

Not waders but of interest anyway

1858 Little Black Cormorant – Fisherman Island – Peter Rothlisberg, Jon Coleman & Pat Stockwell – 13.08.06

1 White-necked Heron – Bishop's Marsh, Toorbul – Esther Townsend – 13.08.06

4 White-necked Heron – Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – Allan Briggs – 12.08.06

1 Australasian Gannet – diving in Bay off Manly Boat Harbour – Heather Smith, Kath Shurcliff & Dave Houghton – 12.08.06

16 Lesser Crested Tern – Manly Boat Harbour – Heather Smith, Kath Shurcliff & Dave Houghton – 12.08.06

1 Australasian Shoveler – Tweed Heads Sewerage Works – Ian Watson & Laurel Allsopp – 17.07.06

4 Eastern Reef Egret – Cooloola roost, Tin Can Bay – Kelvin & Amelia Nielsen & Dorothy Paschniak – 15.07.06

109 Australian Pelican – Sandbank No 1, Caloundra – Jill Chamberlain – 15.07.06

263 Australian White Ibis – Geoff Skinner Reserve – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 15.07.06

500+ Magpie Goose – BP truck stop Mackay – Floss Wainwright & Ken Cowell – 11.07.06

2 Yellow-billed Spoonbill – BP truck stop Mackay – Floss Wainwright & Ken Cowell – 11.07.06

10 Glossy Ibis – BP truck stop Mackay – Floss Wainwright & Ken Cowell – 11.07.06

1 Mangrove Robin – calling in mangroves at Pioneer River Mouth, Mackay – Les & Dawn Thyer – 10.07.06 (first record for area)

123 Wandering Whistling Duck – Kingscliff Sewerage Plant – Ian Watson & Laurel Allsopp – 10.07.06

1 Boobook (juvenile) – Kingscliff Sewerage Plant – Ian Watson & Laurel Allsopp – 10.07.06

1 White-necked Heron – Trutes Wetland, Tweed Heads – Ian Watson – 07.07.06

1 Southern Giant Petrel (juvenile dark morph) – Sandy Cape, Fraser Island – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 07.06.06

1 Southern Giant Petrel (juvenile dark morph) – washed up on beach at Sandy Cape, Fraser Island and subsequently died – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 07.06.06

231 Black Swan – on water at Toorbul – Dez Wells – 14.05.06

279 Australian White Ibis – Beck Road, Caloundra – Jill Chamberlain – 14.05.06

1 Wedge-tailed Eagle – Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – Barry Ellis – 13.05.06

414 Chestnut Teal – Luggage Point – Ivell & Jim Whyte – 13.05.06

1 Common Noddy – Noosa River Sandbanks – Jill Denning – 14.01.06

6300 Common Tern – Noosa River Sandbanks – Jill Denning – 14.01.06

Count Programme by Linda Cross

Thank you for the quick returns of most count sheets for the **National Winter Count**. Unfortunately some sites were not surveyed, which is disappointing as this would affect the long term study of these sites and birds. It is very important that we try to ensure that the two annual national counts are conducted, so please let me know in advance if you cannot do them.

Since the last newsletter it has been relatively quiet regarding the wader numbers due to the fact that this time of year, most of them are probably in the northern hemisphere. However, the southern migration is underway now with the Eastern Curlew being the first species to arrive. One sporting an orange leg flag was spotted at Manly Boat Harbour during the August count, and another also sporting an orange leg flag seen at Pine Rivers Wetland Reserve, so clean off your scopes and get ready for the return of our most frequent flyers. Please remember to keep a look out for any flagged waders and report them to us as soon as possible.

There is also another important survey that counters can do during their counts, which will help assess the breeding results of the birds. When doing your count remember to check for juvenile birds in the flock and record the figure on the count sheet. Godwits are one of the easier birds to do during this exercise because the young birds have the spotting, which really helps distinguish between adult and juvenile bird.

The east/west migration of Double-banded Plover should be completed before most of the arrival of north/south migratory waders. Although not all count sheets for August have arrived yet I have extracted details from those counts already received. A large number of the species were seen in near full breeding plumage.

Double-banded Plover

Fisherman Island – 8 on 13.08.06 and 23 on 16.07.06
 Cooloola roost, Tin Can Bay – 1 on 13.08.06
 Geoff Skinner Reserve – 14 on 12.08.06 and 26 on 15.07.06
 Manly Boat Harbour – 20 on 12.08.06 and 47 on 15.07.06
 King Street, Thorneside – 11 on 12.08.06 and 4 on 15.07.06
 Shallow Bay, Tweed Heads – 13 on 22.07.06
 Tony's Island, Tweed Heads – 10 on 15.07.06
 Sandbank No. 2, Caloundra – 6 on 15.07.06
 Day's Gutter, Moreton Island – 4 on 14.07.06
 Reeders Point, Moreton Island – 44 on 14.07.06
 Mirrapool Beach, Moreton Island – 1 on 14.07.06
 Maroochy River – 23 on 14.07.06
 Caboolture River Mouth – 10 on 13.05.06, 14 on 14.07.06
 Noosa River Banks – 34 on 25.06.06

During the winter months Black-fronted and Red-kneed Dotterels are seen at a number of sites. We have a few records of fairly large numbers of Red-kneed Dotterels using the Pine Rivers Northside site during past years, and in May a total of 21 were seen during the count.

Black fronted Dotterel

5 at Tin Can Bay Sewerage Works on 13.08.06
 2 at Geoff Skinner Reserve on 12.08.06
 2 at Point Halloran Reserve on 12.08.06
 5 at Tin Can Bay Sewerage Works on 15.07.06
 3 at Cooloola roost, Tin Can Bay on 15.07.06
 5 at Tin Can Bay Sewerage Works on 14.05.06
 6 at Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon on 13.05.06

Red-kneed Dotterel

3 at Pine Rivers Northside on 12.08.06
 21 at Pine Rivers Northside on 13.05.06
 4 at Luggage Point on 13.05.06

Breeding records

Only one breeding record of: Masked Lapwing – one bird sitting on 4 eggs – Maaroom – 13.08.06
 Happy counting Linda.

WADER ID DAYS for 2006

Sunday 24th September 2006 at Toorbul

High tide at 10:26 (plus 30 minutes later for Toorbul) of 2.04m. Meeting time 09:00am.

Take the Bruce Highway north from Brisbane to the Donnybrook/Toorbul exit (a large billboard advertising Humble Pie is on the left just prior to the exit. Turn off here and head east over the highway overpass. Continue on this road to Toorbul. Turn right at the T-junction then first left and then right, which brings you onto the Esplanade. Follow this road to the end (approximately 2kms); we will be on the left.

Bring water, food and a chair. It is a good idea to have a hat, sunscreen and insect repellent. Most importantly bring your binoculars or telescopes. Hopefully we can provide the answers to all your questions.

Please contact either Phil & Linda Cross (07) 5495 2758 or David Edwards (07) 3262 2017 if you have any questions.

Saturday 11th November 2006 at Toorbul

High tide at 13:42 (plus 30 minutes later for Toorbul) of 2.11m. Meeting time 12:00noon.

Take the Bruce Highway north from Brisbane to the Donnybrook/Toorbul exit (a large billboard advertising Humble Pie is on the left just prior to the exit. Turn off here and head east over the highway overpass. Continue on this road to Toorbul. Turn right at the T-junction then first left and then right, which brings you onto the Esplanade. Follow this road to the end (approximately 2kms); we will be on the left.

Bring water, food and a chair. It is a good idea to have a hat, sunscreen and insect repellent. Most importantly bring your binoculars or telescopes. Hopefully we can provide the answers to all your questions.

Please contact either Phil & Linda Cross (07) 5495 2758 or David Edwards (07) 3262 2017 if you have any questions.

New Wader Study Group for South Australia

In South Australia there is a network of 'Friends of the Parks' volunteer groups under the umbrella of the state Department of Environment and Heritage. It is as part of this network that we have formed a new group in the South East of South Australia. One of our aims is to bring together various groups, and individuals, who have been working with shorebirds in the south east (SE) for many years. Jeff Campbell, a past editor of Stilt, is President and Maureen Christie is Secretary. The group works closely with the Australasian Wader Studies Group (AWSG), Victorian Wader Study Group and Birds South Australia, with members and projects overlapping.

Activities are varied, and include AWSG Population Monitoring at two sites, counting of the wetlands between the Coorong and the Victorian border, banding and flagging, monitoring of Little Tern and a research project on local movement and site fidelity of Ruddy Turnstone.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of our work to date, has been our involvement with fieldwork in the Coorong during the Red-necked Avocet and Banded Stilt breeding event. We have also coordinated the monitoring of a small colony of breeding Little Tern near Port MacDonnell.

Anyone interested in any aspect of our work is invited to contact the Secretary, Maureen Christie, on 08 87380014.

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of
Queensland Wader Study Group

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NT 0814

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 November 18th 2006

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 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, David Niland (07) 3379 2344; Secretary, John Holt (07) 3359 1439; 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 7:45pm start.

QWSG MERCHANDISE

Should you wish to purchase any of the QWSG Merchandise, items may be purchased at BQ Inc meetings held 1st Thursday of the month at the Royal Geographical Society Rooms OR....
Contact or E-mail at alphabec@powerup.com.au
Postage is not included in the prices quoted.

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

No longer in stock: Birds of Bribie Island, Pumicestone Passage and Environs
Wildflowers of Bribie Island
 However, can be obtained from BIEPA by contacting
 Kathleen Catalan on 07 3408 7338
A Birdwatcher's Guide to Redcliffe, Pine Rivers and Caboolture Shire.
 However, can be obtained from WPSQ Caboolture branch by contacting
 Brian & Eileen Rigden on 07 5496 6644
Polo Neck Shirts.
CD Bird calls of the Broome region (includes 42 Wader Species).
Cloth Badges.

POLO SHIRTS, CLOTH BADGES & METAL BADGES

We are currently looking at organising new stock of polo shirts and badges from new suppliers and would like to hear from members who are interested in purchasing any of the two items mentioned. This will be particularly helpful for us when placing the order in relation to sizes, colour etc. People who contacted us previously with their choice of colour and size need to contact us again please as there will be colour changes.

The polo shirts will be two or three tones in colour and can be purchased with a pocket or without a pocket. At this point in time we do not have a costing for them and are therefore unable to give you a price. We have 5 Polo Shirts left from previous stock (all are large size - 4 Beige and 1 Jade) and we are clearing them out at below cost price of \$15 + postage and handling. If anybody is interested please contact Linda.

We have new metal QWSG logo badges available for sale. The badge has been made like the logo that appears on the front top right corner of this newsletter with pale grey for the sand, blue ocean/sky and the godwit is pale grey, black/brown with a little white. They are 3½ cm in size and are very stylish. Price is \$5 + postage and handling.

Please contact Dawn Beck on 07 3378 8598 or Ivell Whyte on 38020757



Count Activities 2006

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2006

Sat 9 th Sep	2.16m at 10:30
Sat 7 th Oct	2.25m at 09:24
Sat 4 th Nov	2.27m at 08:17
Sat 9 th Dec	2.29m at 12:25

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2006

Sun 10 th Sep	2.22m at 11:16	Meet 09:25
Sun 8 th Oct	2.35m at 10:09	Meet 08:20
Sun 5 th Nov	2.40m at 09:03	Meet 07:15
Sun 10 th Dec	2.18m at 13:06	Meet 11:15

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

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.....)

SIGNATURE: DATE:.....

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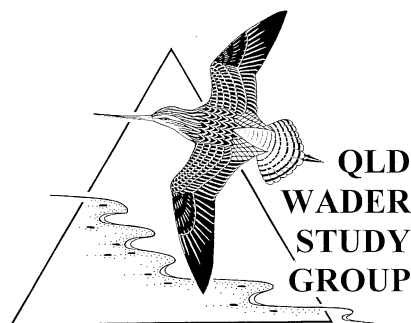
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QUEENSLAND WADER



Issue number 058

December 2006, January, February 2007

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

WADERS EVERYWHERE or ANYWHERE ? FINDING AND MAPPING WADER ROOSTS ALONG THE BURNETT MARY COAST ROUND 2 IN OCTOBER 2006

The QWSG completed another survey of the coast north of Hervey Bay from 20 – 25 October 2006 to follow up on the successful survey from Pt Vernon to Moore Park in February 2006. This time, we were going for bigger and better challenges — trying to count and map roosts along over 200 km of coast. The survey allowed a second count for those areas already mapped and mapping of the northern area of the region. This required a much larger contingent of counters as the entire coast of the Burnett Mary NRM region from Tannum Sands near Gladstone south to Pt Vernon at Hervey Bay needed to be counted or roost sites mapped. Before the survey, the project coordinator, Kirsty Balmer, put in long hours trying to match the 55+ people involved with the 80+ roost sites and make sure each group had the gear and background knowledge to do the job at their sites. This included boats, drivers, local guides, aerial photographs of the roosts, accommodation and count and roost mapping sheets. We had people out in plastic hire dinghies that ran up on reefs, others in canoes, camping up mosquito-infested creeks, drives at low tide along sandy beaches followed by overcrowded inflatable dinghies, all to get to and map those difficult to access roosts.

The northern section of the Burnett Mary Natural Resource Management (NRM) region is more remote than the area covered in the previous survey and in many areas we only had information from one survey by Peter Driscoll 13 yrs ago to guide counters to the roost sites. Many new roosts were found and mapped and most of the old roosts were still viable and these were all mapped and the whole lot counted. Bird counts were not large and the total count was probably less than 4,000 birds along the entire section of coast. However, numbers may not have reached their summer peak as birds are probably still migrating. The largest roost was at the Bundaberg Port dredge spoil pond, which held about 1200 birds. Many of the roosts mapped also hold regionally important numbers of birds, including nesting resident species. Despite its seeming remoteness, the whole region is under a huge amount of pressure as developers try and turn all the available coastal land into higher density housing. Mapping the roosts and demonstrating their values for waders will have an important influence on the local and state government as they assess these development applications. Several Queensland EPA staff participated in the survey as they knew they were contributing to an important study. The summarised results and maps will be valuable for both local and regional planning.

There were many highlights but the ones for me were the many sightings of Beach Stone Curlew including a nest with eggs on Dr May's Is in the mouth of the Elliot River, New Zealand leg-flagged Bar-tailed Godwit at Eli Ck, Hervey Bay (Fig 1) and nesting Pied Oystercatcher at Morris Ck (Mort Ck), Rodds Peninsula near Turkey Beach (Fig. 2). Non-wader highlights included nesting Little Terns at several sites and meeting friendly locals with an interest and concern for their environment.



Fig. 1. An individually-ringed Bar-tailed Godwit flagged at Miranda, North Island of New Zealand but spending this October at Eli Ck, Hervey Bay (Photo: Bob Gleeson).

One more survey is planned for the Burnett Mary region and this will occur on the weekend of 17-18 March 2007. During this survey, we plan to revisit the roosts north of Moore Park to count them a second time during northwards migration and map any sites missed during the recent survey. We thank all the participants in the survey for their contributions and look forward to seeing many of you on the next survey. This project is funded by the Burnett Mary Regional Group for NRM and the completed shorebird mapping information will be held by them.



Fig. 2. Nest of a Pied Oystercatcher on the beach 100m upstream from the entrance of Mort Ck, Rodds Peninsula, Eurimbula NP (Photo: Sandra Harding).

Survey participants: Alan Briggs, Kirsty Balmer, John Bell, Andrew Geering, Barb Dickson, Bob and June Gleeson, Cathy & John Gatley, Chris Barnes, David Milton, Dawn Beck, Dennis & Lorna Johnson, Dez Wells, Don & Lesley Bradley, Floss Wainwright, Heather Smith, Ivell and Jim Whyte, John Knight, John Olds, Joyce Harding, Judy Caughley, Judy Coles, Ken Cowell, Liz Tanner, Margaret Bullock, Michelle Burford, Paul O'Neill, Paula Ryan, Peter Fraser, Peter Rothlisberg, Peter Royall, Ray Woodburgess, Rob Kernot, Rod Whiting, Sandra Harding, Sean Norman, Terry & Karen Kelly, Tim Siggs, Tim Thornton and friends, Eric Zillman, Leanne Evans, Jimmy Liolios, Jason Kas, Natalie McGrath



Wader banding at Manly harbour

Waders will once again be caught and banded in Moreton Bay after a lag of several years. Initially, activities will occur at the Manly wader roost. Hopefully we will also be expanding to other sites over time. We are grateful for the support of the Port of Brisbane Corporation and Manly Marinas Incorporated for allowing us access to what is a restricted area at Manly.

The birds are being caught on a rising tide by setting mist-nets on their flight route into the roost. This allows us to catch a number of birds on each occasion, while causing minimum disturbance to the actual roost itself. As in previous years each bird will receive an Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme (ABBBS) band as well as a green leg flag, which will identify the bird as being banded in south-east Queensland.

Each bird will be weighed and measured to calculate their body condition. Average body condition for each species can then be compared to look at variation both within and between years as well as identifying movement trends for the species using Moreton Bay using leg flag sightings.

Banding will also be used to complement existing long term trend data on survival and migration of waders. This will be provided by the new influx of green flagged birds being sighted in the flyway. To provide more detail than previously collated, many of the birds now banded will have their leg flag engraved with a unique 2 character code. This will enable us to monitor movements of individual birds around the bay, looking at fidelity to roost and feeding sites, as well as generating longer distance movement and survival data for individuals rather than age groups.

The data collected will improve in value with every flag sighting reported so if you see a wader with a green leg flag please look to see if there is a code on the flag and report that with your sighting as normal so the data is captured. Flag sightings are recorded by Phil and Linda Cross, their contact details are address: 40 Thompson Road, Bellmere, Qld 4510, email: xenus@big.net.au or phone: (07) 5495 2758.

All sightings will be published in the QWSG newsletter and we intend to provide regular updates on the fieldwork and results in the newsletter.

Thank you in advance for any sightings you send in and if you want any further information please e-mail me at janetandjon@hotmail.com.

Jon Coleman, David Milton and Sandra Harding.

Did You Know the Port of Brisbane Has a Shorebird Roost?

The Port of Brisbane Corporation has finished construction of a 12Ha Port of Brisbane Shorebird Roost. This site was originally a dredge tailwater pond and has been reconfigured and redesigned to make it one of the largest constructed roosts on Australia's east coast. The monitoring data gathered by the QWSG over the past 3 years was used to determine the type and proportion of the habitats presented within the roost site. Further, the experiences of the QWSG members were instrumental in the design and fit out of the two excellent hides that the Corporation has built within the site.

The site offers the opportunity to get close to a range of waterbirds, shorebirds and waders with the best viewing time at high tide. There is also a viewing platform showing the unique aspects of the intertidal feeding areas, St Helena Island and the Moreton Bay Marine Park.

The site can be accessed free of charge via the Port of Brisbane Visitors Centre, Number 1 Whimbrel Street, Port of Brisbane. Visitors are asked to sign in, agree to a code of conduct, and pick up a key to access the site and hides. Binoculars and bird ID books are also available for loan free of charge. This is a great place for a relaxed Sunday drive or if you have visitors in town. The Port of Brisbane Visitors Centre is open 6 days per week, Sunday - Friday. Bookings or more information 3258 4677.

Queensland Wader Study Group Annual General Meeting

The QWSG AGM will be held on Sunday, 10 December, 2006, at the Visitor's Centre, Port of Brisbane, Curlew Cr, Fisherman Islands. More details later in Newsletter.

Lena-Nordenskjöld International Biological Station and Zackenberg Research Station – two very different arctic worlds

By Hans Meltofte

Senior scientist at the National Environmental Research Institute, Denmark

During my c. 25 seasons as an ornithologist in the Arctic, it has often puzzled me how different conditions are in different parts of the Arctic. Opposite to the thinking of many people, the Arctic is not just the Arctic. Large differences occur not only between the “mild” Low Arctic (mean July temperature between 6°C and 12°C) and the harsh High Arctic (mean July temperature below 6°C), but maybe even more between the different regions of the Arctic. From the literature it is evident that basic conditions such as snow melt, productivity, predation and general climate exert highly different pressures on the breeding birds in different regions. Since I have spent most of my “arctic life” in high arctic Greenland, I have always wanted to visit other parts of the Arctic to see with my own eyes, how conditions differ. Fortunately, this has brought me to places as distant as Western and Northern Alaska, Svalbard and Franz Josef Land besides most of low and high arctic Greenland, but never to arctic Siberia or Canada. To fill at least a little bit of this gap, I was fortunate to spend two weeks in the Lena Delta in Northeast Siberia in late June and early July 2006. This was only possible thanks to the existence of the Lena-Nordenskjöld Biological Station and the great support provided by Vladimir Pozdnyakov and other ornithologists working here and in the outer delta, where we spent most of our time.

And what a difference! Of course, the bird fauna in this low arctic area is much more diverse than in remote high arctic Greenland. Where we for example have six species of waders breeding in our study area at the Zackenberg Research Station in central Northeast Greenland, where I worked during the last 11 summers, there are 17 wader species breeding here in the Lena Delta. And what species? Several of them are pretty exotic for an ornithologist coming from the Atlantic sector of the globe, where many of them only occur as very rare vagrants. Having seen them on the final spring staging areas in South Alaska and China and on the wintering grounds in Southeast Asia, Australia and South America, it was a wild aspiration to see them on the breeding grounds.

Also the densities are much higher here in the Lena Delta. In fact, there are one hundred times as high densities of breeding waders in the best areas here, as in the best areas of the northernmost land in the World, Peary Land in North Greenland. This is clearly due to the several hundred times higher productivity and thereby food density of this low arctic Lena Delta tundra than of the high arctic desert of Peary Land.

Late and variable breeding in Siberia

But it is not all that better here in the Lena Delta. The climate of high arctic Greenland is much more continental with bright sunshine 24 hours a day and little wind for extended periods, where I have seen little more than strong winds, overcast skies and rain in most days here in the maritime summer climate of the Lena Delta. Such weather also occurs in high arctic Greenland, but most often only for one or a few days on end. In spite of a very thin snow cover here in the Lena Delta, not even the snow melt is much earlier here than in high arctic Greenland. In both places the snow melts during June, varying by 2-3 weeks between early and late years. The result is that the birds here do not breed earlier than in Northeast Greenland. On the contrary, in fact. In a favourable spring, the first wader eggs are laid around 1st June in high arctic Greenland, while egg-laying here in the Lena Delta and other parts of arctic Siberia generally is 1-2 weeks later. The same apply to the geese, where barnacle geese *Branta leucopsis* and pink-footed geese *Anser brachyrhynchus* will start egg-laying around 25th May in Northeast Greenland. Here, the black-bellied brent geese *Branta bernicla nigricans* and greater white-fronted geese *Anser albifrons* do not begin egg-laying until early June.

Also predation differs markedly. Here in Siberia, breeding success of tundra birds is well known to vary substantially from year to year depending on the abundance of lemmings and their predators. In lemming peak years, the predators have plenty of food, and tundra birds experience low predation on eggs and chicks, while in the year following a lemming peak, predators are abundant, but have few lemmings to feed on. This is at the cost of the tundra birds, which experience very low breeding success in such years.

This is not all that pronounced in other parts of the Arctic. In high arctic Greenland, the predation pressure is relatively stable in most years, resulting in the loss “only” of about half the wader nests to arctic foxes *Alopex lagopus* in most years. This is probably the result of much lower lemming peaks in this high arctic area, which again keep the populations of arctic foxes relatively low.

And where arctic foxes constitute the only important egg predator in high arctic Greenland, the pomarine skua *Stercorarius pomarinus* appears to be by far the most important egg predator here in the Lena Delta.

But the Lena Delta and high arctic Greenland do not constitute the extremes of arctic life conditions. Here, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta in Western Alaska represents the most favourable part of the Arctic enabling the waders to start egg-laying already in mid May, whereas Franz Josef Land and some of the other Russian arctic islands most likely make up the worst with only one wader species breeding in any numbers: the purple sandpiper *Calidris maritima*, which finds most of its food in the littoral zone, because there is very little invertebrate food on the bare tundra.

Difficult logistics

It is never been easy to perform scientific research in the Arctic. The costs and logistic difficulties have exerted strong limitations to most studies, and long-term ecological monitoring has only recently been initiated at a few permanent arctic research stations. Two of these stations are the Lena-Nordenskjöld Biological Station and Zackenberg Research Station in high arctic Greenland. Also here, the differences are striking. All transport to and from Zackenberg is by small chartered airplanes from Iceland, about six flying hours south of Zackenberg. This is very expensive, which limits the use of the station. Similarly, the transport by motorboat to the Lena-Nordenskjöld Biological Station makes it difficult to reach this place, especially because the often strong winds often prevent navigation on the delta channels leading to the station and other parts of the delta. Furthermore, we are fortunate to have almost all areas of interest within walking distance from our research station at Zackenberg, while the Lena-Nordenskjöld Biological Station is the logistic center for further excursions into the huge Lena Delta.

For a Dane it is almost incomprehensible that the Lena Delta covers an area of nearly the size of Denmark - if we do not include Greenland as Danish territory. To get an idea of the size of the Lena Delta, it is worth mentioning that the delta consists of 6500 channels and 1500 islands with a total of 30,000 lakes and ponds. Hence, it took us seven hours by motorboat to reach Nerpallaakh Island in the outer delta, where we wanted to monitor the rich tundra birdlife. Here we were living in an old fisherman's log cabin, waiting for days for the wind to calm down, so that we could visit other islands with important bird colonies to be monitored. But it was very cosy with crackling fire in the stove, boiling reindeer meat in the pot and lots of exiting birds right outside the cabin. Besides daily excursions to look at birds and search for their nests, it was pretty absurd to sit in an old log cabin in this extremely remote place and work on a computer, while the TV was broadcasting news from Palestine, and we could use satellite GPS systems to locate bird nests.

Water, water, water everywhere

Greenland is highly mountainous. Lowland areas suited for breeding tundra birds are restricted to valley floors and a few forelands. This mountainous landscape makes it easy to walk through valleys and other lowland areas, where dry ground predominates. Lakes and ponds are few in most areas, and fens are not common. Furthermore, the vegetation cover is not continuous. Large expanses are either barren gravel and stones or only have scattered plant cover. In the high arctic desert of Peary Land the vegetation cover is even below 10 per cent in the lowland.

What a difference to the Lena Delta. Here, the landscape is more of a "waterscape" with thousands of lakes and ponds, only separated by deep wet vegetation. To walk in this terrain makes it necessary to wear hip boots, and still it is like "navigating" in a labyrinth of permafrost polygons, lagoons and lakes. On top of this comes the cold wind, which makes it necessary to wear much clothing. In high arctic Greenland, I often work on the tundra only wearing a shirt and a vest, even having my sleeves rolled up, while I needed seven layers of clothing on most days here in the outer Lena Delta. I wonder what the birds feel about it? Well, according to their numbers and diversity, they after all seem to prosper!

Easy nest finding

In high arctic Greenland, you are lucky, if you find five nests during one day's intensive work. The densities are so low that a sample of 10-25 nests and broods per species is a difficult aim to fulfil. Here in the Lena Delta, I could easily "stumble" over five nests during a few hours walk on the tundra. This was not by searching or waiting at a distance for birds to return to their nests and thereby reveal where it was, but simply by seeing the incubating bird lift from the nest a few meters away. This both applied to waders nests and nests by geese and ducks, which are much more numerous here than in high arctic Greenland. Most of the nests found by me were of the common species here: red phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*, Temminck's stint *Calidris temminckii* and greater white-fronted goose, but I also found a few nests of little stint *Calidris minuta*, curlew sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*, ruddy turnstone *Arenaria interpres* and long-tailed skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*.

According to my Russian colleagues, the lemming population was low this year after a peak in 2004-2005. This meant that predation by skuas and gulls on wader and duck nests was very high. Hence, many nests were depredated, and in early July most waders gathered in post-breeding flocks and left the tundra, and many female king eiders *Somateria spectabilis* and Steller's eiders *Polysticta stelleri* were not sitting on eggs anymore. Furthermore, the early snow melt in this part of Siberia apparently meant that many little stints and other "opportunistic" waders never flew this far north, but nested further south. Hence, the number of little stints on the island in the outer delta was very low this year as compared to previous years.

Large goose colonies are found on certain islands here in the Lena Delta. We visited one such island in the outer delta with a 250 pair strong black-bellied goose colony. Nests were concentrated at one end of the island, so that the ornithologists from the Lena-Nordenskjöld Biological Station could easily work their way through colony while recording egg numbers and other details. A total of 50-60 pairs of glaucous gulls *Larus hyperboreus* and herring gulls *Larus argentatus* were nesting among the geese, and goose eggs clearly made up the bulk of their food. About 20 per cent of the goose nests had been emptied by the gulls before our arrival on the island. Besides the geese and the large gulls, Sabine's gulls *Xema sabini* and Ross's gulls *Rhodostethia rosea* were nesting in a small colony on the island, and nests of Bewick's swan *Cygnus bewickii*, king eider and Steller's eider were also found by us.

Apparently, most Ross's gulls refrained from breeding this year. We found only one nest on the brent goose island, where about 10 pairs have been breeding in other years, and on our "own" island, Nerpallaakh, no Ross's gulls were found at all. Here, 12 pairs have been nesting in other years. On our way out here, we saw a flock of 80 Ross's gulls, which support the notion that many Ross's gulls are not breeding this year. In a non-breeding year like this, the birds leave the breeding sites in early July to migrate out into the pack-ice of the Arctic Ocean. Here, we recorded more than 1000 individuals as far west as between Franz Josef Land, Svalbard and North Greenland during the Swedish ice-breaker expedition Ymer in 1980, which may have been another non-breeding year.

The climate is warming

One of the aims of ecological monitoring in the Arctic is to follow and possibly even to predict the effects of the ongoing climate amelioration, which is expected to be most pronounced in the Arctic. In most of the Arctic, temperatures and precipitation has been increasing during the last decades, and they are expected to increase even more in the future. This means earlier snow and ice melt in spring and higher summer temperatures, which will increase invertebrate productivity and thereby food availability for many arctic birds.

Thirty arctic wader specialists gathered at a workshop in Denmark a few years ago has worked on an analysis of the effects of these climate changes to arctic shorebirds. The common expectation is that climate amelioration initially will result in improved breeding conditions for waders in the Arctic, in that they are highly dependent on timing of spring thaw and invertebrate availability both to the adult breeding birds during the first period after arrival and to the chicks after hatch in July. In fact, a number of arctic and north boreal waders on the East Atlantic flyway seem to have been increasing during the last decades. This is not the case on the American and East Asian flyways, where destruction of important habitats and reduced quality of others apparently has caused several wader populations to decline. Similar changes are seen in other arctic bird groups, where e.g. geese have been increasing for decades in Europe and North America, but decreasing in East Asia mainly due to excessive shooting. These changes seem to have little to do with climate change.

However, in the longer term all arctic birds are most likely to suffer large range contractions due to overgrowing of tundra habitat with scrubs and trees. Hence, half the arctic land areas are predicted to be lost to overgrowth during the next 100 years. Here, high arctic habitats such as those of northernmost Siberia, Greenland and the Canadian Archipelago are likely to suffer most, since they will be "taken over" by low arctic vegetation from the south, while they can't "move" to the north because they already constitute the northernmost land areas adjacent to the Arctic Ocean. This means that the waders and other birds adapted to the high arctic tundra are likely to suffer the largest reductions in population size, whereas the low arctic species may do a little better.

This is supported by DNA-analyses of genetic diversity in arctic waders, where the high arctic species have been through narrow population "bottlenecks" during previous climatic perturbations such as at the end of the last glaciation, where some populations may only have numbered a few hundred individuals and others may have gone extinct. In contrast, low arctic species seem to have been doing better during these periods, having maintained a larger genetic diversity than the high arctic species.

These are not the only problems facing arctic waders due to climate change. Outside the breeding season, many of them depend on the extremely rich invertebrate food resources of inter-tidal habitats such as estuaries and mudflats along shallow coasts in temperate and tropical countries. Here, they build up those body stores, which enable them to perform migrations often covering thousands of kilometres non-stop between breeding, staging and wintering areas. With climate warming, the oceans will see increased water levels due to melting glacier ice and expanding sea water volume, which will reduce the availability of these crucial habitats to the waders and other shorebirds.

In this perspective, the future prospects for many arctic birds seem gloom, unless we humans succeed to halt the threats from climate change by severely reducing our expulsion of green-house gases.

By Hans Meltofte

Senior scientist at the National Environmental Research Institute, Denmark

Shorebird Conservation Toolkit

WWF-Australia with funding from the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust is pleased to announce the launch of the Shorebird Conservation Toolkit - www.shorebirds.org.au - to help protect and enhance shorebird habitat across Australia.

The toolkit builds on the success of the national Shorebird Conservation Project (2001-2005), drawing from over 31 on- ground and community-driven shorebird conservation projects.

The toolkit is a comprehensive resource that will enable users to:

- understand and appreciate shorebirds, their habitat and conservation needs;
- locate important shorebird sites in Australia and access population estimates;
- develop site survey and monitoring programs;
- identify/assess site management needs, and implement/evaluate management actions;
- write grant applications, site communication plans and media releases;
- access existing resources;
- identify and advocate international / national conservation options; and
- access organisations with knowledge/expertise in practical shorebird and wetland conservation.

The toolkit is available on-line at www.shorebirds.org.au and on CD

For further information contact Bianca Priest 03 6225 1394 or bpriest@wwf.org.au

Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus* - First Australian Occurrence

Deep in cotton growing country 650 km north-west of Sydney lies a small grain-handling township of Burren Junction. It is here that two bird watchers, Karen and Brett Davis from Jervis Bay saw a bird that they could not identify from their Australian field guide. Fortunately they were able to take digital photographs and send the images by Email to other bird watchers who were able to access field guides to birds overseas and identify the bird as a Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*.

The Grey-headed Lapwing breeds in north-eastern China and Japan and migrate to Nepal, north-east India, Bangladesh and southern China during the northern hemisphere winter. They are occasionally recorded as vagrants in the Philippines and in Indonesia.

More than 100 bird watchers travelled great distances within days of it being discovered in late June 2006. It was still there in late August and appears to have adopted the town, staying close to the tiny urban area, particularly in a grassy paddock opposite the grain storage silos at the western end of town. It is quite a handsome bird; grey above and in front extending down to a black breast band and a white belly below. The eye is bright red. Unfortunately, it has a large spherical red-brown growth under the right foot, causing a slight limp. It often raises the right leg when resting transferring a red-brown stain to the right side of the belly, indicating that the growth is probably infected. Our bird has moved south instead of north at this time of year and has also considerably overshot Indonesia!

Chris Herbert *from the Tattler*

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

In each Qld Wader issue there is quite a number of green leg flag sightings recorded within Moreton Bay, which is where the bird was banded originally. As we are now seeing more leg flag combinations from other countries in Queensland, and have limited space available for sightings, we will not be listing each individual sighting of the green flag records in Queensland unless there is a significant movement of the bird. Instead, we will list the number of flags for each species and the period in which they were seen.

Sighted in Moreton Bay and environs between 27.08.06 & 05.11.06

4 Eastern Curlew, 6 Bar-tailed Godwit, 1 Great Knot, 1 Red Knot, 4 Grey-tailed Tattler, 1 Terek Sandpiper, 2 Curlew Sandpiper.

Interstate & overseas Green leg flag sightings

1 Red Knot – Miranda, Firth of Thames, South Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Nigel Milius – 06.10.06

Orange leg flag sightings

1 Eastern Curlew – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 26.08.06
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Coombabah Lake, Gold Coast – Terry Dillon & Lyn Wallace – 08.10.06
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – Dez Wells, Deborah Metters & Jenny Ovenden – 08.10.06
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Fisherman Island – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 08.10.06
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Pine Rivers Wetland Reserve – Ken Cowell, Floss Wainwright, Graham & Brenda Smith – 07.10.06
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 07.10.06
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Fisherman Island – David Milton et al – 10.09.06
2 Bar-tailed Godwit – Boonooroo – Trevor Qusted, Brian & Bev Woolley – 14.09.06
1 Great Knot – Toorbul – Dez Wells et al – 08.10.06
1 Great Knot – Toorbul – Linda & Phil Cross et al – 24.09.06
1 Red Knot – Toorbul – Dez Wells et al – 08.10.06
1 Red Knot – Toorbul – Brian & Judy Willey et al – 26.09.06
1 Red Knot – Toorbul – Linda & Phil Cross et al – 24.09.06
1 Red Knot – Boonooroo – Trevor Qusted, Brian & Bev Woolley – 14.09.06
1 Red Knot – Thorneside – Dave Houghton & Kath Shurcliff – 27.08.06
1 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Cairns Esplanade – Bob & Vera Radnell – 04.09.06
2 Red-necked Stint – Karumba, Gulf of Carpentaria – Dave Cropley – 02.10.06
1 Red-necked Stint – Fisherman Island – David Milton et al – 10.09.06
Dave Cropley sighted numerous Red Knot in Karumba, Gulf of Carpentaria between 27.09.06 and 12.10.06. Up to a maximum of five orange flagged birds were seen at any one time.

Yellow leg flag sightings

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Fisherman Island – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 08.10.06
1 Red knot – Karumba, Gulf of Carpentaria – Dave Cropley – 30.09.06 & 04.10.06

White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – white flag left tibia, red/white bands left tarsus and yellow/yellow bands right tarsus – Eli Creek, Gatakers Bay, Hervey Bay – Dez Wells, Sean Norman & Bob Gleeson – 21.10.06 (bird seen and photographed numerous times in same area up to 01.11.06)
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – white flag left tibia, blue/yellow bands left tarsus – Manly Boat Harbour – Terry Dillon – 20.10.06
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – white flag left tibia, yellow/blue bands left tarsus and yellow/red bands right tarsus – Fisherman Island – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 08.10.06
1 Bar-tailed Godwit – white flag right tibia, yellow/yellow bands left tarsus, white/white bands right tarsus – Boonooroo – Trevor Qusted, Brian & Bev Woolley – 14.09.06

QUEENSLAND WADER

1 Red Knot – Boonooroo – Trevor Quested, Brian & Bev Woolley – 14.09.06

Dave Cropley sighted numerous Red Knot in Karumba, Gulf of Carpentaria between 30.09.06 and 12.10.06. Up to a maximum of five white flagged birds were seen at any one time.

Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and metal band right tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight et al – 10.10.06

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 08.10.06

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – Sandra Harding et al – 07.10.06

4 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Toorbul – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 10.09.06

(All above birds with blue flag left tibia were flagged in Hokkaido, Northern Japan)

Other wader leg flag sightings

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – orange flag over green flag right tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight et al – 10.10.06 (flagged in NSW)

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – white flag over black flag right tibia – Boonooroo – Trevor Quested, Brian & Bev Woolley – 14.09.06

1 Great Knot – white flag over black flag right tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 09.09.06

1 Great Knot – black flag over white flag right tibia – Karumba, Gulf of Carpentaria – Dave Cropley – 08.10.06 & 12.10.06

1 Great Knot – white flag over black flag right tibia – Karumba, Gulf of Carpentaria – Dave Cropley – 04.10.06

1 Red Knot – white flag over black flag right tibia – Karumba, Gulf of Carpentaria – Dave Cropley – 28.09.06, 03.10.06, 09.10.06 & 12.10.06

1 Red Knot – black flag over white flag right tibia – Karumba, Gulf of Carpentaria – Dave Cropley – 12.10.06
(Black over white and white over black flagged in Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China)

1 Red-necked Stint – blue flag left tarsus – Fisherman Island – Linda Cross – 10.09.06

(Blue flag on left tarsus is a part combination for Taiwan flagged bird, which should also have a white flag on the left tibia and metal band on the right tibia. Unfortunately the bird flew off before I could get a look for the other flag and metal band. Sometimes the flag on the tibia is quite high and not easy to see).

Other leg flag sightings and banded birds

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – blue over yellow band left tarsus and white over yellow band right tarsus – Manly Boat Harbour – Terry Dillon – 20.10.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – yellow band over blue band left tarsus (right leg tucked up and not able to check other leg for bands) – David Milton – 08.10.06

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – white over red band left tarsus and white over yellow band right tarsus – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton – 07.10.06

(The three godwits above are probably New Zealand flagged birds that have either lost the white flag, or flag was not seen)

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Fisherman Island – David Edwards et al – 10.09.06

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Toorbul 1km north – Dez Wells – 13.08.06

Interesting sightings

Please note these sightings are not authenticated records.

* = to be submitted to BQ RAC ** = to be submitted to BARC

30 Marsh Sandpiper – Maaroom – John Bell – 8.10.06

1 Common Sandpiper – Dalrymple Creek, Bowen – Jon Wren – 25.09.06

7 Wandering Tattler – Seaforth Beach, Mackay area – Peggy Harding – 10.09.06

1 Wood Sandpiper – Garnet's Lagoons – John Knight – 09.09.06 & 21.09.06

315 Black-winged Stilt – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 09.09.06

Not waders but of interest anyway

2 Pacific Baza (breeding) – Banorah Point, Tweed Heads – Ian Watson – 11.10.06

20 Magpie Goose (breeding noted) – Nielsen's Road, Carrarra, Gold Coast – Terry Dillon – 09.10.06

2 Buff-banded Rail – Buckley's Hole, Bribie Island – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 08.10.06

1 White-winged Triller – Pine Rivers Northside – David Edwards – 07.10.06

5 Brolga (2 breeding with 1 on nest with eggs) – Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – Allan Briggs – 07.10.06

577 Grey Teal – Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – Allan Briggs – 07.10.06
149 Wandering Whistling Duck – Kingscliff Sewerage Plant – Ian Watson – 25.09.06
1 Australasian Bittern – Garnet's Lagoons – John Knight 21.09.06
1886 Crested Tern – Noosa River Sandbanks – Jill Denning – 10.09.06
1863 Little Black Cormorant – Fisherman Island – QWSG – 13.08.06
253 Chestnut Teal – Fisherman Island – QWSG – 13.08.06
20 Glossy Ibis – Garnet's Lagoons – John Knight & Peter Royall – 15.07.06 (21 on 11.08.06)
11 Australasian Shoveler – Garnet's Lagoons – John Knight & Peter Royall – 15.07.06
1 Musk Duck – Garnet's Lagoons – John Knight & Peter Royall – 15.07.06 (still on site on 11.08.06)
264 Chestnut Teal – Luggage Point – Ivell & Jim Whyte – 15.07.06
500+ Magpie Goose – Mackay Truck Stop – Ken Cowell & Floss Wainwright – 11.07.06
10 Glossy Ibis – Mackay Truck Stop – Ken Cowell & Floss Wainwright – 11.07.06
4 Radjah Shelduck – Harbour Lagoon, Mackay – Ken Cowell & Floss Wainwright – 09.07.06
1 Southern Giant Petrel (ill and subsequently died) – Sandy Cape Fraser Island – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 07.06.06 (a second bird was found dead on 08.06.06)

Count Programme by Linda Cross

Would all counters please note that the monthly count dates for all of 2007 have been chosen and listed at the back of this newsletter. It is always difficult getting just the right height of tide for the day, and the weekends I have chosen are the best I can get. I know there are some quite high and fairly low high tides, but unfortunately these are the best available. If your count site is swamped during the higher tides I suggest you get to your sites (for the first few months) well before the high and get the birds counted before they are pushed off the roost. If you want further advice about counting during the higher tides please feel free to contact me.

Marion Williams took over the count sites in the Tweed Heads area some years ago for the count programme, and has done an excellent job continuing to supply us with records for the database. Marion is having a couple of months break before selling up and travelling around Australia for 12 months, before returning to the Hervey Bay area to live, where she plans to be looking for waders there too. There are a number of very good wader sites in the area for Marion to check out, and perhaps survey some sites for us that have not been counted for a while. We extend our sincere thanks for her contribution and wish her well in her travels and relocation.

Our thanks to Laurel Allsopp, who has been counting with Marion at the Tweed Heads sites for quite some time, and will now continue to survey the sites for us and be the official counter.

We would also like to welcome Terry Dillon into the count programme. Terry has been visiting some of the sites on the Gold Coast that have not been counted for a long time. Not all sites are counted each month, but Terry fills in a count sheet for us each time he visits any of them. Committing oneself to regular monthly counts is not always possible for some people, but we appreciated any counts that can be done and given on an ad hoc basis.

The southward migration has now finished and it is interesting to see the movements of some species, which can be seen in the Wader Watch section. Yellow flagged birds are hardly seen at all in Queensland, but we have two listed in this issue. The other colour is white flagged (New Zealand) birds, with a number of Bar-tailed Godwits sporting a variety of colour bands being reported.

While on the subject of leg flagged birds, can everyone please remember to look and record very carefully the flag positions. Some of the birds have flags on the upper (tibia) and lower (tarsus) legs and it is important to record the combination accurately so that they can be traced back to the country of origin. Some of the flags on the tibia can be high on the leg and difficult to see requiring a lot of effort and time hoping the bird will eventually move enough for you to see the colour. It is certainly frustrating waiting for them to put that other leg down! As I have mentioned in the last paragraph, some of the godwits from New Zealand have colour bands too, and it is important to identify flags from bands and record accordingly. Accurate recording certainly makes things much easier for Phil when it comes to putting the sightings on the database and advising AWSG. Sometimes there is a flurry of phone calls and emails back and forth between observers, us and AWSG to try and get the right information.

The newsletter had to be done a little earlier for this issue in order for details of the AGM to be sent to members, so I was not able to extract sightings from the November count sheets, which are just coming in as I do this article. However, there were some larger totals of some species seen during October.

Good numbers of Grey-tailed Tattler were seen in September at Mathieson Homestead (1100) and Fisherman Island (671). In October, Manly Boat Harbour (597), Toorbul (744), Fisherman Island (600), and Mathieson Homestead (1400).

Reasonable numbers of Eastern Curlew were seen at Mathieson Homestead (467) in September along with (287) at Thornlands in the same month. In October they were seen at Geoff Skinner Reserve east (334) and Mangrove Point Hervey Bay (468).

Whimbrels are quite often hiding in the mangroves, but a good count came from Mathieson Homestead (510) in September

The only other significant counts in September were (468) Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, (1378) Red-necked Stint and (906) Curlew Sandpiper at Fisherman Island. While in October the best counts were (606) Pacific Golden Plover, (360) Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, (3558) Red-necked Stint and (619) Curlew Sandpiper at Fisherman Island, (132) Pacific Golden Plover at Pioneer River, Mackay, (176) Red Knot at Lytton and (249) Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at Pine Rivers Wetland Reserve.

The only other significant counts came from Lytton, with 176 Red Knot on 08.10.06 and 249 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at Pine Rivers Wetland Reserve on 07.10.06

One Latham's Snipe arrived early in Garnet's Lagoons during the first week of August

Breeding records

Beach Stone-curlew – breeding pair with one sitting on nest with an egg at Pioneer River, Mackay on 08.10.06 (photographs taken by Les Thyer)

Pied Oystercatcher – on a nest at Seaforth Beach Mackay area on 10.09.06 (report from 1st October says that the bird has now gone, as there are too many people causing disturbance)

Black-winged Stilt – two birds nesting at Buckley's Hole, Bribie Island on 23.10.06 (Also seen on 29.10.06 by Birds Qld group. One nest clearly seen through scope with 4 eggs), one bird nesting at Bishops Marsh on 08.10.06, lots of nests and mating at Kedron Brook Wetlands on 09.09.06 and numerous downy chicks seen on 07.10.06.

Masked Lapwing – juveniles at Point Halloran on 07.10.06, chicks at Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island on 09.09.06 and two chicks at Cobaki Retirement Village, Tweed Heads on 05.10.06

As I write this article (10th November), I am still in paid employment and apologise to everyone for not replying to emails. I thank you all once again for your patience and understanding.

Happy counting Linda.

Email Subject: Black/White leg flagged bird-Lake Tyers, VIC

When Chongming Dao started using engraved leg flags on most large waders in April this year, they (with the approval of ABBBS etc) switched the order of the flags.

The reason was to make the white flag (which is the one being engraved) more visible. It was thought less likely to be hidden by a bird's white belly feathers in the lower position.

They now flag ALL birds with Black / White (whether flags are engraved or not), rather than the earlier White/Black. Therefore the order is still useful information as it indicates **when** the bird was flagged.

It is a bit confusing, but given the huge numbers of birds being flagged there now (and the commitment of those working there in challenging conditions), it was thought best to maximise their chances of getting useful results from their ongoing flagging studies.

Regards,

Heather Gibbs

- Australasian Wader Studies Group (leg-flag database operator)
- Deakin University, Burwood hgi@deakin.edu.au

Submission from the Queensland Wader Study Group on the Climate Smart Adaptation Discussion Paper

1. Climate smart adaptation - Climate change adaptation principles

Climate change is the result of increased greenhouse gases stemming from the ecological footprint of people in wealthy countries including Australia. Any efforts by governments to reduce our ecological footprint will enable a greater conservation result for the environment. It would be good if tied in with the recognition of climate change; small steps could be made to encourage people to reduce the overall footprint of people in Queensland.

People can make changes in how they live to reduce the production of greenhouse gases. For people to make these changes, they need to be able to see what they do as part of the bigger picture. Creating the vision should be the role of government. A long term approach is needed if our ecological footprint is to be reduced enough to make a difference. While government only operates on the short term (to the next election), in this case the vision needs to be over the long term (at least 20 years).

To reduce the private use of cars needs a reorganisation of the residential areas to improve accessibility without the use of private cars. The government needs to determine how much car use should be decreased and how this will be achieved. Within this context each decision of government should be required to address the need to reduce the footprint and greenhouse gas production.

2. Climate smart adaptation - How can you adapt to climate change?

An important part of adapting to climate change is improving the resilience of natural systems. Shorebirds or waders are birds that are dependent on wetlands. Wetlands have wetting and drying periods which the birds utilise. Climate change will mean lessening environmental flows in rivers, less rainfall and higher sea levels. Many of these wetlands are already threatened due to coastal developments, regulation of rivers, damming of rivers, water extraction and reclamation of tidal and freshwater wetlands. To build in natural resilience for shorebirds, there needs to be efforts to keep as much water available to enter the wetlands while maintaining their natural variability.

The planning being undertaken for water allocation in catchments should address climate change. Once problems occur from lack of water for wetlands, water needs to be purchased from rural producers or other water users to put back into the wetlands. This situation should be avoided.

Another option that should be considered is the use of recycled water. Recycled water can be used to create wetlands for the use of shorebirds. This water may be from urban stormwater, agricultural runoff or waste water treatment plants if appropriately treated. These wetlands will need appropriate management to ensure that there is sufficient water available over the times when resident shorebirds are breeding. They need to be shallow with emergent vegetation and have a variable water level that reflects the natural rainfall events.

A further consideration to accommodate shorebirds is to buffer development around all shorebird areas to ensure that as sea levels rise shorebird habitats are not lost. Disturbance of shorebirds is a major threat in areas where there is urban development, particularly for shorebird high tide roosts. These roosts will be under greater threat from sea level rise.

The QWSG would appreciate your response on how the government proposes to address these issues.

Yours sincerely,
Dr David Milton,
Chair,
Queensland Wader study Group

**Why do all the birds fly south from the northern winter ??????
Because they did not want to walk !!!!!!!**

WADER ID DAY REPORTS

Toorbul Wader ID day report – 24th September 2006

Thirteen people (a much smaller total than normal) attended this wader identification day. Weather conditions were excellent for viewing the variety of birds.

Having a smaller group was a bonus for attendees wanting to learn more about these species because they got tuition on just about a one to one basis, and having Black-tailed and Bar-tailed Godwits, Great Knot and Red Knot at the roost was good for pointing out the differences between them. A count of the waders was conducted at the roost by some of the QWSG members.

A quick stop at **Bishops Marsh** as we left rewarded some of us with close views of a Latham's Snipe in the drain along the roadside, 2 Brolga and a Buff-banded Rail.

Six species were seen at Bishops Marsh:

11 Grey Teal, Cattle Egret, 2 Brolga, 1 Buff-banded Rail, 1 Latham's Snipe and 4 Black-winged Stilt.

A total of 57 birds were seen at the main **Toorbul roost** and environs as follows:

9 Black Swan, Australian Wood Duck, 2 Australian Pelican, 1 Little Egret, Intermediate Egret, 1 Striated Heron, Australian White Ibis, Straw-necked Ibis, Royal Spoonbill, 2 Osprey, 1 Whistling Kite, 1 Brahminy Kite, Buff-banded Rail, 17 Black-tailed Godwit, 492 Bar-tailed Godwit, 357 Whimbrel, 263 Eastern Curlew, 1 Common Greenshank, 11 Grey-tailed Tattler, 179 Great Knot, 17 Red Knot, 8 Red-necked Stint, 32 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 55 Curlew Sandpiper, 3 Pied Oystercatcher, 1 Sooty Oystercatcher, 1 Masked Lapwing, 5 Silver Gull, 11 Gull-billed Tern, 3 Caspian Tern, Spotted Turtle-dove, Crested Pigeon, Peaceful Dove, Bar-shouldered Dove, Galah, Rainbow Lorikeet, Pale-headed Rosella, Sacred Kingfisher, Rainbow Bee-eater, Striated Pardalote, Little Wattlebird, Noisy Friarbird, Little Friarbird, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Lewin's Honeyeater, Mangrove Honeyeater, Brown Honeyeater, Grey Shrike-thrush, Magpie-lark, Willie Wagtail, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Figbird, Australian Magpie, Richard's Pipit, Welcome Swallow and Common Myna.

My sincere thanks to Dawn Beck for compiling the bird list during the day.
Linda Cross

Toorbul Wader ID day report – 11th November 2006

A total of twenty three people turned up for this wader identification day.

There is no shade close the enhanced roost and it was hot standing in the sunshine during our observations of the birds and was probably responsible for an earlier departure of some of the group. A cooling sea breeze, which was most welcomed, did not pick up until some of us were having a late lunch.

Both species of godwit and knot were at the roost, which was good for showing the difference between them. At one time there was an adult Bar-tailed Godwit, an adult Black-tailed Godwit and a juvenile Bar-tailed Godwit standing close together allowing us to point out the differences between them. The lone Grey Plover had a little post breeding plumage, as did some of the other waders.

An Osprey gave a great display of catching fish right in front of the roosting birds.

A Bar-tailed Godwit and a Great Knot were seen with orange leg flags (flagged in Victoria).

A total of 25 birds were seen at the main Toorbul roost and environs as follows:

Australian Pelican, White-faced Heron, Osprey, Whistling Kite, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Whimbrel, Eastern Curlew, Marsh Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Grey-tailed Tattler, Great Knot, Red Knot, Red-necked Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Pied Oystercatcher, Black-winged Stilt, Grey Plover, Masked Lapwing, Gull-billed Tern, Caspian Tern, Spotted Turtle-dove, Mangrove Honeyeater and Common Myna.

Linda Cross

WADER ID DAYS for 2007

Saturday 10th March 2007 at Toorbul

High tide at 12:48 (plus 30 minutes later for Toorbul) of 1.69m. Meeting time 11:00am.

Take the Bruce Highway north from Brisbane to the Donnybrook/Toorbul exit (a large billboard advertising Humble Pie is on the left just prior to the exit. Turn off here and head east over the highway overpass. Continue on this road to Toorbul. Turn right at the T-junction then first left and then right, which brings you onto the Esplanade. Follow this road to the end (approximately 2kms); we will be on the left.

Bring water, food and a chair. It is a good idea to have a hat, sunscreen and insect repellent. Most importantly bring your binoculars or telescopes. Hopefully we can provide the answers to all your questions.

Please contact either Phil & Linda Cross (07) 5495 2758 or David Edwards (07) 3262 2017 if you have any questions.

Editor's Note: *Once again the tides have conspired against us. We find that we have to turn up at 2:00am or will be flooded out by exceptional high tides. This is a low tide for Toorbul but we should be able to find the birds even if we have to visit the other small areas close to the main roost.*

Shorebird Conservation Toolkit

WWF-Australia with funding from the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust is pleased to announce the launch of the Shorebird Conservation Toolkit - www.shorebirds.org.au - to help protect and enhance shorebird habitat across Australia.

The toolkit builds on the success of the national Shorebird Conservation Project (2001-2005), drawing from over 31 on- ground and community-driven shorebird conservation projects.

The toolkit is a comprehensive resource that will enable users to:

- understand and appreciate shorebirds, their habitat and conservation needs;
- locate important shorebird sites in Australia and access population estimates;
- develop site survey and monitoring programs; •identify/assess site management needs, and implement/ evaluate management actions;
- write grant applications, site communication plans and media releases;
- access existing resources;
- identify and advocate international/national conservation options;and
- access organisations with knowledge/expertise in practical shorebird and wetland conservation.

The toolkit is available on-line at www.shorebirds.org.au and on CD
For further information contact Bianca Priest 03 6225 1394 or bpriest@wwf.org.au

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently :

Deborah METTERS
Dennis & Lorna JOHNSON

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.

UN: Migratory birds not major cause of flu transmission

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2006-11/02/content_5283058.htm

Editor: Mu Xuequan

NANCHANG, Nov. 2 (Xinhua) -- UN officials on Thursday said migratory birds do not play a major role in the transmission of the highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1. They made the remarks at the first international Living Lakes Conference in this capital of east China's Jiangxi Province.

Dr. Vincent Martin, an official with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (UNFAO), said the spread of bird flu is mainly the result of the world's fast and unregulated development of animal production to meet the increased demand for animal protein. Highly concentrated domestic poultry production systems, especially in Asia, are still using centuries-old practices that place humans and poultry in close proximity, he said. Meanwhile, the constantly evolving nature of the virus has provided the ideal conditions for the emergence of new pathogenic strains of avian influenza.

Evidence indicates wild migratory birds play a minor role in the long-distance spread of the virus, he said, adding that the main causes of the deadly disease are the trade of poultry and poultry products. Marco Barbieri, executive secretary of Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), said the spread of bird flu receives a lot of attention in the media yet there remains widespread misunderstanding of the issue.

Misinformation has led to wild birds being automatically blamed, the official said. "This creates political pressure for ill-advised and disproportionate policies such as the culling or harassment of wild birds and the destruction of wetland habitats."

According to Barbieri, other modes of transmission, such as the trade in poultry and poultry products, the trade in caged birds and human movements may well play a far more significant role in the spread of the bird flu. In some cases, these modes of transmission have been underestimated and do not receive proportionate exposure in the media, he said. "We need to present an accurate and balanced view which acknowledges that there are a number of factors whose relative importance can change, depending on the area or outbreak concerned."

On the role of wild birds in transmission of the bird flu, Barbieri said it is clear that trade in domestic poultry has been a crucial factor, even in transmitting avian influenza over long distances and across continents. However, numerous species of wild birds, especially water fowl, have been proven to be susceptible to infection by H5N1, he pointed out. Close contact between wild birds and poultry can lead to cross-infection.

The loss of wetlands around the globe has forced many wild birds onto alternative sites like farm ponds and paddy fields, bringing them into closer contact with chickens, ducks, geese, and other domestic fowl. The experts say the issue of "ecohealth" highlights the interplay between agriculture and the ecology. A long term solution would be to separate poultry operations and wetlands used by wild birds in order to avoid shared access and cross-contamination, the UN officials suggested. Wild birds and poultry in the same region should not have direct contact with each other, and runoff from domestic poultry operations must not pollute wetlands used by wild birds.

"Farmers can help to reduce the risks of direct transmission of poultry and cross-infection between wild and domestic birds by improving hygiene and bio-security standards in farms and during the transportation of birds, said Barbieri. Scientists should synthesize information on the routes and timing of water bird migration, especially of poorly known intra-African migrants, and birds using Central Asian, Asia-Pacific and Neotropical flyways. "We need to strengthen bird research worldwide, especially in areas where little or no ringing and counting schemes have operated in the past," he said.

The official urged all countries to strengthen field surveillance of wild birds and enhance the understanding of wild bird migration and use of important sites during migration. They must avoid unjustified and counter-productive measure such as culling of wild birds and destruction of the natural habitats on which they depend, such as wetlands, he said. "The governments should also work with site management and veterinary authorities to ensure regular and effective site monitoring, aimed at rapid detection and reporting of any potential H5N1 outbreak," he added.

Along with the three officials, more than 200 world experts and officials discussed sustainable lake management, avian influenza and wildlife habitat conservation during the two-day forum.

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of
Queensland Wader Study Group

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Dawn Beck	Ken Cowell
Andrew Geering	Joyce Harding
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Ivell Whyte	

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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Single: \$15:00
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Forward application to:
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NT 0814

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 February 18th 2007

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.

Advertising Rates are \$20:00 for one quarter page and \$25:00 for a third of a page.

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QWSG MERCHANDISE

Should you wish to purchase any of the QWSG Merchandise, items may be purchased at BQ Inc meetings held 1st Thursday of the month at the Royal Geographical Society Rooms OR....

Contact or E-mail at alphabec@powerup.com.au

Postage is not included in the prices quoted.

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
CD	Bird calls of the Broome region (includes 42 Wader Species).
METAL BADGES	\$ 5.00+postage Metal QWSG logo badges

No longer in stock: Birds of Bribie Island, Pumicestone Passage and Environs
Wildflowers of Bribie Island
However, can be obtained from BIEPA by contacting
Kathleen Catalan on 07 3408 7338
A Birdwatcher's Guide to Redcliffe, Pine Rivers and Caboolture Shire.
However, can be obtained from WPSQ Caboolture branch by contacting
Brian & Eileen Rigden on 07 5496 6644

POLO SHIRTS, CLOTH BADGES

We are currently looking at organising new stock of polo shirts and badges from new suppliers and would like to hear from members who are interested in purchasing any of the two items mentioned. This will be particularly helpful for us when placing the order in relation to sizes, colour etc.

The polo shirts will be of tri-colour in 100% cotton and will have a pocket. At this point in time we do not have a costing for them and are therefore unable to give you a price. These factors will be discussed at the AGM in December.

We have new metal QWSG logo badges available for sale. The badge has been made like the logo that appears on the front top right corner of this newsletter with pale grey-brown for the sand, blue ocean/sky and the godwit is pale grey-brown, black with a little white. They are 3½ cm in size and are very stylish.

Please contact Dawn Beck on 07 3378 8598 or Ivell Whyte on 38020757

Queensland Wader Study Group Annual General Meeting

The QWSG AGM will be held on Sunday, 10 December, 2006, at the Visitor's Centre, Port of Brisbane, Curlew Cr, Fisherman Islands

The program is:

- AGM: 9.45 - 10.30 am
- Talk by Danny Rogers on the effect of the closure of the Saemangeum estuary, South Korea on waders coming to Australia 10.40 - 11.10 am
- Count at the Port: starts at 11.15 am
- BBQ lunch held in the park opposite the Visitor Centre at 1:30 pm or after the count is completed (BYO food and drink)

If you have any queries, please contact David Milton on 3390 2179 (home)



Count Activities 2007

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2006-7

Sat 9th Dec 2.29m at 12:25

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2007

Sun 7th Jan 2.33m at 11:57

Sun 4th Feb 2.37m at 10:55

Sun 4th Mar 2.31m at 09:54

Sat 31st Mar 2.20m at 08:14

Sat 28th Apr 2.05m at 06:50

Sat 19th May 1.71m at 11:12

NO COUNT IN JUNE

National Summer Count

Additional Count for northward migration

Sun 15th Jul

Sat 4th Aug

Sat 15th Sep

Sat 13th Oct

Sat 10th Nov

Sat 8th Dec

1.71m at 10:01 **National Winter Count**

1.98m at 13:25 (1:25pm)

2.03m at 11:31

2.17m at 10:31

2.26m at 09:35

2.27m at 08:40

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2006-7

Sun 10th Dec 2.18m at 13:06

Meet 11:15

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2007

Sat 6th Jan 2.40m at 11:22

Sat 3rd Feb 2.41m at 10:23

Sat 3rd Mar 2.34m at 09:23

Sun 29th Apr 2.04m at 07:30

Sun 20th May 1.63m at 12:03

Sun 17th Jun 1.68m at 11:00

Sat 14th Jul 1.68m at 09:14

Sun 5th Aug 1.99m at 14:23 (2:23pm)

Sun 16th Sep 2.00m at 12:06

Sun 14th Oct 2.16m at 11:03

Sun 11th Nov 2.27m at 10:09

Sun 9th Dec 2.32m at 09:16

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

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.....)

SIGNATURE: DATE:.....

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

Cheques to be made out to: Queensland Wader Study Group

For a direct credit, please use the following details. An email advice to Sheryl Keates tattlers@tpg.com.au would be appreciated.

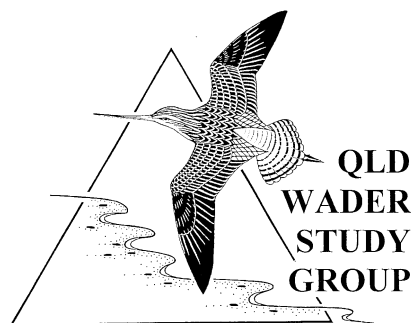
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QUEENSLAND WADER



Issue number 059

March, April, May 2007

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

SUMMARY OF QWSG ACTIVITIES IN 2006

Report presented at the AGM on Sat 10 December, 2006

The QWSG committee and many members had another active year in 2006 with a large project to map roosts in along the coast from Tannum Sands to Pt Vernon in Hervey Bay. We continued to undertake counts at the Port of Brisbane for the Port of Brisbane Corporation during 2006 with the support of Wayne Young. We received three requests for summary data from environmental consultants undertaking Environmental Impact Studies for coastal developments. A new policy of the group meant that we now have a fee structure by which to charge for providing these count data. The group has continued to do wader counts for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at Mirapool on the southern end of Moreton Is. A new management plan for the area has been drafted and this is planned to involve QWSG helping the EPA to undertake a study of the disturbance of waders in the area. This study is expected to commence in 2007 and will require volunteers to spend 1-2 days monitoring vehicle and human disturbance of roosting birds each quarter.

During 2006, organising and running the large Burnett-Mary Regional Group for Natural resource Management (BMRG)-funded roost mapping project took much of the time of the chair and other committee members. However, steady progress was made on finalising many existing projects that have meant they were completed or almost completed in 2006.

- **BMRG Roost Mapping** – The BMRG Roost Mapping project involved a large number of QWSG members in 2006. Two surveys were undertaken, in March and October and these involved up to 60 people in the field at one time. That these surveys were completely successful is mostly due to the efforts of our part-time project coordinator, Kirsty Balmer. I thank her for the long hours she spent organising logistics, accommodation, boats and counters for over 100 roosts in the BMRG region. Another key person for the project has been Kirsten Wortel from the Qld EPA Southern Region office in Maryborough. Kirsten provided copies of available aerial photography for all the roosts surveyed, which was critical for the mapping. Ivell Whyte, Don and Lesley Bradley and Denis and Lorna Johnson also made major contributions to the project. They undertook a major survey of resident wader species breeding in the southern Great sandy Strait in September 2006 with help from Qld Parks and Wildlife Service staff. Don and Lesley Bradley and Denis and Lorna Johnson also made pre-survey reconnaissance trips to remote roosts along the coast north of Bundaberg and Fraser Is. The Ch 10 children's show, "Totally Wild" also made celebrities of Lesley and Don by filming a segment on breeding Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers during the survey of breeding resident waders.
- **QWSG Book** – During the year, Andrew Geering again continued working hard finalising the text and layout of the book "Shorebirds of Australia". Andrew and Sandra Harding have now reviewed the final text and it has been sent back to the publishers for last minutes alterations Watch out for a notice or brochure in the newsletter during 2007. QWSG will have an official launch in conjunction with the book's sponsors, Port of Brisbane Corporation.

- **Wader course** – The committee decided to defer a wader course for 2006 while Andrew Geering focussed on completing the wader book. In 2005, it was planned to hold the next course in the first half of 2006. This obviously did not happen with the other activities going on. The committee have agreed to hold a course on 17 November 2007.
- **Port of Brisbane** – QWSG continued the monthly count program at the Port Of Brisbane with 12 counts in 2006. These counts are coordinated by Peter Rothlisberg and continue to be well attended, with many members attending for one or more counts and enjoying the hospitality of Wayne Young with the BBQs on site after several counts. QWSG have agreed to continue to participate in these counts at the POB during 2007. I thank Peter and all members who attend these counts of this critical roost site.
- **Newsletter and website** – The QWSG published four newsletters during 2006 and they continue to receive positive comments from readers. I thank David Edwards for his continuing efforts as editor, making each issue informative and topical with excerpts and articles from across Australia and the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. The count program continues to be the backbone of the newsletter. Linda Cross makes a sterling effort to ensure all interesting or large counts are recorded. I also thank Ivell and Jim Whyte for their efforts in labelling and posting the newsletters to members and ensure they all arrive on time. The QWSG website has been off-line for 2006 while the committee grapple with the decisions about the style and content of the website and what its primary focus will be. In the meantime, members can look for information about coming QWSG events at the Birds Queensland website <http://www.birdsqueensland.org.au> and follow the link to their page about QWSG.
- **Count program and ID days** – I thank all members who contributed wader counts for QWSG during 2006. The QWSG count program continued successfully during 2006 under the dedicated guidance of Linda Cross. There were 11 monthly counts at regular roost sites and 12 counts at the Port of Brisbane that are also incorporated into the QWSG count database. I thank all the counters who have contributed their time and money to making these counts. The count database is an extremely valuable resource as a result of these efforts and it increases in value the longer we continue with the program. Joyce Harding has continued in her role as data entry person and has shown continued dedication to ensure that the counts are entered quickly and accurately. David Edwards and Linda Cross have continued to run a series of wader ID days for new and not so new members. Attendance in 2006 has not been as large as in previous years, but they do provide a valuable exercise and a way for newer wader watchers to gain advice and help from the “experts”. We plan to continue them during 2007 as a means to help new members
- **SEQ NRM and Library** – During 2006, Joyce Harding attended four meetings of the SEQ Natural Resource Management Group as a representative of QWSG. The NRM allocated \$20,000 to raise awareness of shorebirds and their habitats. Some of these funds have been used to fund a part-time resource teacher to take the QWSG education kit into Queensland schools. Other activities included making a short TV segment for Channel 7’s to highlight the linkage between water quality in Moreton Bay and healthy intertidal habitats where waders can feed. Michele Burford and Joyce Harding were TV stars for a short time and did well at getting the message across.
- **Wader counts of southern Moreton Is** – QWSG members have continued to accompany Qld Parks and Wildlife staff on counts of roosts on southern Moreton Is. QWSG participated in counts in February, July and November 2006. These are a continuation of counts of this important region of the Bay that began in 2004. We thank the Qld Parks and Wildlife Service for continuing to support these surveys. This region is very important to Eastern Curlew and Bar-tailed Godwit and the total number of birds reaches over 5,000 birds at the three major roost sites. The EPA is keen to monitor wader disturbance at Mirapool, where vehicles regularly disturb the birds as they roost on the beaches. The new Moreton Is Management Plan is now expected to be gazetted in early 2007. New regulations will be introduced to try to reduce or eliminate this disturbance. The EPA would like QWSG to participate in monitoring this disturbance in order to assess effect of the new regulations. They would also like QWSG members to give public presentations about waders and the effects of disturbance on their body condition and ability to migrate. I would like to thank Lisa Ford from the Qld EPA for coordinating these counts and providing QWSG with the opportunity to be involved.
- **Wader survey in Mackay region** – The Australasian Wader Studies Group (AWSG) have received funding from federal Department of Environment, Heritage and Water to undertake wader surveys at sites with large populations of Great Knot and other species that regularly used the reclaimed

Samangeum estuary in South Korea during migration. Based on previous QWSG studies in the region, AWSG decided to survey waders in the Mackay region as part of this project. Ten QWSG members from Brisbane flew to Mackay in January 2006 to undertake the survey in company with local members. Unfortunately, a tropical low formed off the coast during the week before the planned survey dates. This low dumped buckets of rain and pushed strong winds onto the coasts during the weekend of the survey. This meant that most of the sites with large aggregations of Great Knot could not be accessed as they required boats. Despite these difficulties, over 15,000 waders were counted at the accessible roost sites. These data will provide a useful pre-Samangeum closure data point for comparison with planned surveys in Mackay during the 2006/07 and 2007/08 non-breeding seasons. The other regions being surveyed as part of this project are Roebuck Bay and Eighty Mile Beach south of Broome in northern WA.

I hope that members can see from this list of activities that the QWSG committee have had another busy and productive year. The profile of waders and QWSG is rising and lets all hope that this increase in public awareness will have direct benefits for the conservation of waders and their habitats in Queensland.

I would like to thank the QWSG committee members for their commitment during 2006.

Looking ahead to 2007

The large BMRG project will continue during 2007, with a final report due in June. There will be one more field survey from 17 – 21 March as part of this project. This survey will focus on the northern part of the region and count waders on roosts from Tannum Sands south to Moore Park near Bundaberg. Some new roosts will be mapped during the survey and all roosts counted for a second time. This will mean that all roosts along the entire 200 km of coast will have been mapped and counted twice during the project. These data will be provided to the four local authorities in the survey area as well as the Qld EPA. These authorities will be able to use the data to make more informed local and regional planning decisions. We believe activities such as this will have lasting benefits for the waders by getting information on waders included in the local government planning schemes and making more people aware of waders and their habitat requirements.

For the same reasons, I would like QWSG to undertake a survey and mapping of all wader roosts in Moreton Bay during the 2007/08 non-breeding season. This will require a lot of planning and coordination to get counters to each roost in the area. We will need several boats to ferry counters to sites and map roosts on the islands in the Bay. I would appreciate any member with a boat who would be prepared to help to let me or any of the committee members know of their potential availability. The dates are likely to be in the December 2007 - January 2008 period when the numbers of waders are most stable in Moreton Bay.

Happy and safe wader watching to all members in 2007 and I look forward to meeting more members during the planned survey activities this year. Watch your newsletter for further details or contact me.

David Milton
Chairperson

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently :

Stephen MURRAY
Tom MUTTON
Rebecca RYAN

Many thanks too to those who have included a donation with their renewal or membership fee. This is greatly appreciated as such donations make on-going work possible.

QWSG Income and Expenditure Statement For Year Ended 30th September 2006
--

	2006	2005
	\$	\$
INCOME		
Contract Income		
BCC	90.00	
Burnett-Mary	27,866.73	
GSS Surveys		7,990.00
Gulf Survey Project		5,400.00
Port of Bris Surveys	9,363.64	9,364.00
Signage		75.00
Courses		1,389.00
Donations	780.69	1,043.00
Envirofund Grant		3,596.00
Fundraising Income		
Badges		22.00
Books/reports	127.27	109.00
Shirts	68.18	40.00
Other	163.59	60.00
Interest	5,053.56	3,613.00
Membership	2,222.73	2,018.00
Miscellaneous income	309.09	65.00
TOTAL INCOME	46,045.48	34,784.00
EXPENSES	2006	2005
	\$	\$
Bank charges	40.65	67.00
Contract expenses		
BCC	90.00	
Burnett-Mary Project	8,857.18	
GSS Surveys		3,702.00
Gulf survey		3,114.00
Mackay Surveys		379.00
Port of Bris Surveys	886.36	650.00
Courses expenses	0.00	449.00
Depreciation Expense	5,322.00	6,993.00
Donations	181.82	250.00
Education & publicity material	837.18	645.00
Envirofund grant expenses		3,596.00
Fundraising expenses	210.72	222.00
Insurance/rego	1,874.77	53.00
Membership expenses	95.00	86.00
Miscellaneous expenses	523.25	831.00
Newsletter expenses	1,177.73	1,293.00
Stationery/post/phone/copying	616.97	344.00
Wader guide expenses	2,435.00	8.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	23,148.63	22,682.00
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	22,896.85	12,102.00
Profit before income tax	22,896.85	12,102.00
Income tax revenue - ordinary activities		
Net profit attributable to the association	22,896.85	12,102.00
Total changes in equity of the association	22,896.85	12,102.00

QUEENSLAND WADER

Opening retained profits	104,429.00	92,327.00
Net Profit attributed to the association	22,896.85	12,102.00
Closing retained profits	127,325.85	104,429.00

	2006	2005
CURRENT ASSETS	\$	\$
Cash Assets		
Cash at Bank	121,737.60	92,117.00
Inventories		
Stock of Goods for Resale	557.91	353.00
Total Current Assets	122,295.51	92,470.00

NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, Plant and Equipment		
Plant & equipment - at cost	46,236.95	46,069.00
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-39,274.00	-33,952.00
	6,962.95	12,117.00
Total Non-Current Assets	6,962.95	12,117.00

Total Assets	129,258.46	104,587.00
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	2006	2005
CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$	\$
Current Tax Liabilities		
GST payable control account	2,121.12	245.00
Input tax credit control account	-188.51	-87.00
	1,932.61	158.00
Total Current Liabilities	1,932.61	158.00
Total Liabilities	1,932.61	158.00
Net Assets	127,325.85	104,429.00

Members' Funds		
Accumulated surplus/(deficit)	127,325.85	104,429.00
Total Members' Funds	127,325.85	104,429.00

SUMMARY OF SOURCED FUNDS	30/09/2006	30/09/2005
	\$	\$
Burnett-Mary Project	19,009.55	
GSS	8,559.17	8,559.17
Nigel's Estate	44,349.00	41,977.28
Port of Brisbane	26,731.82	18,293.18
Total Sourced Funds	98,649.54	68,829.63

Cash at bank	121,737.60	92,117.32
Less Sourced Funds	98,649.54	68,829.63
Total General Funds	23,088.06	23,287.69

Editor's Note

Apologies for the late arrival of your newsletter.

I came back from a holiday and my computer decided to go on one for itself. The computer technician has been able to kick start it again, but is not too hopeful for the hard drive's future. Another endangered species?

Syria: 1250 Sociable Plovers, but hunters are on their way!

Subject: from [MEBirdNet]

From: René Vos Rene@renevos.net

Date: 2007. febrúár 25. 21:22:57 GMT+01:00

Reply-To: MEBirdNet@yahoogroups.com

The Syria Sociable Plover team discovered today in a limited area about 1250 Sociable Plovers, but unfortunately also preparations for hunters with obviously these birds as their target. Please read Remco Hofland's report below, and especially his cry for immediate help.

René Remco Hofland wrote:

Dear friends,

Today we hit the jackpot but see lower down for urgent news and request for help, especially from people who are influential in Syria.

We started this morning simultaneously at areas No 1 and 2, to get an accurate count of Sociable Plovers around in the area. Team 1 (area 1) would then move to area 3, team 2 to 4, going further east, informing each other of movements of flocks to try and prevent getting double counts.

Area No 1 yielded 267 SPs, all visible scanning around from the top of our Nissan Patrol; area No 2 (ca 14 kms eastwards) produced between 124 and 140 birds. Team 1 moved to area No 3 and, after arriving and quite quickly locating 148 SPs, team 2 moved to area No 4. This however turned out to be the eastern part of area No 3, which proved to be the jackpot.

(Area 3) It is located about 18 kms east of area No 2 and is about 14 x 14 kms in size (of which the southern part resembles semi-desert and is therefore not suitable for SP). The birds' preferred habitat was similar to the earlier ones, which is grazed natural steppe enclosed by near-endless barley fields.

While team 1 was looking at 148 SPs in the SW corner, team 2, positioned in the NE corner, counted no less than 700 SPs from one viewpoint only. I strongly believe that my team recorded around 1,250 different SPs today, of which 848 were found in one area only. This area is called Ar Ruweida Rangeland reserve and, although it is grazed by several herds of sheep, has quite extensive stretches of short grass favoured by SPs. It is bordered by an earth wall much like Talila Reserve east of Talila, but only at the western and southern sides as far as I could tell. We took dropping and soil samples and photographed birds and plants.

There is one VERY BIG PROBLEM, however. In the eastern part of the area a tented camp was being erected by workmen servicing a Qatari prince and the rest of his hunting party, who are said to be arriving tonight or tomorrow. They will probably stay around one month in luxury tents, with nothing on their hands other than to shoot more SPs than there are worldwide (according to the Single Species Action Plan). The area holds few other birds, the ones we saw were endless flocks of Sky- and Calandra Larks, single male Pallid and Hen Harrier, few Long-legged Buzzards, Merlins and Greater Sand Plovers. The SPs are at great risk here AND THERE IS NEED FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION. Could someone please send governmental people or police over to politely (but firmly) ask to move elsewhere ?!!! We have been able to take photographs of the camp, rifles and slugs, after introducing ourselves as normal tourists.

The GPS coordinates of the eastern access track to the area, located ca 500m west of a power station just north of the M4, are N 36, 33, 11.6 / E 39, 52, 56.1. The area is located roughly 3 kms south of the M4.

The GPS coordinates of the tented camp are N 36 degr 28' 35.2" / E 39 degr 53' 03.7" .

More on behaviour and the likes in the next email.

Bye for now,

Remco and the team

FLAGGED QUEENSLAND WADERS – MORE VISIBLE IN THE FLYWAY

Since October 2006, a small band of QWSG members led by David Milton and Sandra Harding has been mist-netting waders with Jon Coleman in Moreton Bay (see QW issue number 58). To date, Manly Boat Harbour has been the main location, with one activity at Port of Brisbane.

Having been a regular participant in banding and flagging activities with QWSG's wader guru Dr Peter Driscoll until the late nineties, I was delighted at the opportunity to join the current mist-netting group.

Jim and I had our introduction to the activity on January 5 at Port of Brisbane. Mist-netting on the reclamation site provides many more opportunities for getting bogged in the mud than counting there does. Heather Smith, who for some reason regularly sinks up to her knees when she's around me, declined my company and went with the second group on the night. My reputation for giving my companions that sinking feeling was maintained however, when Jon's neighbour, Stephen, disappeared up to his left thigh as we made our way out to check the nets.

The night was windy and our wader catch was small, both in number and stature – three Red-necked Stints, a Curlew Sandpiper and a redcap.

Manly Boat Harbour roost on successive netting nights was far more civilised, with good areas of shoreline around the moat on which to set the nets. Windy conditions once again meant the catches were small, but rewarding nevertheless.

One of only ten waders caught at Manly on January 16 was a surprise: a green flagged Lesser Sand Plover banded on 5 October 1997, at Fisherman Islands (now Port of Brisbane). It was an adult when first banded and would now be at least 11 years old. Many of Moreton Bay's waders were banded well before that date and would now be carrying pension cards. It will be good to have new flaggings to supplement Queensland's dwindling representation in the flyway.

During our cannon-netting period, QWSG members had difficulty in coaxing Whimbrel inside the firing zone, however 4 were caught on the February outing, bringing to 7 the mist-netting total for this species.

I must say also that setting up for mist-netting is a breeze compared with that of cannon-netting. No more wheelbarrow-loads of equipment across the mudflats or extended waiting periods between the net-setting at low tide and the high tide catching period. Mist nets are light and are set up just prior to the birds flying in to roost.

All up, 101 waders from 15 species have now been caught and banded during mist-netting. Forty-two of these are carrying engraved flags, which will be invaluable in terms of future data collection both in Moreton Bay and throughout the flyway.

Species and number currently boasting the new adornments are:

Species	Engraved flags
Bar-tailed Godwit	8
Greater Sand Plover	4
Grey-tailed Tattler	17
Terek Sandpiper	1
Whimbrel	7
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	4
Pacific Golden Plover	1

Other species caught and fitted with plain green leg flags are Eastern Curlew, Red-necked Stint, Ruddy Turnstone, Lesser Sand Plover, Curlew Sandpiper, Red-capped Plover and Red Knot.

Hit Akutsu, from the Yatsu-Higata volunteers and Wild Bird Society of Japan, has forwarded a list of our individually flagged birds to the local shorebirds network in Japan. This will no doubt increase the possibility of sightings reports from Japan. These reports will go initially to the Yatsu Higata Nature Observation Centre (YNOC) with information relayed to us by Centre staff.

QUEENSLAND WADER

YNOC staff and volunteers have previously sent reports of Queensland flagged birds observed in the Yatsu Higata. We're looking forward with anticipation to more reports from our Japanese friends during the coming migration.



Grey-tailed Tattler in hand, leg-flag "AT", Manly Boat Harbour

Don't forget to check your green leg flag sightings for any 2-character codes. We have a top opportunity to gain a much greater understanding of our waders through these reports.

All leg flag sightings in Queensland are recorded by Phil and Linda Cross. Contact details are: address: 40 Thompson Rd, Bellmere Qld 4510, email: xenus@big.net.au or phone: (07) 5495 2758.

Ivell Whyte

FINDING NESTING WADERS – THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

In late September 2006, I joined QWSG members Don Bradley, Lesley Bradley, Dennis Johnson and Lorna Johnson in Hervey Bay to carry out a survey of nesting resident waders on the Great Sandy Strait islands. Data on identified breeding sites would be complementary to that on feeding and roosting areas, giving a wider view of wader usage in the region. The project was funded by the Burnett-Mary Natural Resource Management (NRM) Group, with logistical support provided by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. The latter was in the form of the QPWS vessel the "Yerandunah", skippered by Bill Alston, who was ably assisted by deckie Wayne Matthews.

Now, I must admit to having been a little sceptical at the outset about the potential for success of this particular venture. After all, the breeding period for three important target species, Beach Stone-curlew, Pied Oystercatcher and Sooty Oystercatcher is spread pretty broadly over about four months (Sept-Jan). The surveys were to be carried out over about a week only. What I hadn't taken into consideration, and subsequently learned the importance of, was local knowledge. Specifically, the Bradleys' local knowledge, gained over many years of boating among, and taking schoolchildren out to, islands in the strait. Don and Lesley assured us that without a doubt, September was the month to bring results. And they were right.

Wayne dropped us off on the morning of the 25th in the Yerandunah's rubber duckie on Woody Island in the north of the GSS. Just 20m from our landing point Don found a nest whose location he'd marked with a stick on a previous visit with students. Result: one newly-hatched Pied Oystercatcher chick and one egg.

A week earlier, while surveying Little Woody and Duck Islands, Don and Lesley had found three pairs of nesting Sooty Oystercatchers. This species is rare in SE Qld, so locating nests of two of the pairs, each containing two eggs, was exciting and a valuable addition to the wader database for the region.

During the September surveys of the GSS islands, a total of 29 pairs of breeding resident shorebirds were recorded and 10 nests located. These included the 3 pairs of Sooty Oystercatcher and 7 pairs of Beach Stone-curlew. The rest of the breeding pairs were Pied Oystercatcher. A total of only 23 Red-capped

Plovers was observed and there was no evidence of any breeding activity amongst these. Breeding pairs were defined as those exhibiting nesting or breeding behaviour, i.e. agitation or distraction display, whether or not nests and/or chicks were located.

Woody Island, which hadn't previously been surveyed, proved to be greatly underestimated in terms of its importance to the resident shorebird population in the GSS. 15 nesting pairs of Pied Oystercatcher (6 nests located) and 6 pairs of Beach Stone-curlew exhibiting nesting behaviour were found on the island.

Sincere thanks to all involved in this survey. Overall results were excellent. As with most of our wader surveys, there were some testing moments and my hat's off to Lorna for her magnificent stoicism during the team's circumnavigation on foot of Woody Island. The rocky foreshores were extremely difficult to negotiate and Lorna bore, without complaint, the biggest blisters I've ever seen!

Following the September survey, Dennis and Lorna, who like Don and Lesley are also boaties, applied their own local knowledge to their new-found expertise in resident wader nesting behaviour. They found a pair of Beach Stone-curlew with a chick near Wathumba Creek on Fraser Island.

And it was local knowledge once again that ensured Beach Stone-curlew and Pied Oystercatcher nests on Dr Mays Island weren't overlooked by the Elliott Heads team during last October's Burnett Mary coast survey. Local Barry Bainbridge had told us during the February survey that the Pied Oystercatchers we counted on the island regularly bred there, so we kept a close lookout in October.

Dr Mays Island, in the mouth of the Elliott River, is accessible by boat from the western (mainland) side. Conditions were calm enough on the day for our intrepid skipper, Rod Whiting, to land the rest of the team (Heather Smith, Marg Bullock and myself) on the island to carry out the survey on foot. Rod's intention was to remain offshore with the boat, while the girls did the survey work. This plan quickly went by the board, when he noticed from the boat a third Beach Stone-curlew head down to the shoreline from cover. We girls had left the general vicinity, momentarily abandoning our search for a nest we were sure was there. His boat was left anchored and unattended as Rod headed over to join us.

Suffice it to say that we found the nest with its single egg and later the Pied Oystercatchers' nest with two eggs. Both nests were at the base of vegetated low dunes on the mainland side of island. This section is unfortunately the main access point for boaties landing on the island. However, with local knowledge of the nesting sites now verified and officially recorded, hopefully protection of this special area will be ensured.

Ivell Whyte

Shellfish dredging -> Red Knot decline

Mixing exploitation and conservation: A recipe for disaster

Commercial shellfish dredging in the Dutch Wadden Sea led to declines in both the quality and amount of the red knot's food resources, causing the population to crash.

Most governments around the world set conservation policy based on the assumption that resource exploitation and species protection can co-exist in the same place. These policies have led to Orwellian "marine protected areas" that host commercial fishing operations, leading one to wonder who's protecting whom. A new study reveals the danger of this approach--showing that exploitation has led to a decline of a seabird species by 80% in the Dutch Wadden Sea--and concludes that it's time to let protection mean protection.

For decades, the Dutch government sanctioned mechanical cockle dredging in three-fourths of the intertidal flats of the Wadden Sea, a natural monument protected under two intergovernmental treaties. Before suction dredging began in the 1960s, an estimated 2,000 tons of cockles were hand-harvested from the reserve each year. In 1989, the high-pressure, motor-driven water pumps used in suction dredging sucked up close to 80,000 tons of cockles. By 2004, the Dutch government decided the environmental costs were too great and stopped the practice. Jan van Gils and colleagues investigated the ecological impacts of commercial cockle dredging on intertidal ecosystems by studying a long-distance migrant shorebird that dines principally on cockles, the red knot (*Calidris canutus islandica*). Up to 50% of the global red knot population uses the Dutch Wadden Sea at some point during their annual cycle.

Red knots are exquisitely adapted to their lifestyle. They have a pressure-sensitive bill that senses hard objects buried in the sand and a shell-crushing gizzard to accommodate the birds' penchant for swallowing their catch whole. They even have a flexible digestive system that minimizes the energy costs of flying up to 16,000 kilometers between their arctic breeding grounds and winter homes in Europe and the tropics; their gizzard expands and contracts to balance daily food intake and energy needs. To determine the effects of dredging on the birds, the authors sampled prey quality and density over 2,800 Wadden Sea sites during the late summer months (late July to early September) for five years starting in 1998. Dredging occurred each year from September to December, immediately after their sample collections. In un-dredged areas, cockle densities increased by 2.6% each year, and the quality remained stable. In dredged areas, cockle densities remained stable, and their quality (flesh-to-shell ratio) declined by 11.3% each year--paralleling the decline in the quality of the birds' diet (as measured by droppings). This finding falls in line with evidence that dredging disturbs the silt cockles like to settle in, as well as their feeding conditions, which in turn reduces their quality as a food resource.

Based on prey quality and densities, van Gils *et al.* predicted the energy intake rate for knots with an average-size gizzard at each site (all sites were pooled into 272 blocks, each with an area of 1 square kilometer), then calculated the percentage of blocks that would not yield sufficient intake rates for knots to avoid starvation. From 1998 to 2002, the percentage of blocks that couldn't sustain knots increased from 66% to 87%--all attributable to dredging in previously suitable sites. Reduced prey density caused some of this degradation, but most stemmed from declines in both cockle density and quality.

The authors caught and color-banded the birds so they could estimate survival rates the following year, and they measured gizzard mass with ultrasonography. As expected, when prey quality declined, birds needed larger gizzards to process the relatively higher proportion of shells in their diet. Their chances of surviving conditions at the Wadden Sea increased as a function of prey quality and gizzard flexibility. Birds that did not return had much smaller gizzards than those that did. Survival rate calculations based on gizzard size and prey quality revealed that if birds could not expand their gizzard and prey quality was low (0.15 grams of flesh per gram of shell), only 47% of arriving birds would avoid starvation. A much greater proportion would survive if their gizzard could expand by at least 1 gram (70% for 1 gram, 88% for 2 grams).

These degraded food conditions, the authors conclude, explains why red knot populations have declined by 80% in the Wadden Sea. And increased mortality in the Wadden Sea, which the authors estimate at 58,000 birds over five years, accounts for the 25% decline of red knots across their entire northwest European wintering grounds. Dredging reduced the quality of red knots' primary food source so drastically that even the birds' extraordinarily adaptable digestive system could not save them. The authors point out that dredging doesn't even provide significant economic benefits--only 11 outfits manage 22 fishing boats--yet is "directly responsible" for the widespread decline of a protected shorebird. These findings put the lie to the notion that commercial exploitation is consistent with conservation and underscore the risks of disturbing critical habitat for threatened or endangered species.

Citation: van Gils JA, Piersma T, Dekinga A, Spaans B, Kraan C (2006) Shellfish dredging pushes a flexible avian top predator out of a marine protected area. *PLoS Biol* 4(12): e376. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pmed.0030376.

Increased Links Between Australia and NZ with Siberia

We are living in exciting times! This year's Russian/ International expedition to Chukotka, the very north- east part of Siberia, made 22 sightings of colour flagged waders. Until three years ago there had only been two recoveries and no flag sightings linking the waders of this remote part of Siberia with the wader populations present in the non breeding season in Australia and New Zealand.

16 of the flag sightings relate to Red Knot. Six were birds from North Island New Zealand (white flagged) and four were from Victoria, Australia (orange flagged). These are the known areas to which the *rogersi* sub- species of the Red Knot migrate. This has already been proved by a Russian banded Red Knot from Chukotka being caught in Victoria --two years ago and then subsequent sightings of New Zealand and Victorian flagged Red Knots in Chukotka last year (the New Zealand flagged bird actually at a nest).

But this year's records include three sightings of yellow flagged Red Knot in Chukotka - at two different locations and with some time between each sighting, suggesting that three different birds may have been involved. This is the first time we have had incontrovertible evidence that the *rogersi* sub-species of the Red Knot occurs in north west Australia also.

Previously we had thought that the population there was almost entirely *piersmai*, which breeds in the New Siberian Islands and northern Yakutia. These three yellow flag sightings suggest that it may be more than just a few stray *rogersi* which visit NWA.

There were also three sightings of Great Knot flagged in north west Australia and two sightings of Red-necked Stint (as well as one from Chongming Dao in China).

Bearing in mind that reports of any species of wader in the breeding areas are very few and far between, these reports in 2006 are a real bonanza.

Clive Minton from the *Tattler*

Bar-tailed Godwits Complete Marathon Trans-pacific Flights

(Search launched for missing trans-Pacific godwits and curlews)

Buoyed by the success we had in 2005 in attaching satellite transmitters to nesting Bar-tailed Godwits (see January 2006 *Tattler*), we expanded the effort in 2006 to include both Bar-tailed Godwits and Bristle-thighed Curlews. Between early August and late September we followed the southward flights of 9 Bristle-thighed Curlews and 5 Bar-tailed Godwits as they departed their Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta staging grounds.

Amazingly, all of the curlews were tracked to French Polynesia and the southern Line Islands. Bar-tailed Godwits were likewise followed across the Pacific along almost their entire flight, but continuing problems with battery failure prevented us from tracking birds to their final destination in either New Zealand or eastern Australia. For example, one godwit got within 1,500 km of New Zealand when its battery died. At the time it was well past Fiji and flying strongly at over 80 km/h. Another godwit was 2,500 km from Queensland and flying steadily at 50 km/h when its battery failed. Yet a third godwit had its battery die before it even departed on migration. Another bird spent 9.5 days!! in the air before it landed on an atoll east of New Caledonia. It got caught up in some pretty strong headwinds north of Hawaii and again past Fiji. The latter caused the bird to abruptly head west where it stopped on New Caledonia.

This sub species of Bar-tailed Godwits that nest in Alaska must complete the longest known single flight for a land bird, 11,000 km, to Australia and New Zealand.

Among the Bristle-thighed Curlews, two birds reached French Polynesia but their transmitters stopped reporting before they settled on a specific non-breeding area. Both were within 1,000 km of the nearest atoll known to host Bristle-thighed Curlews when their transmitters last reported. Since the transmitters were on a 48-h reporting cycle birds easily could have reached land during the following two days and shed their transmitters before the next reporting cycle. (It is beyond the scope of this article to present other details of the study. These you'll see shortly in the *Tattler* and other scientific journals.)

In the mean time, anyone with an interest in Bar-tailed Godwits and Bristle-thighed Curlews can provide invaluable help by observing one or more of the marked godwits and curlews whose radios stopped prematurely. Each bird carries a black flag inscribed with a two-digit alphanumeric code and an antenna should be clearly visible extending from the bird's lower back or from under its tail. For godwits in particular observing one of the birds in question will demonstrate that it did indeed complete its migration (Bar-tailed Godwits with transmitters and engraved flags were observed in Australia and New Zealand last year).

Please send information directly to David Melville <david.melville@xtra.co.nz>, Adrian Riegen <riegen@xtra.co.nz>, Phil Battley <philbattley@quicksilver.net.nz>, or me.

Besides being profusely acknowledged in our writings about the birds, you will become an honorary member of the Alaska Shorebird Group and receive a handsome hat and patch.

Article from the *Tattler*

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.

Recaptures

On 19th January 2007 the flagging team from QWSG recaptured a Lesser Sand Plover at Manly Boat Harbour. The bird was originally flagged at Fisherman Island on 5th October 1997 and recorded as 3+ years old. This will make this bird at least 12 yrs old ! It is nice to know that there are still some of our older flagged birds around.

Green leg flag sightings

In each Qld Wader issue there is quite a number of green leg flag sightings recorded within Moreton Bay, which is where the bird was banded originally. As we are now seeing more leg flag combinations from other states and countries, and have limited space available for sightings, we will not be listing each individual sighting of green flag records in Queensland unless there is a significant movement of the bird. Instead, we will list the number of flags for each species and the period in which they were seen.

Sighted in Moreton Bay & Environs between 04.11.06 and 02.02.07

13 Eastern Curlew, 23 Bar-tailed Godwit, 2 Whimbrel, 2 Great Knot, 20 Grey-tailed Tattler, 1 Ruddy Turnstone, 2 Terek Sandpiper, 1 Curlew Sandpiper, 8 Lesser Sand Plover, 1 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, 2 Red-capped Plover and 5 Red-necked Stint.

The above totals do not include the birds that are individually banded with marked flags. As reported in the last newsletter (issue 58) QWSG are again banding waders, and some are fitted with individual letters etched in the flag. All recent sightings of individually marked birds have been at Manly Boat Harbour. **Bar-tailed Godwits:** AM has been seen four times from 27.11.06 to 02.02.07, AN has been seen four times from 11.11.06 to 07.01.07. **Whimbrels:** AA has been seen twice on 27.11.06 and 03.12.06, AC has been seen once on 03.12.06. **Grey-tailed Tattlers:** AD has been seen three times from 11.11.06 to 27.11.06.

Since 7th November 2006 QWSG as flagged over 100 waders (some with etched numbers), and as northward migration will be well underway when you receive this newsletter we are asking everyone to please remember to look for flags and make special note of etched flags.

Interstate & overseas Green leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken & K. Bond – 19.10.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, Firth of Thames, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 14.10.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Farewell Spit, Gobi, Nelson, SI, New Zealand – Rob Schuckard & David Melville – 09.10.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Bells Island, Waimea Inlet, Nelson, SI, New Zealand – Willie Cook – 07.10.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Farewell Spit, Bushend Point, SI, New Zealand – Rob Schuckard, David Melville & Derek McLeod – 07.10.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Clifton Road, Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 02.10.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, Firth of Thames, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken & Phil Battley – 01.10.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken, D. Lawrie & G. Vaughan – 24.09.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Clifton Road, Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 19.09.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Cape Avinof, Alaska, USA – Brian McCaffery – seen 01, 02 and 04.09.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit (flag on left tibia) – Cape Avinof, Alaska, USA – Brian McCaffery – 04.09.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Cape Avinof, Alaska, USA – Martin Green – seen on 24, 29, 30 and 31.08.06. Also seen on 02 and 04.09.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Cape Avinof, Alaska, USA – Andrea Pomeroy & Sarah Lovibond – 30.08.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Cape Avinof, Alaska, USA – Andrea Pomeroy & Sarah Lovibond – 24.08.06
- 2 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken, D. Lawrie et al – 23.10.06
- 1 Red Knot – Seagrove, NI New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 23.09.06

Orange leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – Esther Townsend – 04.02.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul 1km North – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 07.01.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton – 27.11.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – David Edwards et al – 11.11.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 11.11.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Kakadu Beach Roost – Michael Strong – 05.11.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 05.11.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 03.11.06
- 1 Great Knot – Toorbul – Phil & Linda Cross et al – 11.11.06
- 1 Curlew Sandpiper – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton – 02.02.07
- 1 Curlew Sandpiper – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton – 27.11.06
- 1 Curlew Sandpiper – Cairns Esplanade – unknown observer – 15.10.06
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 04.11.06
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Cairns Esplanade – Phil Gregory – 27.10.06

Yellow leg flag sightings

- 1 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – Geoff Skinner Reserve – Michele Burford & Nicola Udy – 04.11.06

White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings

No sightings

Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings

- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 07.01.07
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Fisherman Island – Wayne Young, Joyce Harding, Heather Smith & Ivell Whyte – 10.12.06
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – Kath Shurcliff – 03.12.06
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and metal band right tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – Kath Shurcliff – 25.11.06

(All above birds with blue flag left tibia were flagged in Hokkaido, Northern Japan)

Other wader leg flag sightings

- 1 Eastern Curlew – white flag over black flag right tibia and metal band left tarsus – Cairns Esplanade – Phil Gregory – 28.10.06
 - 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – etched white C9 on black flag right tibia and radio transmitter- Toorbul 1km North – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 07.01.07
 - 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – etched white C9 on black flag right tibia and radio transmitter- Toorbul – Deborah Metters – 19.11.06
 - 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – orange over green right tibia and white flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 16.11.06 (unknown origin).
 - 1 Great Knot – white flag over black flag right tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 07.01.07
 - 1 Great Knot – black flag right tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 11.11.06
- (Black flag C9 was seen at Kakadu in December 05 and January 06. This bird was flagged in Alaska)
- (Black over white and white over black flagged in Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China)

Count Programme by Linda Cross

On the back page of this newsletter under 'Count Activities 2007' we have the dates for the monthly count programme and the Port of Brisbane Corporation (PBC) counts. When I worked out the dates for the PBC and placed them in issue No 058 newsletter I neglected to include the time that we meet. As I have now included them in this issue can the regular attendees please take a note of these times.

Counters have you noticed that there are two count dates set down for March in the 'Monthly Count Programme'? This is an exercise especially for the northward migration, which has not been done for some time. My apologies for taking another day out of your weekends in March, but it would be really appreciated if you could do both the 4th March count and the 31st March.

It is with regret that we have to say goodbye to two more counters from the programme. Peter & Lynette Reilly who counted the north section of Stradbroke Island and Sovereign Island (until the site was developed). Peter & Lynette were already counters when I became the count co-ordinator, so they have

been with the programme for a long time. They used to take their boat out to do the count, but rough seas on many count days and family commitments meant that they could not do the count every time. We thank them both for their extensive work for the programme.

Thankfully, Terry Dillon has been doing some counts on the island and the Gold Coast City Council is also taking an interest in the waders on the island and is keen to work with QWSG. So, between the two we should be able to continue to monitor this site into the future.

We would also like to welcome Dorothy Pashniak and Nicola Udy to the count programme. Dorothy has been helping Kelvin & Amelia Nielsen count the sites in Tin Can Bay, which she continues to do, but she now has a site she counts on her own. The site is in among the mangrove area of Toolara and Dorothy has to paddle to the site using a kayak. We know she enjoys being out in her kayak, and also the challenge of learning more about the waders.

Nicola has taken over Acacia Street, Wellington Point site from Michele Burford and Peter Rothlisberg. I remember Nicola attending one of the QWSG wader course a number of years ago and on the field trip she got top marks for correctly identifying some of the wader species. Nicola lives behind the roost and can see the birds from her verandah. I know a lot of counters would love to have that sort of site to cover. We hope Dorothy and Nicola will enjoy their new found hobby.

I would just like to remind members (and none members) that there are a number of count sites just waiting for someone to count. We currently have a number of already listed and known sites from Cairns to Gold Coast, but are adding more as the QWSG continue to survey regions on a more thorough basis. We would love to hear from anyone who is interested in joining the count programme on a regular or add hoc basis.

Latham's Snipe

There are not usually many records for this species, but they have been recorded at a number of sites this summer.

Garnett's Lagoons – 4 on 25.10.06. 4 on 03.11.06. 7 on 09.12.06. 5 on 07.01.07 and 1 on 04.02.07.

Nielsen's Road, Cararra – 1 on 06.11.06.

Buckley's Hole Lagoon, Bribie Island – 5 on 09.12.06 and 6 on 31.12.06.

Trutes Wetland, Tweed Heads – 1 on 04.01.06

Banora Point Sewerage Plant, Tweed Heads – 2 on 05.01.06.

Sewerage Works, Tweed Heads – 1 on 13.01.06

Sewerage Works, Tin Can Bay – 4 on 07.01.07 and 4 on 04.02.07

Painted Snipe

Just one record of the rarer snipe species coming from Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay, with 4 being seen on 07.01.07. I believe the birds were seen on other days, but I only have the details from one count sheet.

Breeding records

Beach-stone Curlew – records from Pioneer River Mackay and Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island for November 2006 to February 2007.

Pied Oystercatcher – records from Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island, Seaforth Mackay, Reeder's Point Moreton Island, Tweed River Entrance Tweed Heads and Noosa River for September to November 2006.

Red-capped Plover – records from Manly Boat Harbour, Young Ave Kinka Beach, Fisherman Island, Noosa River, Rooney's Point Fraser Island and Kakadu Beach roost Bribie Island for November 2006 to January 2007.

Masked Lapwings – records from Bishops Marsh and Maaroom for September and December 2006.

During the last few of months there have been some large counts at a few sites and I have placed six counts into a table below. What has been surprising is the larger counts at some sites in December and January, (particularly) at the Port of Brisbane Corporation. The 2006 report and counts for the Port of Brisbane Corporation has been completed and ready for the newsletter, however, it is possible that this will not appear until the next issue of the Queensland Wader due to limitation of space. I have also recorded some of the larger counts in the 'Wader Watch' section.

QUEENSLAND WADER

SPECIES	ROSS 08.10.06	MAHA 27.11.06	GSMH 07.01.07	MAHA 07.01.07	TRNT 07.01.07	BSIS 06.01.07	PION 16.01.07
Black-tailed Godwit		89			2		
Bar-tailed Godwit	445	1450	1500	1995	2740	985	36
Whimbrel	7	94	17	64			18
Eastern Curlew	39	117	4	72		1	136
Common Greenshank		13	113	16	19	3	
Terek Sandpiper		16	450	93			22
Grey-tailed Tattler		662	1050	645	1	255	72
Ruddy Turnstone		9	12	32		14	48
Great Knot	1880	34	600	58	462	58	370
Red Knot	210		18		1		
Red-necked Stint	6	404	180	495		1914	340
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	990	266		93	102	1041	42
Curlew Sandpiper		131	24	82	2	1813	40
Bush Stone-curlew							2
Pied Oystercatcher	26	91	22	195	2	133	6
Sooty Oystercatcher							3
Black-winged Stilt		21		17	91	77	
Red-necked Avocet						32	
Pacific Golden Plover		55	8	29		1090	180
Grey Plover	6	1		1		45	
Red-capped Plover		8	11	6		66	40
Lesser Sand Plover		39	6	157		590	2800
Greater Sand Plover				15		441	110
Masked Lapwing				3	2		4
Total Waders	3609	3500	4015	4068	3424	8558	4269

ROSS – Ross River Mouth, Townsville

MAHA – Manly Boat Harbour

GSMH – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay

TRNT – Toorbul 1 km North

BSIS – Fisherman Island

PION – Pioneer River, Mackay

Les Thyer, who counts Pioneer River in Mackay with his wife Dawn, was amazed at the large number of Lesser Sand Plovers, and said the count on this day in January was the largest count he had ever done for the site.

Happy counting. Linda Cross.

WADER ID DAYS for 2007

Saturday 10th March 2007 at Toorbul

High tide at 12:48 (plus 30 minutes later for Toorbul) of 1.69m. Meeting time 11:00am.

Take the Bruce Highway north from Brisbane to the Donnybrook/Toorbul exit (a large billboard advertising Humble Pie is on the left just prior to the exit. Turn off here and head east over the highway overpass. Continue on this road to Toorbul. Turn right at the T-junction then first left and then right, which brings you onto the Esplanade. Follow this road to the end (approximately 2kms); we will be on the left.

This time of year is the northward migration and some of the birds should have breeding plumage, which can help identify those more difficult species. Bring water, food and a chair. It is a good idea to have a hat, sunscreen and insect repellent. Most importantly bring your binoculars or telescopes. Hopefully we can provide the answers to all your questions.

Please contact either Phil & Linda Cross (07) 5495 2758 or David Edwards (07) 3262 2017 if you have any questions.

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of
Queensland Wader Study Group

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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 May 18th 2007

Contributions should be addressed to:

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

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QWSG MERCHANDISE

Should you wish to purchase any of the QWSG Merchandise, items may be purchased at BQ Inc meetings held 1st Thursday of the month at the Royal Geographical Society Rooms.

OR

Contact Dawn Beck Phone 07 33788598 or email alphabec@powerup.com.au

Postage is not included in prices quoted.

BOOKS	\$19.80 Shorebird Conservation in the Asia-Pacific Region
	\$20.00 Status and Conservation of Shorebirds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.
	\$15.00 Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds
CD	\$20.00 Bird Calls of the Broome Region (includes 42 Wader Species)
METAL BADGES	\$5.00 Metal QWSG logo badges.
CLOTH BADGES	\$8.00 QWSG logo on rectangular bottle-green background

POLO SHIRTS

Supplies of QWSG's new 100% cotton polo shirts have been delayed as our local producer has been unable to obtain particular colours from her fabric manufacturer. Updated colour swatches have been sourced. The polos should be available for sale within the next couple of months.

Art Exhibition

The Queensland Wildlife Artists Society Inc. (QWASI) is holding an exhibition of outstanding wildlife art inspired by Australia's beautiful native flora and fauna. There will be paintings, bronze, ceramic and wood sculpture, books, cards and prints on show and for sale. The exhibition is called 'From Ocean to Outback' and will be held from 16 to 30 March 2007 at:

Royal Queensland Art Society
25 Broadbeach Boulevard
Broadbeach, Gold Coast.

Opening Hours:
11am to 3pm Monday to Friday
9am to 5pm Saturday & Sunday

The official opening is at 3pm on Saturday 17th March and entry will be by a gold coin donation. The proceeds for the day are very kindly being given to the QWSG, which will be much appreciated, and we thank them sincerely. Admission is free for the rest of the exhibition.

Anyone wishing to attend the official opening is welcome. If you do plan to attend the official opening please ensure you call Gail Higgins on 3396 7484 for catering purposes.

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, David Niland (07) 3379 2344; Secretary, John Holt (07) 3359 1439; 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 7:45pm start.



Count Activities 2007

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2006-7

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2007

Sun 4th Mar 2.31m at 09:54
 Sat 31st Mar 2.20m at 08:14
 Sat 28th Apr 2.05m at 06:50
 Sat 19th May 1.71m at 11:12

Additional Count for northward migration

NO COUNT IN JUNE

Sun 15th Jul 1.71m at 10:01
 Sat 15th Sep 2.03m at 11:31
 Sat 13th Oct 2.17m at 10:31
 Sat 10th Nov 2.26m at 09:35
 Sat 8th Dec 2.27m at 08:40

National Winter Count

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2006-7

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2007

Sat 3rd Mar 2.34m at 09:23 Meet 07:35
 Sun 29th Apr 2.04m at 07:30 Meet 06:00
 Sun 20th May 1.63m at 12:03 Meet 10:15
 Sun 17th Jun 1.68m at 11:00 Meet 09:10
 Sat 14th Jul 1.68m at 09:14 Meet 07:25

Sun 5th Aug 1.99m at 14:23 Meet 12:30
 Sun 16th Sep 2.00m at 12:06 Meet 10:15
 Sun 14th Oct 2.16m at 11:03 Meet 09:15
 Sun 11th Nov 2.27m at 10:09 Meet 08:20
 Sun 9th Dec 2.32m at 09:16 Meet 07:25

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

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.....)

SIGNATURE: DATE:.....

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

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For a direct credit, please use the following details. An email advice to Sheryl Keates tattlers@tpg.com.au would be appreciated.

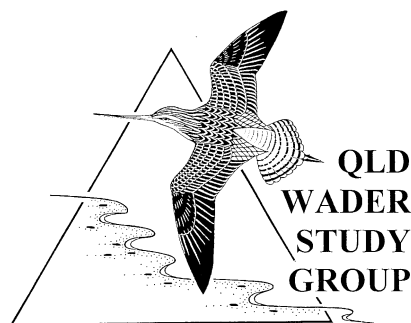
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QUEENSLAND WADER



Issue number 060

June, July, August 2007

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

Port of Brisbane Corporation Count Results - 2006

The QWSG has just completed its fourth year of thorough monthly counts for the Port of Brisbane Corporation (PBC) at Fisherman Islands, and again, counts were conducted on the day before, or after the scheduled monthly count day set down for the QWSG count programme.

The methodology used for the counts stayed the same, with numbers being listed under the appropriate habitat the birds used, (dry open area, wet margin, broken ground and bund wall). In 2006 the overall count was 73,033 waders and 17,809 waterbirds, which does not include the figures for the Visitors Centre Lake (89 waders and 4,808 waterbirds). These figures of course are not the number of birds using the site at any one time, but a culmination of the monthly totals. The largest count of waders was in January (12,323), the highest one-day count over the last four years. This figure was probably attributed to the new additional reclamation ponds that were formed in the extension. The overall count in 2006 is quite a significant increase on the highest total recorded in 2003.

2006	2005	2004	2003
73033	51416	56124	57302

Continual works and changes at the PBC reclamation area were noted during our monthly visits and two sites (**S1 and J Paddocks**) were deleted from the counts as they had been filled in.

S2 – the small portion that was left of this 18-hectare site was finally filled in by June, but has a breeding record for Black-winged Stilt in January. A total of 1057 Red-necked Stint was recorded on the site in February.

S3A – this 18-hectare site was reduced in size during the year and by the end of 2006 no longer existed. The site has breeding records for Black-winged Stilt in January and Chestnut Teal in January, February, and April. In June 261 Red-necked Avocets were counted on the site.

S3B – although the site is only 10 hectares it still continually supports good wader numbers and species. The site is particularly favoured by Pacific Golden Plover and high numbers were recorded for seven out of the 12 months. The best figures being 795 in January and 885 in March. A total of 2058 Red-necked Stint was also counted in November.

Area 5 – the 12 hectare protected roost that has been built for the shorebirds is still not attracting many migratory waders, but the potential to hold a large number of them is there when the time comes. In the meantime it is a favoured by Chestnut Teal. One lone Red-kneed Dotterel was recorded on the site in March.

R1 – a 20-hectare site that has had a lot of work done on it providing a large area of broken ground making it a nightmare to count, because a large variety and numbers use the site and the smaller waders roost down

QUEENSLAND WADER

in the rubble. Some good figures include 54 Grey Plover and 1410 Curlew Sandpiper in January, 2600 Red-necked Stint and 1132 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in February, 96 Double-banded Plover in May and 1 Broad-billed Sandpiper in December.

R2 – 1 smaller 17-hectare site, which is less attractive to the waders, although 755 Lesser Sand Plover and 105 Ruddy Turnstone were recorded in January, and 2 Broad-billed Sandpiper in December.

C1 – for the first five months of 2006 this was a large 33-hectare site before being split into two sites, which added C2 to the count sheets in June. Now it is 17-hectares in size. An interesting sighting of 1 Bush-stone Curlew was recorded in January, 4 Broad-billed Sandpiper in February, 108 Ruddy Turnstone and 2 Broad-billed Sandpiper in April and 261 Red-necked Avocet in October.

C2 – split from the main C1 site in June, this is a 16-hectare site, which to date has not attracted many waders. The best figures are 567 Grey-tailed Tattlers in August and 941 Red-necked Stint in December.

FPE BS – known as Bayside, this is 26-hectares in size, but only a small number of waders use it. However, something attracted Little Black Cormorant to the site in July when 750 were recorded, and 1858 in August. One Red-kneed Dotterel was seen in June.

FPE Outer – the largest area, (122-hectares) to count on the outer section of the expansion, which is done by driving around it. Grey-tailed Tattler and Ruddy Turnstone particularly like roosting around the bund walls. Tattler numbers recorded were 656 in February, 670 in September, 600 in October, 700 in November and 959 in December. Two of the highest totals for Turnstone were 119 in February and 133 in December.

Claypan – a very large area to count that was difficult to get accurate figures for because of size, access and trees obscuring views. During the year it was possible to get on the other side of the trees, which meant we could get better views, but will always be impossible to count the whole site. A variety of species use the site, but in smaller numbers, with the exception of Eastern Curlew and Whimbrel. The highest Eastern Curlew count was 260 in December, and the highest Whimbrel count was 221 in March.

Visitors Centre – the only wader species recorded at the site in 2006 was Masked Lapwing and Black-winged Stilt, both in small numbers. The site is still a very good waterbird area and Chestnut Teal, Dusky Moorhen, Black Swan and Australasian Grebe have bred there this year. A Nankeen Night Heron was seen in January and a Buff-banded Rail in October.

Flagged birds were seen as follows:

February	Green flags on Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Grey-tailed Tattler (1) and Ruddy Turnstone (1). Orange flag on Red-necked Stint (1). Blue and white flag on Ruddy Turnstone (1).
March	Green flags on Bar-tailed Godwit (3) and Great Knot (1).
May	Two blue flags and a metal band on Red-necked Stint (1).
August	Orange flag on Caspian Tern (1).
September	Orange flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Red-necked Stint (1) and Caspian Tern (1). Blue flag on Red-necked Stint (1).
October	Green flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Orange flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Yellow flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (1) White flag, yellow/blue and yellow/red bands on Bar-tailed Godwit (1).
November	Green flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (2).
December	Green flag on Bar-tailed Godwit (4) and Lesser Sand Plover (1). Blue flag on Grey-tailed Tattler (1).

Breeding records:

Red-capped Plover species were recorded at R2 in January (nesting), C1 in January (1 chick) and C1 in September (nest with one egg).

Black-winged Stilt species were recorded at S2 in January (2 chicks) and S3A in January (2 chicks plus a nest with 3 eggs).

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

January	15 Chestnut Teal chicks and 392 Silver Gull S3A. 1217 Little Tern R2.
February	2 Chestnut Teal young S3A.
March	105 Little Pied Cormorant Area 5.
April	4 Chestnut Teal young S3A. 1 Brown Falcon and 660 Little Tern C1.
May	132 Royal Spoonbill and 2 Great Cormorant Visitors Centre Lake.

June	207 Chestnut Teal and 1 Swamp Harrier Area 5.
July	89 Australian Pelican and 132 Royal Spoonbill Visitors Centre Lake.
August	4 Lesser Crested Tern R2. 1 Lesser Crested Tern C2.
October	1 Great Cormorant Visitors Centre Lake.
November	290 Chestnut Teal Area 5. 3 Whiskered Tern Visitors Centre Lake.
December	1032 Little Tern R2. 2 Whiskered Tern Outer FPE. 27 Whiskered Tern FPE BS.

Wader species (in taxonomic order) and numbers using the PBC sites during 2006 are included with this article. Many other waterbirds were also recorded using the sites, however, lack of space in the newsletter does not allow the printing of them.

Our thanks to the PBC for their ongoing support to the QWSG and supplying the vehicles and equipment during the counts. Very special thanks to Wayne Young for the continual sacrifice of his time on the weekends of the counts.

The excellent results obtained for the PBC and our database would not be possible without the help of committed regular counters and other members and friends whose names appear below. We thank you all sincerely, and I apologise if I have omitted anyone from the list.

Dawn Beck, Michele Burford, Vicki Campbell, Lynn Cole, Phil Cole, Jon Coleman, Maureen Cooper, Ken Cowell, Linda Cross, Phil Cross, Andy Eacott, David Edwards, Andrew Geering, Joyce Harding, Sandra Harding, Martin Havlicek, Ron Hoff (USA), Dave Houghton, Barbara Main, Peter Main, Gay Maxwell, Renee McGlashan (PBC) David Milton, Dollyanne Myers (USA), Pete Nichols, Amber Perry, Anne Rasmussen, Bruce Rasmussen, Ralf Reiger, Virginia Ridgley, Danny Rogers (AWSG), Peter Rothlisberg, Martin Ryan, Rebecca Ryan, Kath Shurcliff, Brenda Smith, Graham Smith, Heather Smith, Pat Stockwell, Nicola Udy, Floss Wainwright, Ivell Whyte, Jim Whyte, Ted Wnorowski, Wayne Young (PBC).

We will be continuing our counts at the PBC in 2007 and will require a good support group to help us achieve this. Please feel free to contact us if you can help with the counts, as any assistance is a bonus. You will be surprised at what is behind the wire fence.

The dates and meeting times for the PBC counts are listed at the back of this newsletter. Please contact myself: Linda Cross email: xenus@big.net.au Home: 5495 2758

Or

Peter Rothlisberg email: peter.rothlisberg@csiro.au Home: 3822 3759 Work: 38726 7225

By Linda Cross

EMAIL- Subject: One Year after Sea-wall Closure: Saemangeum, South Korea

Dear All,
Saemangeum Shorebird Monitoring Program 2007, Second Count Cycle Update

This is a draft summary of count data and habitat assessment from the second spring-tide cycle of this year's Saemangeum Shorebird Monitoring Program, a joint initiative of the domestic organization Birds Korea and the international Australasian Wader Studies Group. These data and information will be refined further, for publication in the SSMP 2007 Report and in other papers, and can be cited freely by others (with proper acknowledgement and caveats).

Between April 9th and April 19th 2007, a total of fifteen people counted or assisted counting shorebirds within the 40,100 ha Saemangeum reclamation area (until April 21st 2006, comprising the free-flowing estuaries of the Mangyeung and Dongin Estuaries), Gomso Bay and the Geum Estuary, three adjacent intertidal wetlands on the west coast of South Korea. In addition, two teams of observers also traveled north to Asan Bay (Gyeonggi Bay) on April 16th to locate and photograph (successfully) two Bar-tailed Godwits (E1 and E8) satellite tracked to Korea from New Zealand.

Data are here summarized from counts at Gomso Bay on April 19th; at the Geum Estuary on April 15th; and within Saemangeum, between April 15th and 18th (including boat-based counts on the 18th).

QUEENSLAND WADER

At Gomso Bay, two full counts were made, with the high tide count on April 19th producing 2,941 shorebirds, comprised largely of Great Knot (1664), Dunlin (720) and Far Eastern Curlew (315). This total compares with only a single shorebird found at the same site on April 15th 2006!

At the Geum Estuary, repeated counts at mainland sites were supplemented by simultaneous counts of both mainland and outer tidal-flat sites on April 15th. A total of 50,560 shorebirds were counted at this time, with most numerous being Great Knot (28,554), Dunlin (13,050), Bar-tailed Godwit (4029) and Far Eastern Curlew (1405), while 9 Nordmanns Greenshank (Endangered) were also recorded. This total compares with only 45,731 shorebirds counted in the same area on April 17th, 2006, with much of the difference made by the very greatly increased total of Great Knot (only 10,429 in 2006), and lower numbers of both Dunlin and Bar-tailed Godwit. A second day of research at Yubu Island during a very high tide of 6.7 m on April 18th produced a much larger estimate of 50,000 Great Knot and 9500 Bar-tailed Godwit, as well as 16 Nordmanns Greenshank and 50 Saunderss Gulls (Vulnerable). These latter counts are not included in the totals here, as they were not part of a simultaneous counting effort.

Within the Saemangeum area, land-based counts by four teams were supplemented by a boat-based count on April 18th. In total, 69,441 shorebirds were counted, with 29,801 at the Mangyeung and 39,640 at the Dongjin (this compares with a rather similar total of 71,709 shorebirds counted within the Saemangeum area between April 15th and 17th 2006). Most numerous were Great Knot (6188 at the Mangyeung and 25,727 at the Dongjin) and Dunlin (19,212 at the Mangyeung and 10,678 at the Dongjin). Based on leg-flag observations (including several birds flagged in northwest Australia and at Chongmin Dao in the Yangtze Estuary), it appears that some of this similarity in numbers year to year might be in part the result of Great Knot building in number here this spring earlier than in 2006 – possibly due to more favorable weather conditions during migration allowing birds to reach the Korean west coast earlier. The third count cycle, in early May, should be useful in confirming or refuting this.

While Saemangeum remains of considerable international importance to shorebirds, conditions within most of the reclamation area continue to deteriorate, with open expanses of desert-like dried-out sandflats and severe water quality conditions prevalent in many wet areas leading to red algal bloom puddles in muddy areas, dense gravy-brown waters in some bays, and thick scum and dried foam in creeks and channels. The recent tidal range is estimated at only 17cm, and only one significant area of tidal-flat (lying far out in the Dongjin) appeared relatively healthy, supporting 18,820 Great Knot and 2745 Dunlin on April 18th. Many other areas used by shorebirds in 2006 and in March and early April 2007 are becoming narrower and drier, and some such areas supported significantly fewer shorebirds between the first and second count cycles this year.

While it remains too early to predict how the shorebirds now staging and arriving within the area will fare this spring, it does appear that we are now recording significant displacement of birds from the Saemangeum reclamation area to neighbouring (and possibly other) sites. In the case of Gomso Bay, the near complete absence of Great Knot using the site in 2006 (or in earlier years) suggests that the area will likely be unable to support long-term significant concentrations of the same species in 2007 and beyond. At the Geum, frequent skirmishes between feeding Great Knot have already been observed (including pecking at legs and attempted stealing of food items), as well as foraging in among tide-line garbage (possibly on stranded shellfish). Both suggest that many Great Knot might find it very difficult to acquire the necessary weight and body condition to migrate and breed successfully – especially as it is believed that the species migrates more or less direct to breeding areas from this region in the second half of May.

Considering the region's extreme importance to waterbirds, and the obligations held by South Korea under the Ramsar Convention and under the Bilateral Migratory Bird Agreement signed by Korea and Australia, it is absolutely apparent that the sea-gates must be opened further to restore greater tidal exchange, to reduce water quality problems and to maintain the few remaining areas of healthy tidal-flats (even more so as, one year after seawall completion, there still remains no end-use for any land made by this disastrous project.) We aim to continue our awareness-raising efforts through mailings to media (domestic and international) and interested parties; through interview (e.g. with a documentary team from the domestic MBC TV on 19th); and through other activities, including a symposium at the local Wonkwang University (Iksan) on May 4th, and an informal display at the same university between May 1st and 8th.

Note: Participants of the SSMP on dates between April 10th to April 19th included: Geoff Styles, Tony Crocker, Andrew Patrick, Keith Metzner, Park Jong-Gil, Nial Moores, Peter de Haas, Jeong Sun-Gu, Han Sung-Ho, Han Hyun-Jin, Kim Tea-Kyun, Peter Nebel, Danny Rogers, Sarah Dawkins and Sajahan Sorder.

Nial Moores, Birds Korea, April 20th, 2007. [Http://www.birdskorea.org](http://www.birdskorea.org) [Http://www.birdskorea.or.kr](http://www.birdskorea.or.kr)

QWSG Ramps Up the Leg Flagging of Waders in Moreton Bay

As most of our migratory waders head north for their breeding season, the potential for new and exciting sightings of our increasing number of individually-flagged birds in other parts of the flyway will increase. QWSG has flagged 173 birds at three sites in Moreton Bay since the new flagging program began in September 2006. The majority of the birds have been caught at the Manly Boat Harbour roost (see Table 1). Fifteen species of wader have been caught and the most commonly caught species were Grey-tailed Tattler and Lesser sand Plover. Queensland has the largest population of these two species during their non-breeding season. Much less is known about their migrations as they are infrequently caught in Victoria and north-western Australia where the large flagging projects have now been run for up to 32 years. We hope that putting individually-coded flags on these species will give us additional insight into their migration patterns and important stopover sites as they fly to and from their breeding grounds.

Table 1: The number of birds of each age for each wader species caught at the three sites where QWSG has mist netted between September 2006 and April 2007.

Species name	Capture site	Age	N
Bar-tailed Godwit	Manly Boat Harbour	1	6
Bar-tailed Godwit		2+	10
Curlew Sandpiper		2+	4
Eastern Curlew		2+	1
Greater Sand Plover		2+	5
Greater Sand Plover		1	2
Grey-tailed Tattler		2+	37
Grey-tailed Tattler		1	23
Lesser Sand Plover		2+	26
Lesser Sand Plover		1	3
Masked Lapwing		1+	2
Pacific Golden Plover		1	1
Red Knot		1+	3
Red-capped Plover		1	1
Red-capped Plover		2+	2
Red-necked Stint		1	2
Red-necked Stint		2+	14
Ruddy Turnstone		1+	7
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper		2+	4
Terek Sandpiper		2+	3
Terek Sandpiper		1	1
Whimbrel		2+	5
Whimbrel		1	4
Curlew Sandpiper	Port of Brisbane	2+	1
Red-capped Plover		2+	1
Red-necked Stint		2+	3
Silver Gull		1+	1
Curlew Sandpiper	Geoff Skinner Reserve	2+	1
Red-necked Stint		2+	1
TOTAL			173

The coded flags have already provided a large number of re-sightings, mostly at Manly, but a few elsewhere in Moreton Bay (see Table 2 below). These re-sightings show that individual birds of some species are faithful to the same roost as long as feeding conditions remain good nearby. The most exciting recapture was of a 12+ year old Lesser Sand Plover that had been originally flagged at the Port of Brisbane by Peter Driscoll in October 1997. This bird was recaptured at Manly in January 2007 with its plain green leg flag still in good condition.

The flagging has focussed more attention on looking for flags during the regular monthly counts. At the count at Manly on 31 March, 2007, an amazing 19 flags were seen. This was after many birds had already begun their migrations, so the large number of flags was even more surprising. One of the consequences of this increased flag sighting rate is that Phil Cross now has a lot more work to do entering the flag sightings into the database.

Table 2: The number of each age of each species seen (or recaptured) at different locations to 22 April 2007. These recaptures/re-sightings include multiple sightings of the same birds.

Species name	Age	Recapture site	N
Bar-tailed Godwit	1	Manly Boat Harbour	1
Bar-tailed Godwit	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	26
Curlew Sandpiper	1+	Manly Boat Harbour	2
Eastern Curlew	10+	Manly Boat Harbour	14
Eastern Curlew	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	1
Great Knot	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	1
Grey-tailed Tattler	1	Manly Boat Harbour	3
Grey-tailed Tattler	2+	Lytton roost	1
Grey-tailed Tattler	2+	Toorbul roost	1
Grey-tailed Tattler	2+	Cleveland Point	1
Grey-tailed Tattler	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	26
Grey-tailed Tattler	2+	Manly Ck	1
Lesser Sand Plover	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	5
Lesser Sand Plover	12+	Manly Boat Harbour	1
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	1
Terek Sandpiper	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	3
Whimbrel	2+	Manly Boat Harbour	7
TOTAL			94

The flagging team led by Jon Coleman has also expanded as the summer progressed. What started out as an intrepid group of three, now has five other regular members. This has allowed the team to increase the catching effort and try new sites. The QWSG committee is considering a proposal from Jon to make the wader flagging program a regular part of the QWSG activities. Over time, the proposal being considered will see regular notices of the flagging activities being put in the "Queensland Wader" and interested members will be able to get involved. As the skill levels in the group increase, this will allow the flagging program to expand and take in more sites. This increase emphasis on flagging will be a new direction for the QWSG and a return to one of the original core activities when the QWSG was formed. We hope members will support this new activity as we try to increase our understanding of the local and regional movement patterns of the birds. Improved understanding of high and low tide habitat use by individual birds will help us provide better advice to local and state governments and thus lead to better conservation of the birds and their habitats.

By David Milton

An effective national wader Population Monitoring Program (PMP) is nearing reality

David Milton attended a 2 day meeting in Melbourne in early April 2007 with participants from Birds Australia (BA), Australasian Wader Study Group (AWSG) and the federal Department of Environment and Water Resources (DEWR). The aim of the meeting was to discuss how the national wader PMP run by AWSG could be made more effective. The meeting was held at Birds Australia and was chaired by their Research manager, Dr Mike Weston. The agenda covered a broad range of issues from site definition, site selection and mapping, resident species, count methods and frequency, analytical methods and training. It focussed on the broad range of issues that are faced when trying to coordinate the difficult and challenging task of providing a suitable annual index of the numbers of each migratory wader species that spend their non-breeding season in Australia. Australia has 36 species of migratory wader that regularly spend their non-breeding season here. They occur in an enormous range of habitats across our large country. I think the meeting recognised it will be almost impossible to develop one approach that can count a substantial proportion of each of these species' population.

The current AWSG PMP has 23 sites across all states that have been counted fairly regularly since the program began in 1981. As part of this program, a single summer and winter count is made at each site on a designated day. There are 6 sites counted in Queensland (Tweed Heads, Moreton Bay, Mackay, Bowen, Townsville and Cairns) and of these, only Moreton Bay has been counted each year since the program began. In recent years, there have been no counts from Townsville or Cairns as the counters have either moved or become involved in other activities. Considerable time in the meeting was spent discussing the advantages and disadvantages of this twice-yearly count approach.

How could these counts be analysed to provide an index of population size that we can be confident is representative? One of the methods available to analyse these single counts was discussed at the meeting. If adopted, the approach will require some changes to the way most people currently count their waders. Any additional training of observers will be done as part of the new PMP. As the revised PMP takes shape, further information will become available. Things are happening and BA and AWSG hope to be able to make some public announcements within the next few months about the new PMP and how it will operate.

Unlike the AWSG PMP, the QWSG count program gets observers to count birds at individual roosts at monthly intervals throughout the year. The aim of making such frequent counts is to use the variation between these counts and measurements of the environmental conditions at the time to get an average population estimate for each roost across the non-breeding season (summer). These estimates can be standardised for differences in weather, observer and tide height and in theory provide a more realistic index of bird numbers. This is the most practical approach in Queensland where the AWSG "sites" (closed systems of multiple roosts) are often large (eg. Moreton Bay). To make complete counts of these "sites" usually requires boats and a large team of volunteers. QWSG plans to try and undertake the first complete count of waders in Moreton Bay during summer 2007/08. Stay tuned to further announcements in "Queensland Wader". We could be moving into exciting new times with a new higher profile national wader PMP in which QWSG members will play an important part.

By David Milton

E-Mail: Subject: Effects of Loss of Wader Habitat

From: Roz Jessop [moonbird@waterfront.net.au]

I've just come across a publication which may be of interest to everyone as it concerns the effects - predicted and actual - of the loss of a wader habitat (in this case by reclamation). I attach a copy of a summary of the results which appeared in the March 2007 edition of "British Birds" and a copy of the paper itself (which Danny Rogers was able to obtain) from a 2006 volume of "Ecological Applications".

For a long time we have tended to assume that when waders are displaced from a habitat, by some major change which makes it unsuitable, they redistribute themselves in other adjacent habitats. We also assumed that overall numbers would gradually be reduced due to consequent higher mortality and/or lower breeding success, so that in the end the net effect was a loss to the world population equivalent to the number of birds displaced from the lost habitat. Also, in some actual or proposed habitat changes, proposals have been made for creating or managing other areas in a way which would partially, or completely, offset the expected negative effects.

This new publication details the development of an earlier model which was used to try and predict the effects of habitat change on populations of Oystercatchers in the UK. John Goss-Custard and his team have now tested the new model using data on Redshank displaced from Cardiff Bay in South Wales when a controversial barrage was completed in 1999. This resulted in a loss of inter-tidal feeding habitat that had been regularly used by 200 Redshank. Almost all the birds in this population had been previously marked with individual colour band combinations.

After reclamation all the birds moved to an adjacent area of mudflats, where the population rose from 300 to 500. The model predicted that the mortality rate of the combined population would increase by 3.65%. Monitoring over subsequent years showed that it actually increased by 3.17%, very similar to the predicted level. Further simulations helped to demonstrate that mortality was density dependent and that it had risen both as a result of increased interference between feeding birds and because of the reduced amount of available prey in the mudflats.

Another interesting finding was that if a proposed offset area, equivalent to only 10% of the area of lost mud flats in Cardiff Bay, had been created and managed appropriately (with tidal dwell times) it could have provided enough food for all the birds displaced from Cardiff Bay and ultimately lost to the world population.

This predictive model and proof that it is realistic is going to be of considerable value in helping to mount future cases against destruction of important wader habitats. I'm sure that those involved, for example, in the Saemangeum lost battle and now fighting the new Geum Estuary proposed reclamation in South Korea will be utilizing this new information to the full. And it allows us to more confidently say that the net long-term effect of the loss of feeding habitat for waders is a loss to the world population equivalent to those birds which were occupying that habitat. Whilst in the example quoted here it was thought to be mainly due to increased mortality it is more likely that at key stopover locations (such as the Yellow Sea) much of the loss may be caused via reduced breeding success.

Aberrant plumages in some migratory waders in Australia

An abstract from the Wader Study Group Bulletin 107 August 2005

There are few published records of aberrant plumages in waders (shorebirds) in Australia. In an extensive literature survey to December 1986, Lepschi (1990) found that melanism was considerably less frequently reported in Australian birds than albinism. He lists 13 records of melanism in 10 species from 10 families, but none is a wader, and 298 records of albinism in 95 species from 45 families, 13 of which relate to waders of seven species. These results are similar to those reported by Sage (1963a) who analysed 3,134 reports of aberrant plumages in birds in Britain.

Of the 13 records of aberrant plumage in waders reported by Lepschi, ten relate to species that are resident in Australia: one record each for Bush Thick-knee *Burhinus magnirostris*, Sooty Oystercatcher *Haematopus fuliginosus* and Red-capped Plover *Charadrius ruficapillus* and seven records for Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*. The remaining three records relate to migratory waders of three species and only these will be discussed here. Each report is very brief: (i) a white "Jack" Snipe (presumably Latham's) *Gallinago hardwickii*, shot in the Murray River area, New South Wales (NSW) (Chisholm 1956); (ii) a white Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*, with red legs and reddishbrown bill, seen on the Swan River estuary, Western Australia (WA) (Lindgren 1956); and (iii) a Double-banded Plover *Charadrius bicinctus*, with dull white plumage except for the bands above the lores and throat which were lighter than normal and the black and chestnut breast bands which were normal, seen at the Illawarra Entrance, NSW (McGill 1976). This species breeds in New Zealand and migrates to SE Australia, including Tasmania, for the non-breeding season.

Following the terminology of Sage (1962, 1963a,b), Lepschi (1990) used "albino" and "albinism" in a wide sense to refer to "any individual that is completely or partially white, irrespective of the colour of the soft parts" and including "the similar albinistic plumage variants of leucism and schizochroism" described by Harrison (1963a). We have decided to adopt the rather strict definitions originally set out by Rensch (1925), quoted by Harrison (1963b) stated by Sage (1962), and reiterated by Buckley (1982), and Davis & Recher (1996). These are as follows:

Albino/albinism: An individual in which there is no coloured pigment in any plumage or soft parts, the feet, legs and bill generally appear yellowish-white or pinkish and the eye/irides always appear pink.

Leucino/leucism: A bird whose whole plumage or part thereof is white due to loss of pigment in feathers, but with soft parts of normal colour, including the irides which are usually black (Harrison 1963b, Buckley 1982). This condition may be complete or partial, symmetrical or asymmetrical and the criteria have been widened to include those birds with soft parts that are abnormally coloured (Buckley 1982).

Schizochroic/schizochroism: Another generally recognised colour variation that occurs when the frequently occurring browns and blacks of the feathers are altered by the absence of one of the two melanins responsible for the original colour (Buckley 1982, Harrison 1985).

Dilution: A rare condition in which there is an even reduction in the quantity of all pigments rendering colours paler than normal (Buckley 1982, Harrison 1963b, 1985).

Melanic/melanism is due to the excessive deposition of the black pigment melanin (Sage 1962, Buckley 1982).

More than one of these aberrant plumages can occur in the same individual, except for melanism which is usually found throughout all feathers (Harrison 1963a). In the light of these strict definitions, which are now generally accepted, it is unfortunate that the colour of the irides was not documented in any of the reports of migratory waders cited by Lepschi. It is therefore possible that neither the snipe nor the Curlew Sandpiper he reported was albino, though each was certainly leucino. The Double-banded Plover showed more than one type of aberrant plumage, the dull white back and wings being leucistic, while the bands around the head being paler than normal could be classified as diluted, and the breast bands were normal. Since Lepschi's review, there have been only two published reports of waders seen in Australia with aberrant plumage.

Wader Information Day, Hervey Bay

On Saturday, 24th March 2007 34 people gathered at the Hervey Bay Sports and Leisure Centre to hear about the waders that visit the Hervey Bay and Mary River region during their annual migrations. This information day was conducted to promote knowledge of waders and to inform people about a current project on waders. The Queensland Wader Study Group is undertaking an extensive survey of the Burnett Mary coast to document important roost sites as an aid for their protection. The project is funded by the Burnett Mary Regional Group for Natural Resource Management and is supported by the Hervey Bay Birdwatchers.

The talks were given by Linda Cross, David Edwards and David Milton. The meeting was followed by barbecue lunch and bird identification information at Gables Point, Point Vernon.

A general talk about waders provided a sound overview for people in the audience who were new to waders. Detailed information was also presented on the identification of waders, the dangers they face and conservation needs to help them on their migration, particularly when they are in Australia during the non-breeding period.

It was good to see the level of interest in the residents of the area. The need to protect roost sites is increasingly important as coastal developments threaten more roost sites. Thank you to everyone who assisted on the day. The efforts of locals who are pushing Councils to conserve the coastal environment for protection of migratory waders are fantastic.

Joyce Harding

Bar-tailed Godwits Arrive back in Alaska

At least four of the Bar-tailed Godwits being tracked by satellite have reached their breeding grounds in Alaska after stopping in the Yellow Sea to put on extra fat for the final journey and establishment. As you can see from the Google Earth image (below) employing satellite tracking data, these birds have completed some mammoth flights from New Zealand to the northern end of the Yellow Sea non-stop. The incredible thing is that these Olympians of the air flew over extensive areas of intertidal mudflats in the southern part of the Yellow Sea but chose to continue on to their chosen locations in various parts of China and Korea.

If you have Google Earth on your computer, visit <http://www.werc.usgs.gov/sattrack/shorebirds/overall.html>. The site has instructions for downloading a link to Google Earth which displays the journey locations as overlays.

A summary of the birds' movements up until 8 May 2007, as reported by Phil Battley:

- During the third week of March, 10 of 14 satellite-tagged Bar-tailed Godwits departed from New Zealand on their northbound migration.
- During the first week in April, 3 more birds departed from New Zealand.
- Six of the birds arrived at coastal staging sites in South Korea, China, and Japan after completing a very long (>10,000 km) transoceanic flight in just over 7 days.
- One bird (32919) migrated north in a few shorter flights. This bird stopped at Yap, Micronesia for a month, then travelled to Okinawa, Japan for a week, and now is on the coast west of Yalu Jiang, China. Members of the Okinawa Wild Bird Society were able to locate and photograph the bird during its stay on Okinawa.
- Only 1 bird (40158) is still in New Zealand and it is at Golden Bay on the South Island. This bird continues to use the same roosting sites on Farewell Spit and feeding areas on the central mudflats of Golden Bay.
- Starting on 1 May, four birds departed from coastal staging sites in Asia (40157 from Asan Bay, South Korea and 40015, 40156 and 40155 from Yalu Jiang, China) and embarked on >5,000 km migration flight to breeding grounds in Alaska.
- 40156 first made landfall in Alaska at Cinder River lagoon on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula. The next day this bird flew to the north shore of Kvichak Bay and is now just inland of the bay.
- 40015 landed in the interior Yukon Delta near a lake north of Baird Inlet.
- 40157 is just south of Baird Inlet on the Yukon Delta.
- 40155 is currently stopping over at Mud Bay on the south side of Port Moller on the Alaska Peninsula.
- 40160 remains at Asan Bay where it was observed and photographed (along with 40157) on 16 April during a survey by the Saemangeum Shorebird Monitoring Programme. Check out their website <http://www.birdskorea.org>
- 40159 remains at Suncheon Bay, South Korea where it went after first stopping over at Tshushima Island, Japan.
- The transmitter on 36119 stopped working at Baong Island, Papua New Guinea on 10 April, but fortunately this bird was recently seen and photographed by in Queensland, Australia. It is astonishing that 4 of these 14 birds have been observed by people at locations 100s to 1000s of km from their banding sites! We are very grateful to everyone who has sent us information about these birds.
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- The transmitter on 36118 stopped working when the bird was in the southern Philippines, and we do not currently know the fate of this individual.
 - Another bird (32920) stopped for a few days on the southern coast of Papua New Guinea before turning back to Queensland, Australia.
 - An additional three birds (39590, 36117, 40161) were on their way to the Yellow Sea area when their transmitters stopped functioning. We will have to wait for visual observations of these birds to determine their fate.
- Data courtesy of Lee Tibbitts

WADER WATCH Linda and Phil Cross, Joyce Harding

We would like to remind all members and counters to continue to look for leg flags during counts, or when just doing general observation at wader sites. There are a number of flagging projects currently underway, which requires making observations and recording very important. **Please remember to look carefully if it is a flag or band as this makes it easier to trace where the bird has been flagged.**

The flagging protocol has become quite large and a number of projects underway are using colours that are designated to different areas. One of these is a Victorian and New South Wales flagging project of oystercatchers using a yellow flag (also used by North West Western Australia) with a 2 digit inscription. Victoria is placing the flag on the right tibia and New South Wales is putting it on the left tibia. Both have the 2 digit inscription.

There is also a New Zealand/Alaska project that has fitted transmitters and a large black flag with a 2 digit inscription to Bar-tailed Godwits. Some of the transmitters have been implanted (Alaska), and others had a harness placed on them, which is meant to fall off after a short period of time. It is important to advise if the transmitter is also seen during the sighting.

The QWSG is also now using etched flags, so please try to look if there is a 2 digit inscription on all flags when making the observation.

We have also reminded everyone to please advise Phil or myself of any flag sighting seen in Queensland. Phil processes the details and informs the relevant states/countries. We have in the past put this information in the newsletter before, but somehow it appears to get missed or forgotten. We would really appreciate your co-operation with this request

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

In each Qld Wader issue there is quite a number of green leg flag sightings recorded within Moreton Bay, which is where the bird was banded originally. As we are now seeing more leg flag combinations from other states and countries, and have limited space available for sightings, we will not be listing each individual sighting of green flag records in Queensland unless there is a significant movement of the bird. Instead, we will list the number of flags for each species and the period in which they were seen.

Sighted in Moreton Bay & Environs between 29.01.07 and 28.04.07

5 Eastern Curlew, 3 Whimbrel, 18 Bar-tailed Godwit, 1 Pacific Golden Plover, 7 Great Knot, 1 Ruddy Turnstone, 22 Grey-tailed Tattler, 1 Greater Sand Plover, 3 Lesser Sand Plover & 1 Red-necked Stint.

Not included in the above list are the first sightings of green flagged waders with etched letters away from the Manly Boat Harbour (where they were flagged).

We have our first etched flag overseas sighting reported (see next section).

- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – green flag etched **AP** – Lytton roost – Deborah Metters – 18.02.07
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – green flag etched **AE** – Toorbul – Linda Cross, David Milton et al – 10.03.07
- 1 Grey-tailed Tattler – green flag etched **AE** – Toorbul – Linda Cross – 04.04.07
- 1 Terek Sandpiper – green flag etched **AB** – Queens Esplanade, Thornside – Harry Briggs – 22.03.07
- 2 Bar-tailed Godwit – green flag etched **AB & AK** – Queens Esplanade, Thornside – Harry Briggs – 22.03.07

Interstate & overseas Green leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit (**AL**) – Namdangri, Hongsung, Republic of Korea (South Korea) – Ui-soon Park & Hae-soon Lee – 16.04.074
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Yalu Jiang site 2, China – Chris Hassell – 17.04.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Yalu Jiang site 15, China – Chris Hassell – 15.04.07
- 2 Bar-tailed Godwit – Yalu Jiang site 2, China – Chris Hassell, Zhang Guangming & Wang Tao – 09.04.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Bells Island, Waimea Inlet, near Nelson, SI, New Zealand – David Melville, Willie Cook, Don Cooker, Jan van de Kam & Jan Lewis – 24.03.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Miranda, Firth of Thames, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 25.02.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 24.02.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Mangere Sewage Ponds, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 14.02.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Pakawau, Golden Bay, SI, New Zealand – Rob Schuckard, Bob Gill & Nils Warnock – 31.01.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Farewell Spit, Gobi, near Nelson, SI, New Zealand – Rob Schuckard, Willie Cook, Bob Gill & Nils Warnock – 31.01.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Clifton Beach, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 18.01.07
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Farewell Spit, Gobi near Nelson, SI, New Zealand – David & Julia Melville – 22.12.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Motueka Sandspit, near Nelson, SI, New Zealand – David Melville – 09.12.06
- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken et al – 03.12.06
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 17.02.07
- 2 Red Knot – Clarks Bay, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 04.02.07
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 04.02.07
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 27.01.07
- 1 Red Knot – Miranda, Firth of Thames, NI, New Zealand – E Stanyard – 19.01.07
- 1 Red Knot – Clifton Beach, Whitford, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken & K Bond – 17.01.07
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Adrian Riegen & D Taylor – 17.01.07
- 2 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 05.01.07
- 1 Red Knot – Clarks Bay, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 05.01.07
- 1 Red Knot – Mangere Sewage Ponds, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – E Stanyard – 03.01.07
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 23.12.06
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Ian Southley – 04.12.06
- 1 Red Knot – Karaka, Manukau Harbour, Auckland, NI, New Zealand – Tony Habraken – 11.11.06
- 1 Lesser Sand Plover – Beidaihe, Qinhuangdao City, Hebei Province, People's Republic of China – Guus van Duin – 29.04.07

Orange leg flag sightings

- 1 Bar-tailed Godwit – Boonooroo – Chris Barnes – 02.03.07
- 1 Red Knot – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross – 22.03.07
- 1 Curlew Sandpiper – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 25.02.07
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 17.03.07
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 31.03.07
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Toorbul – Phil Cross et al – 10.03.07
- 1 Red-necked Stint – Toorbul – Esther Townsend – 04.03.07

Yellow leg flag sightings

The following sightings of yellow flagged oystercatchers are not birds flagged in North West Western Australia, as per the flagging protocol. They are another project being run from Victoria and New South Wales. Birds flagged in Victoria will have a yellow flag on the right tibia and inscribed with two digits. New South Wales birds will have the yellow flag on the left tibia and inscribed with two digits.

- 1 Pied Oystercatcher – yellow flag left tibia etched **C3** – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 14.05.07 (This bird flagged in NSW)
- 1 Pied Oystercatcher – yellow flag right tibia – Point Halloran – Harry Briggs – 11.03.07 No etched digits reported. (Probably flagged in Victoria)

White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings

No white flag sightings

A number of Bar-tailed Godwit were flagged and fitted with transmitters in New Zealand. Below is one of the birds that were sighted here in Queensland.

1 Bar-tailed Godwit – black flag left tibia with etched **E3** on it and metal band right tibia – Norman Point, Tin Can Bay – Amelia & Kelvin Nielsen, Dorothy Pashniak & Judy Bannister – 29.04.07

Blue (Japanese) leg flag sightings

2 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Jun Matsui – 21.04.07, and again on 25.04.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – David Milton et al – 31.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 31.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Geoff & Lyn Smith – 31.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Alan Gillanders et al – 25.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and metal band left tarsus – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross, David Milton & Sandra Harding – 23.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross, David Milton & Sandra Harding – 23.03.07

2 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross – 22.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and white flag left tarsus – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross – 22.03.07

3 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia and metal band right tibia – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – Linda Cross – 21.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Manly Boat Harbour – Laurie Knight – 17.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Toorbul – Linda Cross et al – 10.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Wynnum Creek, Cleveland Point – Heather Smith – 09.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Toorbul – Dez Wells – 04.03.07

1 Grey-tailed Tattler – blue flag left tibia – Toorbul 1km North – Esther Townsend – 04.03.07

(All above birds with blue flag left tibia were flagged in Hokkaido, Northern Japan)

(The one bird with blue flag left tibia and white flag left tarsus was flagged in Tokyo Bay, Central Japan)

Other wader leg flag sightings

1 Great Knot – black flag over white flag right tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Jun Matsui – 25 & 26.04.07.

The bird was also seen on 12.05.07

1 Great Knot – black flag over white flag right tibia – Cairns Esplanade – Alan Gillanders et al – 25.03.07

(Black over white and white over black flagged in Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China)

Other leg flag sightings and banded birds

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Toorbul Sandfly Bay roost – Roy Sonnenburg – 25.04.07

1 Caspian Tern – orange band right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 31.03.07

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus and metal band on left tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 04.02.07

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus and metal band left tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 31.12.06

1 Caspian Tern – orange flag right tarsus – Mathieson Homestead, Hervey Bay – John Knight et al – 03.11.06

1 Crested Tern – coloured band (half silver half orange) left tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 31.03.07

1 Little Tern – orange flag over yellow flag left tibia and metal band right tarsus – Buckley's Hole Sandbar – Dez Wells & Deborah Metters – 31.03.07

Interesting sightings

Please note these sightings are not authenticated records.

* = to be submitted to BQ RAC ** = to be submitted to BARC

16 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Fisherman Island – Wayne Young, David Edwards, Phil & Linda Cross – 03.03.07

2 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Buckley's Hole Sandbar, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 18.02.07

749 Eastern Curlew – West Geoff Skinner Reserve – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 04.03.07

105 Marsh Sandpiper – Maaroom – John Bell & Glen Hastie – 31.03.07

QUEENSLAND WADER

130 Common Greenshank – Maaroom – John Bell & Glen Hastie – 31.03.07
58 Ruddy Turnstone – Pioneer River Mouth, Mackay – Les & Dawn Thyer – 01.04.07
16 Bush Stone-curlew – Pioneer River Mouth, Mackay – Les Thyer, Marj Andrews & Alexandra Ferguson – 02.03.07
1900 Grey-tailed Tattler – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight et al – 31.03.07
1050 Great Knot – Mathieson Homestead – John Knight et al – 31.03.07
19 Common Sandpiper – Pine Rivers Wetland Reserve – Ken Cowell & Floss Wainwright – 04.02.07
1 Sanderling – Buckley's Hole Sandbar – Michael Strong – 18.03.07

Not waders but of interest anyway

53 White-faced Heron – Geoff Skinner Reserve East – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 31.03.07
5 Brown Quail – King Street, Thornside – Joyce Harding – 28.04.07
250 White-winged Black Tern – Noosa River Sandbanks – Jill Denning – 15.01.07
1350 Common Tern – Noosa River Sandbanks – Jill Denning – 15.01.07
2 Chestnut Teal (first record on site) – Kakadu Beach roost, Bribie Island – Frank Bigg & Michael Willis – 28.04.07
232 Chestnut Teal – Gold Coast Treatment Plant – Terry Dillon – 05.03.07
2 Pink-eared Duck – Visitors Centre Lake, Fisherman Island – Vicki Campbell – 29.04.07
1 Black-necked Stork – Young Ave, Kinka Beach, Yeppoon – Barry Ellis – 30.04.07

Last newsletter Issue 059 information that was missed out.

Interesting sightings

700 Eastern Curlew – Geoff Skinner Reserve – Peter Rothlisberg & Michele Burford – 04.02.07
696 Eastern Curlew – Mirapool Beach, Moreton Island – QWSG – 05.02.07
1 Common Sandpiper – Lamerough Creek, Pelican Waters, Caloundra – Jill Chamberlain – 06.02.07
2 Common Sandpiper – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 09.12.06
5000 Bar-tailed Godwit – Sandbank off Amity Point – David Milton – 06.11.06
3002 Bar-tailed Godwit – Mirapool Beach, Moreton Island – QWSG – 05.02.07
460 Black-tailed Godwit – Kakadu Beach, Bribie Island – Frank Bigg, Lois MacRae & Michael Willis – 04.02.07
280 Black-tailed Godwit – Deception Bay Mangrove roost – Phil & Linda Cross – 04.02.07
52 Marsh Sandpiper – Deception Bay Mangrove roost – Phil & Linda Cross – 04.02.07
1 Wood Sandpiper – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Bill Gould & Lee Mason – 07.01.07
1090 Pacific Golden Plover – Fisherman Island – QWSG – 06.01.07
5 Sanderling – Ross River Mouth, Townsville – Peter Driscoll – 05.11.06
1 Sanderling – Maroochy River, North Shore – Shirley Rooke, Jan Bedwell & Judy Hewitt – 08.12.06
65 Sanderling – Rooney Point, Fraser Island – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 14.12.06
1 Broad-billed Sandpiper – Kedron Brook Wetlands – Dez Wells – 04.11.06

Not waders but of interest anyway

1 Baillon's Crake – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Bill Gould & Lee Mason – 07.01.07
1 Spotless Crake – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Bill Gould & Lee Mason – 07.01.07
24 Glossy Ibis – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Bill Gould & Lee Mason – 07.01.07
95 Whiskered Tern – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight, Bill Gould & Lee Mason – 07.01.07
337 Pink-eared Duck – Lake Galletly, Gatton – Ivell & Jim Whyte – 06.01.07
6 Wandering Whistling Duck (4 ducklings) – Buckley's Hole Lagoon, Bribie Island – Michael Strong – 31.12.06
3571 Little Tern – Sandy Cape, Fraser Island – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 16.12.06
1420 Common Tern – Noosa River Sandbanks – Jill Denning – 15.12.06
1 Brown Booby – Rooney Point, Fraser Island – Donald & Lesley Bradley – 14.12.06
1 Australasian Bittern – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight et al – 03.11.06
12 Australasian Shoveler – Garnett's Lagoons, Hervey Bay – John Knight – 25.10.06
1 female Blue-billed Duck with 1 duckling – Nielsen's Road, Carrara – Hans Beste (via Terry Dillon) – 03.10.06
6 Buff-banded Rail (2 adults & 4 young) – Cobaki Retirement Village Wetland, Tweed Heads – Ian Watson & Mathew Angus – 17.01.07

There was lots of other good wader numbers and sightings that I wish could be placed in the newsletter, but unfortunately there is not enough room to fit them all in.

Count Programme by Linda Cross

Unfortunately due to the lack of space in this issue of the newsletter the count programme will be reduced. This is partly due to the large amount of leg flag sightings and the Port of Brisbane Corporation report for 2006.

Could I please ask all members and counters to read the forward message in the Wader Watch section of this newsletter. It is very important that you are aware of the flagging projects.

Could I also remind counters that the National Winter Count is set down for the Sunday 15th July. A high of 1.71m at 10:01am. No count in June, however we will be counting at the Port Of Brisbane Corporation on Sunday 17th June. We will be meeting at 09:10am if you would like to join us.

In July watch for the breeding plumage becoming evident on our visitors from New Zealand, (Double-banded Plover). They have been recorded at Kakadu Beach roost at Bribie Island, Sandbank No.1 & 2 at Caloundra, Geoff Skinner Reserve East & West, Manly Boat Harbour, Fisherman Island, Shallow Bay at Tweed Heads and South Stradbroke Island. The largest count being 50 at Geoff Skinner Reserve East on 28.04.07

Breeding records – just the one

Beach-stone Curlew – a juvenile bird was seen with two adults at Bowen on 08.01.07 by Jon Wren & Cliff Sexton.

Interesting snippet from count sheet

During the monthly wader count at Maaroom on 28th April John Bell and Glen Hastie watched an Australian Hobby swoop down and take a Red-capped Plover.

Editor's Note:- Linda do we count the wader on our list if this happens to us!!

Happy counting. - Linda Cross.

Migratory waterbirds: early warning system for climate change

From Wetlands International

Climate change is the theme of this year's World Migratory Bird Day, 12 May 2007. Among the migratory birds, waterbirds are among the clearest 'early warners' for climate change. Waterbirds are very vulnerable to even small increases in sea level, loss of Arctic tundra and inter-tidal habitats and increases or decreases in water levels of freshwater lakes.

Wetlands International sets the global standard for research into waterbird numbers and distribution at continental scales, and the role of waterbirds as indicators of climate change is an increasingly important element of this work.

Most waterbird species disperse widely during the summer breeding season in Europe, but on migration and in winter, they often congregate in high numbers at a relatively small number of sites. In the African-Eurasian Flyway, a frequent pattern is for waterbirds to breed in vast numbers but at low density in the tundra zone of northern Russia, from where they migrate to winter destinations such as the Inner Niger Delta and lake Chad in West Africa. En route they stop at vital "refuelling stations" such as the Dutch-German Danish Wadden Sea, where they fatten up on a rich diversity of invertebrate prey which will sustain them on the next leg of their journey. Most species are dependent on a chain of such sites between their breeding areas and their wintering areas, and damage or destruction of just one link in the chain can have disastrous effects on waterbird survival.

Climate change is predicted to disrupt this pattern in a number of ways. The thawing of the tundra zone and its northward shift into the Arctic Ocean are likely to greatly reduce both the extent and quality of these breeding habitats. Sea level rise will reduce the extent of intertidal areas such as the Wadden Sea, reducing possibilities for waterbirds to feed. Finally, drought is expected to alter flooding regimes at enormous floodplains in Africa such as the Inner Niger Delta and Lake Chad, reducing areas suitable for waterbirds at the end of their great migrations.

An increase in severity and intensity of droughts at wetlands in arid and semi arid regions will also have adverse effects - many waterbirds are dependent on wetlands in these regions during their annual migration and during nesting.

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of
Queensland Wader Study Group

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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 2007**

Contributions should be addressed to:

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QWSG MERCHANDISE

Should you wish to purchase any of the QWSG Merchandise, items may be purchased at BQ Inc meetings held 1st Thursday of the month at the Royal Geographical Society Meeting Room, 237 Milton Road, Milton.

OR

Contact Dawn Beck Phone 07 3378 8598 or email alphabec@powerup.com.au

Postage is not included in prices quoted.

BOOKS	\$19.80 Shorebird Conservation in the Asia-Pacific Region
	\$20.00 Status and Conservation of Shorebirds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.
	\$15.00 Slater Field Guide to Australian Birds
CD	\$20.00 Bird Calls of the Broome Region (includes 42 Wader Species)
METAL BADGES	\$5.00 Metal QWSG logo badges.
CLOTH BADGES	\$8.00 QWSG logo on rectangular bottle-green background

POLO SHIRTS

QWSG's new 100% cotton polo shirts have been ordered and should be available within the next few weeks. The locally made shirts will be in tri-coloured sand/cocoa/sky or sand/cocoa/bottle as well as plain bottle or sky with contrast collar. Price is expected to be around \$35.00.

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, David Niland (07) 3379 2344; Secretary, John Holt (07) 3359 1439; 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 7:45pm start.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new member who have joined recently :
Vicki CAMPBELL Kim HERBERT Jim & Susan SNEDDON

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.

The latest newsletter of the South Coast NSW Shorebird Recovery Program is now available online

http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/shorebird_newsletter_mar_2007.pdf

A total of 13 Hooded Plover fledglings were added to the NSW population of less than 50 birds. Little Tern fledglings from the south coast numbered 135 after an eventful breeding season.

Enjoy



Count Activities 2007

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Programme – 2007

NO COUNT IN JUNE

Sun 15 th Jul	1.71m at 10:01	National Winter Count
Sat 4 th August	1.98m at 13:25	
Sat 15 th Sep	2.03m at 11:31	
Sat 13 th Oct	2.17m at 10:31	
Sat 10 th Nov	2.26m at 09:35	
Sat 8 th Dec	2.27m at 08:40	

Port of Brisbane Count Dates – 2007

Sun 17 th Jun	1.68m at 11:00	Meet 09:10
Sat 14 th Jul	1.68m at 09:14	Meet 07:25
Sun 5 th Aug	1.99m at 14:23	Meet 12:30
Sun 16 th Sep	2.00m at 12:06	Meet 10:15
Sun 14 th Oct	2.16m at 11:03	Meet 09:15
Sun 11 th Nov	2.27m at 10:09	Meet 08:20
Sun 9 th Dec	2.32m at 09:16	Meet 07:25

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:.....
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 Payment enclosed: \$.....

Phone: (Home) (Work)
 Fax / e-mail:

TOTAL \$.....

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.....)

SIGNATURE: DATE:.....

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

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