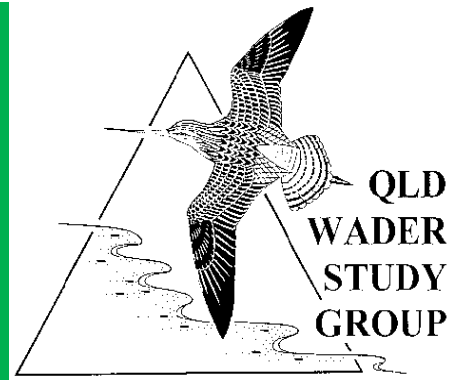


QUEENSLAND WADER



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Chairperson's Report - QWSG AGM 2022

David Edwards - 11 December 2022

I am pleased to present this report as Chairperson of the Queensland Wader Study Group (QWSG), on behalf of the 2022 QWSG Management Committee.

It has been a busy twelve months.

This Chairperson report will highlight some of the achievements and activities of the QWSG over the past year, as we have continued to promote the protection of wader habitats, some under threat, and promote the scientific study and conservation of all Waders. Brief reports from Counts, Flagging, Banding, Membership and Education officers will be tabled at this meeting. The full reports will be added to the full minutes of the meeting, as well as being produced in the next issue of Queensland Wader.

Some of the key activities in 2022, in no particular order of priority are highlighted below:

GRANTS

QWSG received funding support from the Queensland Government's Community Sustainability Action grant program. The project commenced in December 2020 and has run for almost 2 years. I am pleased and proud to announce that the report was handed to government two weeks ago.

We have conducted field work in three Ramsar sites – Bowling Green Bay, Great Sandy Straits and Moreton Bay. Our findings have informed future conservation for shorebirds in coastal Ramsar sites as the climate changes.

The progress of the QWSG's State government grant has seen the targets required reached and exceeded. The survey of Bowling Green Bay has been successfully completed and the data stored and used. The banding component of the grant was organised for the start of the next year and successfully completed with flagged birds sighted and tracking results downloaded. The education aspects of the grant can be seen at the Children's education website and at the Discovery Centre at Manly.

Thanks to Robert Bush, Jon Coleman, Peter Driscoll and Brad Woodworth as managers of the grant project, plus all those who helped in the field.

Many thanks to Wayne Lock, the Birds Queensland (BQ) Treasurer, for keeping track of all the invoices and making sure the financial aspects of the Grant were complied with, plus thanks to Judith Giles as QWSG Treasurer.

EDUCATION

The close personal nature of education and the menace of Covid meant a truncation to a lot of our activities, particularly those involving young school children. I am pleased to announce that these events will be up and running at full capacity next year. Many thanks to Sheryl and Arthur Keates for their tireless efforts in the past and a warm welcome to Rae Clark who is taking over the running of this important work.

ID days are always popular and give an opportunity for not only education within the group but also as a 'meet and greet' component that is missing at many of our other activities. Again, many thanks to Sheryl and Arthur Keates, and Linda and Phil Cross for so ably running these days. The three main areas, Manly Harbour, Kakadu Beach and Toorbul have all had good turnouts for the ID days

We have been able to run a one-day Wader course for Marine Parks Rangers this year. The day consists of a presentation on shorebird migration and breeding, plus some conservation issues affecting shorebirds followed by questions and discussions. Next Peter Rothlisberg, the QWSG Secretary, guided participants through a well-structured session giving tips for successful Wader identification. We then visit Manly Boat Harbour to put these ID tips into practice.

Many thanks to Sheryl and Arthur Keates for the organisation and help for these days. Many thanks to Marine National Parks for arranging the use of their rooms.

The QWSG Facebook page has been kept up to date by Robert Bush. Robert regularly posts items throughout the year. All are informative, with some managing to reach far around the world, attracting a very large number of hits. Thank you, Robert.

The QWSG, again, arranged for two billboards to be used to highlight the return of Waders to Moreton Bay. The slogan was: "WE ARE BACK look out for us". We saw an increase in hits to our web site front page, which was modified for the campaign. Once again, the overall response from outside our group was a little disappointing. However, we now have the advertisement skins, so we can run another campaign at any time or use them in static displays.

This side of the QWSG activities, the education of the general public, is a weakness and over the next couple of years, I suggest, we make a concerted effort to raise the profile of Waders and the QWSG throughout Queensland.

THE COUNT PROGRAM

Linda Cross again tirelessly organised and managed the count programme in 2022 with monthly counts across a whole range of sites in Greater Moreton Bay and further afield up and down the Queensland coast. The online data entry continues to make life easier in terms of data entry, but validation is still necessary to make sure the high standard of QWSG data is maintained. Linda is always looking for new counters, so, if you know anyone, or would like to count your own site please get in touch with her. Thanks, Linda.

Thanks, not only to Linda but, to every one of our members who count, because without you, we would not have been able to contribute as much as we have to shorebird conservation. The counts are our core business. Please don't underestimate the value of consistently counting a location over long periods of time. Our count program has been responsible for some very influential discussion on shorebird declines and has influenced opinion throughout the flyway as a result of the QWSG dataset that is held in the highest of esteem.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) provide personnel and a boat to take QWSG counters to Moreton Is, Peel Is, Goat Is and Toondah Harbour every quarter. This is greatly appreciated, because it makes sure that a full coverage of the Bay is achieved. Many thanks to all involved.

This year has seen the QWSG return to the Greater Mackay region for the biennial survey of the area. Peter Driscoll arranged and managed the trip with great success showing the importance of this area for waders. The sites covered during the survey were rationalised concentrating on the sites used by waders, those that had a preponderance of waterbirds or unproductive were dropped. We will look forwards to the Great Sandy Strait survey next year to achieve our usual routine of these two survey areas.

Michele Burford and I were able to participate and train the Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation Rangers on the Wellesley Islands during one of their surveys in October. This was a great opportunity to see a different area with different problems of surveying. Many thanks to the rangers who looked after us so well. There may be opportunities for QWSG to work with CLCAC in this important area of the Gulf in the future.

Our Queensland Government grant enabled the surveying of the Bowling Green area south of Townsville for a second time. (See Grants)

BANDING AND TRACKERS

This side of QWSG activities has been quietly active over the last year, with over 1500 waders banded and flagged (See report that follows). The data from trackers that we fitted some years ago is still coming in and supplying useful and sometimes amazing data. We have used Kernel Density software programs on the download satellite data and have been amazed at the wealth of information revealed. Insights into wader movements that we were unaware of and opening further possibilities.

One of the most encouraging results of all this work has been the production of peer reviewed papers in many prestigious journals. Seeing the hard worked for data accumulated by the QWSG from count surveys, banding and tracking devices, being used, and not just sitting in a computer somewhere, means that there is ratified data and information for all levels of Government to use.

Be warned that, once again 2023 is looking to be a busy time for banding and flagging.

FLAGGING

Many thanks to Jon Coleman for his hard work with the flag sightings, checking and validating them as they come in, plus he gives quarterly reports for the Newsletter.

The online entry of flag sightings has made this task a little easier, so be sure to use it. Members giving information on the notified sightings will receive information about the bird.

Once again thanks to all of you who send in your sightings, they go a long way in the protection of the waders and their habitat. Even with all the work required to log these sightings Jon still goes out and issues more flags

FINANCES and MEMBERSHIP

Judith Giles and Brenda Smith have been working efficiently behind the scenes to make the financial and membership sides of the QWSG run smoothly. Judith's clear reports at each Committee meeting gives us confidence that all is well, plus the prompt payment of our bills shows that all is under control.

The occasional hiccup has arisen with the new Birds Queensland website coming online, but these problems are being sorted out between BQ and ourselves.

As you will see from the Financial Report our finances are not only sound, but in good hands.

Our membership is around 300.

Brenda is standing down from the QWSG Committee but will continue as Membership Officer for the next year

QWSG DATA

The QWSG data is still very much in demand and, with Peter Driscoll as manager, data is released judiciously. The money we receive goes back into more surveys and so more information.

THE NEWSLETTER

The newsletter, Queensland Wader, has been presented every quarter with the vast majority of the editions now being sent out as an electronic version. Weight restrictions means that the print version is limited to 18 sides which means that it cannot present all of the content, whilst the electronic copy is virtually unlimited, I think the biggest last year would have been 38 pages. Once again, many thanks to all contributors, a special thanks to Linda Cross, who produce content for the Newsletter each quarter and to Arthur Keates for all his articles on flag sightings. Please contribute we need to hear from you all.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Toondah Harbour has taken up a lot of time and effort for many of our members. The Walker Group issued its Draft EIS for comment and it sounds as if they had many thousands of replies from the local area, all of Queensland and from around the world.

The QWSG's reply to the EIS can be found on our website. It highlights the relevant details as to why we were against this development as it stands. Though we are not a politically active group our voice and actions hold a lot of weight.

I would like to thank Deirdre Chrzescijanski for taking on the task of pulling together all the thoughts from members into a coherent submission.

Also, I thank Robert Bush for all his quiet, but effective work, behind the scenes promoting the opposition to the Toondah Harbour development.

Healthy Land and Water (HLW)

We have partnered with HLW to help formulate plans and actions for shorebirds in Greater Moreton Bay. This partnership will be extended into next year, and we hope to see exciting results for waders and their habitat in the next 12 months, both at a practical level as well as politically.

Yatsu Higata Nature Observation Centre's (YNOC) Visit

At last, a visit from a delegation from Yatsu-Higata came to fruition. A group of eleven managed to make it here in November. They were shown around SE Queensland by members of the QWSG and the Brisbane City Council. A great time was enjoyed by all who were able to attend. With friendships made and contacts forged. The hope is that as soon as possible an exchange visit can be arranged.

The highlight of the trip was the bestowing of a QWSG Life Membership to Hitoshi Akutsu (Hit San): In recognition of the outstanding contributions, Hitoshi has made towards the friendship, goodwill and exchange of information between the shorebird watchers of Narashino and Brisbane. In particular, the close ties he has built, over many years, between Yatsu Higata Nature Observation Centre and the Queensland Wader Study Group.

Australasian Shorebird Conference 2022 (ASC22)

Australasian Shorebird Conference 2022 (ASC22) finally was held virtually. Although the QWSG logo was prominently displayed many thanks must go to the hard work done by the Australasian Wader Study Group leading up to the conference and on the day. Considering the number of potential disasters that could have occurred it was handled brilliantly. The quality of the presentations was extremely high. The thrilling thing for me was the young age of the speakers. A great hope for the future of wader research.

Another highlight was the number of speakers with a connection to the QWSG and the amount of QWSG data used in presentations.

A big thank you also goes to Birds Queensland (BQ) for their collaboration throughout the year.

Thank you to every single committee member and those who run the non-committee roles of QWSG. We always underestimate the effort required to make a group like this run effectively.

On that note, I would like to thank Peter Rothlisberg, who as Secretary, keeps us all on track. Keeping the minutes during committee meetings and getting the draft out so promptly. Sorting all the email traffic into one document so that we do not miss anything, plus his other unseen actions. All our hearts sink when we hear "Is there an action item to go with this?" But without Peter I would be a mess and the QWSG not function as well as it does.

What of the future? I am sure that we will continue to be beset by the Toondah Harbour issue. However, there are concerns throughout Moreton Bay and the whole of the coast of Queensland that affect or will affect waders and their habitat. Coastal development and usage are seeing "a death by a thousand cuts" caused by "the tyranny of small decisions".

The next one we will be facing is the Olympics and the threat to coastal areas for the events and shore access.

The QWSG has already approached several Government departments with particular reference to Manly Harbour roost site. Although we are close to ten years away from the event, we have to make sure those making decisions know what they are dealing with i.e. the health and wellbeing of the waders. The Queensland Government is touting the Games as the Green Olympics, hopefully this means something.

In the year we have had talks about the status of the Geoff Skinner Reserve and these discussions will be followed up, in order to protect this large area of untouched foreshore, mangrove fringe, salt marsh and clay pan.

The Port of Brisbane has been very keen to re-invigorate the Artificial Roost site and to help protect areas outside the Port's reclamation and development, this may lead to better access to view the waders. We will continue these talks next year.

All of these meetings and contacts take time, so if you feel you can help, please let us know.

A bright note might be the announcement last week of the new Environmental Protection Agency. Although this might take time to set-up and implement it is encouraging for the future.

I am sure I have missed someone or something in this roundup, so to everyone who has contributed to the group in many different ways, thank you.

Finally, and most importantly, I have to say thank you to all QWSG members for your support and fieldwork over the last 12 months. Without you we achieve nothing. I hope this 2022 report has shown you how important your support, your counts, and your involvement is in everything to do with Waders.

So, I wish you all a great 2023, good Wader Watching and please stay safe.

David Edwards – Chairperson QWSG

11th December 2022

Treasurer's Report – QSG AGM 2022

Judith Giles - 11 December 2022

Queensland Wader Study Group (QWSG) is a special interest group of Queensland Ornithological Society (QOSI), also known as Birds Queensland (BQ). QWSG statements are included in the complete Audited Financial Statements and Treasurer's report for QOSI, which you will find in the members section of the QOSI website.

Today I present the QWSG Profit and Loss Account for the year ending 30 September 2022, and the QWSG Balance sheet as at 30 September 2022, along with my Treasurer's report at that date.

The major items of income, Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd contract \$26,960 and Membership fees of \$4,029 are slightly higher than past years, with Sale of Data \$8,800 being a significant income figure. Donations totalled \$2,095 and are directed to the David Milton Fund, unless requested otherwise.

Minor income items are course income, royalties, and Interest income. It is expected that interest income will increase in the future.

Total Income was \$42,866.

For the second year running, the Goa Billboard campaign was a significant cost at just over \$5,000.

For the last two years we have had three Tracking programs running – the cost of our long standing one has been gradually reducing since it commenced to \$1,949 in 2022, as there is now only one bird being tracked. There is a possibility that the final payment from the DES grant may be paid to QWSG in 2022-23 to cover some of this cost from the past two years.

The other two programs have been under the DES grant and administered by BQ, so do not show in the QWSG Profit and Loss Account. Details of this expenditure are included in the grant acquittal report.

The only survey expense was an honorarium paid to a participant in the Bowling Green Bay survey. This was not covered by the DES grant.

Port of Brisbane travel reimbursements were \$810 and contribution to cost of a special publication \$845.

Other expenses include QWSG share of audit and insurance expense paid to BQ, and administrative items, such as computer expense, stationery (including newsletter postage and printing), PayPal fees, Website and travel expense.

Depreciation has been a large expense in the last two years, and most of our assets are now fully depreciated, leaving only the Vortex Scope, Leg Flag Laptop and Billboard skins with a balance into the next financial year. Total Expense was \$22,161, giving a Net Profit for the year of \$20,706.

Looking at the Balance Sheet, within the Asset group the biggest difference this year was an increase in our total Cash at Bank to \$218,918. We always have a large figure in Trade Debtors, as Port of Brisbane is invoiced late in the year and pay in the new financial year.

The figure for Non-Current Assets has reduced to \$3,428 as our assets are depreciated. As mentioned above, only the Vortex Scope, Leg Flag Computer and Billboard skins have not yet been fully depreciated.

Liabilities include Trade Creditors \$485, being invoices that were paid early in the new financial year, Member subscriptions paid in advance \$625 and Grant Liability \$2,596. The Grant is administered by BQ, and this figure \$2,596 is the difference between total income received from DES via BQ and total reimbursements for expenses paid on our behalf by BQ. Note the grant continued until end of October 2022. Total Assets \$244,306 minus \$Total Liabilities \$3,706 gives us Net Assets \$240,600.

When the Net Profit \$20,706 is added to the Opening retained Profits, the Closing Member Funds are \$240,600 which equals our Net Asset figure and is a very good result both financially and in achieving our goals, and in our having sufficient funds to plan for future activities towards these goals.

Thanks to all who help by giving advice, by collecting and forwarding receipts, advising of invoices to be issued, to Brenda as we try to navigate the vagaries of some of the payments in our membership system, and to Deirdre, our Assistant Treasurer.

Membership Report - QWSG AGM 2022

Brenda Smith - 11 December 2022

As at 12th Dec 2022 there is a total of 238 memberships, with 305 members, this includes all family members and life members (6 memberships 8 members). In addition - there are 40 memberships, 45 members whose membership is on hold awaiting payment. These are less than 3 months overdue.

There are 40 complimentary newsletter recipients – not included in the above figures.

In the past year there have been 59 new memberships, 80 members. A number of these are joining when joining Birds Queensland. During the year there have been several memberships cancelled when they were 3 months overdue for payment. A number of these were members who joined the previous year, mainly through Bird Queensland.

Following the introduction of the new website for Birds Queensland, there are still a few hiccups with the system. The treasurer and I attended a meeting with Birds Queensland to try and resolve some of the issues we were both having. This is a work in progress.

Count Coordinator's Report – QWSG AGM 2022

Linda Cross - 11 December 2022

Although it has been back to normality with no Covid restrictions this year, the count programme has seen many counts not conducted at numerous sites throughout Queensland. This may be because people now have more freedom to travel.

June was a rest month for the count programme, but we were still able to get 12 counts completed for the year as we did 2 counts in April. Unfortunately, some sites have not been fully covered for the year. To date, the Tweed Heads 7 sites were only counted in July this year due to continual flooding and sites in the Burdekin area have only been surveyed 3 times due to illness and holidays. The Queensland Aluminium Limited sites at Gladstone were not surveyed for the first half of the year but have now resumed with new counter Tony Longson taking over from Margaret Worthington.

In the Great Sandy Strait 3 sites (1 in Boonooroo and 2 in Tin Can Bay) were not counted at all for the whole of the year because access to one of them was problematic and there were no counters for the other two. The counter for the 1 Bundaberg site in the count programme moved interstate at the end of 2021 and no replacement for a counter in 2022 has been found.

The January count was the only count for Point Halloran Reserve before the counter (Barbara Collyer) requested it be dropped from the count programme as it no longer supported any waders and Pine Rivers north site has not been counted at all for the year due to the same fate along with mangrove regrowth (an issue becoming too common at other roost sites). That site too has been dropped from the programme, but thankfully the counter (David Edwards) has moved to the Redcliffe Peninsular counting Scarborough to Clontarf (an old site in the database) and a newer site (Scarborough Marina) since January.

There were 4 seasonal counts completed for Moreton Island and 3 for St. Helena Island.

Online entries by counters continued to be excellent and required very few amendments.

Monthly counts conducted during 2022 are as follows:

734 entered, validated and uploaded into the database

180 validated and waiting to be uploaded into the database

130 waiting to be validated

Approximately 82 counts to be entered from counters for December which will need checking, validating, and uploading.

That will make a total of 1,126 (150 more than 2021) from the count programme itself.

Arthur Keates was the most prolific counter with more than 117 entries to the end of November, followed by Dez Wells with 108, then Michael Strong with 39 and Penn Lloyd with 38 counts.

To the end of November, Manly Harbour was again the most counted site during the year with 46 entries (31 less than last year), and again, Arthur Keates was the reason for 37 (30 less than last year) of those counts. Kakadu Beach Bribie Island was the second most counted with 30 entries, with most of them contributed by Michael Strong, then Lytton No. 1 Claypan with 25 entries contributed by Arthur Keates.

I must thank Peter Driscoll (Data Manager) for his continued work maintaining the database and website, answering all my enquiries and sorting out issues related to the count programme, the database and the website.

The count programme would not exist if it were not for the dedicated counters who have contributed so much to the QWSG database, which is the most extensive wader (and other shorebirds) database in Australia. The QWSG and I, would like to sincerely thank all of you for your commitment.

I have continued to strive for punctuality with my articles to David Edwards for the newsletter.

My thanks to the people I have already mentioned for their assistance during the year, and to everyone else from the group (on and off committee), for their commitment to the QWSG.

Port of Brisbane.

A summary of the QWSG's contracted work with the Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd.

I liaised with Brenda Smith (QWSG membership officers), and Penelope Webster, Michael Linde or Craig Wilson from the Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd (PBPL), to keep the Port counter/induction list up to date, and then ensured Peter Rothlisberg was kept informed accordingly before the email notification was sent.

In 2022 we scheduled 13 counts (1 more than the count programme) for the year. As I submit this report the December PBPL count will take place shortly after the AGM which will bring the total counts completed by the QWSG team to 12 for the year. The 13th count that we scheduled was a second count in May which was cancelled at the last minute due to shortage of PBPL staff and an early start. Two of the ponds were removed from the scheduled counts (PBS1 after April) and (PBC2 after August) as both are now full of sand and ready for development. Lytton No. 1 Claypan (that was added late last year) was counted every month of 2022. Including today's count for December, 166 Port counts (28 more than 2021) will be added to the database this year.

Attendance by QWSG members improved this year with between 12 and 15 (average 13) volunteers most months. Four new members have attended several counts during the year, and I am hopeful (judging by their attendance) that we can retain them for future counts.

Excluding the December count to take place today, the highest wader count for the year was October, with a total of 8,235 (which now includes the totals from Lytton No. 1 Claypan) being counted for the whole of the complex. This is a drop of nearly 3,000 birds compared to 2021 (11,125).

I would like to thank Craig, Michael and Penelope from the PBPL for looking after us during the counts.

Special thanks to Peter Rothlisberg and other members who arrive an hour earlier each month to conduct the Lake count prior to the scheduled count times and additional thanks again to Peter for organising the emails and allocating sites. Thank you to Brenda Smith for liaising with me on memberships, and finally a big thank you to the counters who turn up each month to conduct the count. Without you, these counts would not be possible to complete.

Earlier in the year Richard Ravell offered to help with the Count Coordinator workload, but unfortunately due to both of us taking holidays and not seeing one another until last month, nothing has come to fruition until now. We have agreed that starting in the new year, Richard will look after the PBPL inductions and respond to emails from prospective counters before organising placement with other counters.

It has been a couple of years now that I have informed the group that I would like to step down from this role, but apart from Richard, no one else has shown any interest. So, it looks like I am still in a caretaker role!

Leg Flag Database Report – QWSG AGM 2022

Jon Coleman - 11 December 2022

This year saw leg flags fitted in Great Sandy Marine Park as well as in Moreton Bay with resightings of birds recorded in both marine parks.

This year, to the 8th of December 2022 there were a total of 2,922 individual resightings involving 23 species of shorebird. While the vast majority (2,679) of these were green flagged birds recorded in Queensland there were a number of green flagged birds recorded overseas and foreign flagged birds recorded in Queensland, as shown below. The figures in brackets represent the number of resightings, not the number of individuals seen.

Victoria Flagged Birds Recorded in Queensland

Bar-tailed Godwit (13), Caspian Tern (9), Curlew Sandpiper (1), Great Knot (13).

New South Wales Flagged Birds Recorded in Queensland

Pied Oystercatcher (8)

Northern Territory Flagged Birds Recorded in Queensland

Curlew Sandpiper (1)

Green Flagged Birds Recorded Overseas

Bar-tailed Godwit – Japan (1), New Zealand (9), South Korea (2)

Grey-tailed Tattler – Japan (3)

Lesser Sand plover – Japan (1), Philippines (1)

Ruddy Turnstone – Japan (4), Taiwan (1)

Terek Sandpiper – South Korea (1)

Foreign Flagged Birds Recorded in Queensland

China

Curlew Sandpiper (2), Great Knot (27), Lesser Sandplover (2), Red Knot (2), Red-necked Stint (2)

Japan

Bar-tailed Godwit (2), Grey-tailed Tattler (35)

New Zealand

Bar-tailed Godwit (1), Red Knot (1)

Taiwan

Curlew Sandpiper (4), Lesser Sand plover (5), Red-necked Stint (1), Terek Sandpiper (1)

USA

Bar-tailed Godwit (1)

Three Green Flagged Pied Oystercatcher were also recorded in New South Wales during 2022 along with one Bar-tailed Godwit.

The following people submitted leg flag re-sightings in 2022 with apologies for any omissions:

Adrian Riegan, Ana de Joux, Anne Buchanan, Anne Love, Arthur Keates, Sheryl Keates, Naho, Mitsuhashi, Frank Burch, Melissa Whitby, Ofalia Ho, Peter Driscoll, Rob Kernot, Sandra Harding, Tom Tarrant, Brian Russell, Campbell Paine, Cecile Espigole, Will Price, Cheryl Ponter, Graham Ponter, Colin Trainor, Daniel Townend, David Melville, W. Cook, Denise Holder, Dezmond Wells, Don Bradley, Lesley Bradley, Lisa Daria, Peter Rothlisberg, Michele Burford, Gary Hall, Helen Leonard, Hidetoshi Kudo, Ian Tarrant, Jack Worcester, John Lowry, John Paterson, Jon Coleman, Jun Matsui, Kasia Ganderska-Someya, Lachlan Cooper, Linda Cross, Rob Kernot, Marilyn Sweetnam, Michael Strong, Terry Burgess, Michele Mathieson, Mick Barker, Nelle Mawson, Nicola Udy, Paul Fisk, Penn Lloyd, Peter Field, Peter Ramshaw, Phil Cross, Rachelle Patterson, Richard Fuller, Roland Odsey, Sally Sheldon, Scott Humphris, Scott Lenton, Shota Sawamoto, Stephen Kerr and Family, Steven McBride, Tansy Bliss, Teresa Madgwick, Audrey Burgess, Tim Peisker, Tom Tarrant, Tony Cotter, Tony Habraken, Toshifumi Moriya, Wayne Cass, Julie Cass, Wilmot Senaratne.

The most leg flag re-sightings were submitted by Arthur Keates (1,427) and Tony Cotter (746). However, every resighting adds to our knowledge, and we are grateful to every single person who submitted a leg flag resighting in 2022 and helped us to further our knowledge on Queensland's shorebirds.

Banding Report – QWSG AGM 2022

Jon Coleman - 11 December 2022

2022 saw a significant focus on banding and flagging in Great Sandy Marine Park as well as regular banding in Moreton Bay during the early part of 2022. No shorebird banding was conducted in the latter part of 2022 as a result of poor tide heights and times. This will be addressed in early 2023 with catches at the usual locations to fit bands and flags to new cohorts across a range of species.

Visits were made to Great Sandy Marine Park in January, with successful cannon net catches at O'Regan's Creek, Toogoom and Boonooroo, and in August with a successful cannon net catch at Maaroom. The catch totals for 2022 are shown in Table 1 and also included two Bar-tailed Godwit fitted with PTT's, one at O'Regan's Creek and one at Maaroom. This effort resulted in 241 birds flagged, with one recapture of a Victoria flagged bird on southward migration.

Table 1: Catch Totals at Great Sandy Marine Park in 2022

Species	Number Banded	Number Recaptured	Total Caught
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	1	0	1
Australian Tern	2	0	2
Bar-tailed Godwit	95	1	96
Curlew Sandpiper	15	0	15
Great Knot	62	0	62
Greater Sand plover	26	0	26
Lesser Sand plover	30	0	30
Little Tern	1	0	1
Red-necked Stint	6	0	6
Red Knot	3	0	3
TOTALS	241	1	242

Banding in Moreton Bay was less than normal in 2022 as a result of the focus on Great Sandy Marine Park, but nonetheless 41 birds of 9 species were captured and three PTTs fitted to Bar-tailed Godwit. The recaptures were all birds local to Moreton Bay.

Table 2: Catch Totals in Moreton Bay Marine Park in 2022

Species	Number Banded	Number Recaptured	Total Caught
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	0	1	1
Bar-tailed Godwit	19	1	20
Curlew Sandpiper	2	0	2
Grey-tailed Tattler	9	0	9
Lesser Sand plover	1	0	1
Pied Stilt	1	1	2
Red-necked Stint	1	0	1
Ruddy Turnstone	4	0	4
Terek Sandpiper	1	0	1
TOTALS	38	3	41

In addition, a single Beach Stone-curlew was leg flagged in Cairns Airport Mangroves as part of a Birdlife project in Cairns, facilitated by Amanda Freeman.

Table 3: Catch Totals at Cairns Airport Mangroves in 2022

Species	Number Banded	Number Recaptured	Total Caught
Beach Stone-curlew	1	0	1
TOTALS	1	0	1

In addition to the five PTTs fitted to Bar-tailed Godwit this year, existing transmitters on 2 Far Eastern Curlew, 1 Whimbrel and several Bar-tailed Godwit continued to provide regular data on roosting, feeding sites and migratory movements.

One Bar-tailed Godwit presented a complete migration trace from Moreton Bay to Alaska and back, one Eurasian Whimbrel to Siberia and back and one Far Eastern Curlew to its breeding grounds in Northern China and back provided further information on staging and breeding grounds.

Other birds provided enormous amounts of local data on roosting and feeding grounds which has proved essential to understanding the importance of Moreton Bay to our visiting shorebirds.

QWSG were involved in the publication of two scientific papers in 2022, using both telemetry and morphometric data to look at the ranges and migratory behaviour of newly described subspecies of Eurasian Whimbrel and Black-tailed Godwit. Data on home ranges was also used in presentations at the AWSG Shorebird conference and at Birds Queensland to highlight the complexity of shorebird behaviour in Moreton Bay and also to highlight the need for the Toondah Harbour development to be dismissed as an ill-defined, ill-informed and destructive proposal that will cause irreversible damage to Moreton Bay.

Further work using our PTT data, leg flag resightings and low tide counts is underway to establish accurate home range data for feeding and roosting birds. This joint project between Healthy Land and Water, the University of Queensland and Queensland Wader Study Group will provide accurate maps for use in assessing shorebird impacts from disturbance, development and other factors.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and recognize every individual who assisted with catching shorebirds in 2022, those assisting with data analysis and also acknowledge the assistance of a Queensland Community Action Grant which funded fieldwork and PTTs in Great Sandy Marine Park.

Jon Coleman 08/12/2022

Education Report – QWSG AGM 2022

Sheryl Keates - 11 December 2022

Wader Identification Days 2022

Arthur and I lead 4 wader identification days at Manly on 23 Jan, 13 Feb, 16 Oct and 13 Nov, while Linda & Phil Cross lead 6 wader identification days at Toorbul on 22 Feb, 7 Mar, 23 Mar and 25 Nov as well as Kakadu Beach, Bribie Is on 30 Jan and 2 Mar 2022.

Shorebird presentations for the public

Redlands – On 13 Oct Arthur and I did a shorebird presentation at the Redlands Sporting Club, Wellington Pt for about 40 members (all ladies) of the Moreton Bay branch of the VIEW Club “Voice, Interests & Education of Women” at the Redlands Sports Club, Wellington Pt. They were very interested and asked many questions. Word has spread and we have been asked to do another presentation for the residents in Wellington Manor on 21 Jan and Redlands Probus on 7 Feb 2023.

Toondah Harbour 17 Sep – Deirdre Chrzescjanski, Jon Coleman, David Edwards and I attended “Welcome back the Waders” to show people shorebirds through our telescopes. Robert Bush was one of the speakers. Karragarra Island 25 September – Peter Rothlisberg gave a presentation entitled “Shorebirds of Moreton Bay – Biology and Conservation” at the annual Karragarra Sea Market Festival

QWSG Shorebird Educ in partnership with MBEEC to be recommenced for Grade 3 students at the Port of Brisbane in 2023

The last 2 excursions were Feb 2020, after which Covid-19 restrictions intervened, especially as most of us were in the ‘high risk’ age category.

From Sep 2014 to Feb 2020, 3,975 students in 46 classes from 17 schools attended the Birds and Beaches, Dogs and Leashes field trips at the Port of Brisbane bird hides. Without MBEEC and our volunteers from QWSG, BQ and BLSQ, we would not have been able to reach so many students from so many schools. Thanks to everyone involved.

I have decided to step down from organising and liaising with MBEEC, as we will be overseas for first and last terms next year. However, Rae Clark has kindly offered to take my place. A message has been included in the current edition of Qld Wader and BQ’s newsletter, asking for more volunteers for the shorebird education program with MBEEC for first and fourth terms in 2023.

MBEEC Principal Dianne Aylward said “I have valued the partnership with QWSG, Birds Qld & Birdlife Southern Qld immensely. Results and reach through the collaboration have been rich and rewarding” and “If there would be the capacity (for QWSG) to join Moreton Bay EEC again on program, or as expert professionals to support, that would be wonderful for 2023”.

Yatsu-Higata Nature Observation Centre (YNOC), Narashino City, Chiba, Japan.

On 20 Nov, I gave a shorebird education presentation to 11 visiting volunteers from YNOC, principal of NBEEC, Allison Kerr-Hislop, BWEC staff and volunteers, BCC staff and QWSG volunteers.

Shorebird Dining Experience – Sandgate 8:30 am - 10:30 am Sunday 18 Dec 2022

Jenny Carey, President of Keep Sandgate Beautiful Assoc., contacted me about doing a “Shorebird Dining Experience” like Boondall Wetlands Env. Centre (BWEC) did at Nudgee Beach during the Dog off Leash Trails in Jan 2021. David Edwards, Arthur and I attended some of the sessions.

Thanks to BWEC who has given us permission to have a loan of the items needed. We plan to set up a table with white linen, white china, wine glasses and food covers on the exposed sandy mud with the tide receding on the foreshore, just past the border of the designated Off-Leash area, just north of Second Av, Sandgate. We hope to reinforce the idea that there is a border to the Off-Leash area!

“Poseidon’s Palace Menu” has ‘seafood fit for shorebirds’ to enable them to build up their fat supplies for their amazing migration journeys to the breeding grounds in the Northern Hemisphere. It was certainly an innovative idea, and some people actually lined up to buy seafood from us at Nudgee Beach.

Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corp (QYAC) requested a wader course for 20-30 rangers on Minjerribah Ganaba (North Stradbroke Is) in Feb 2021. Once again, due to Covid restrictions, this was cancelled.

However, an identification training course for 6 – 10 QYAC rangers in partnership with Healthy Land & Water and QWSG, will be on 13 Dec at QPWS Office, Manly with a visit to the nearby Manly harbour high tide roost to identify many of the species mentioned in the lectures with experienced wader-watchers with telescopes to help. Arthur Keates and I have organised the course with David Edwards, Peter Rothlisberg, presenting. [At short notice the 2022 course was cancelled]

More training courses for QYAC rangers are expected to be held early next year and will be funded by the Australian Government.

QWSG Course for Japanese students has been cancelled

Yuko Crease from the Australia Japan Wildlife Conservation and Education Foundation (AJWCEF) had requested a shorebird workshop for up to 30 Japanese students on Sat 28 Jan 2023 or Sat 25 Feb 2023. Yuko has emailed to say the workshop will not be held at this time.

Thanks to everyone who helped bring shorebird education to the public.

Best wishes to all for 2023

Sheryl Keates, Education Officer

Where do Shorebirds Roost During King Tides: There is no Easy Answer

Arthur Keates

During king tides many roost sites become inundated and shorebirds leave. In Moreton Bay the roost sites at Manly Boat Harbour, the Geoff Skinner Reserve and the Lytton Claypan are some of the roost sites that become unusable for shorebirds, for example.

So, where do they go?

Some species regularly roost in mangroves, like Eurasian Whimbrel, Grey-tailed Tattler and Terek Sandpiper. Other species too have been occasionally recorded roosting in mangroves: Ruddy Turnstone, Bar-tailed Godwit and strangely Far Eastern Curlew. In Moreton Bay, Goat, King and Cassim Islands are known to be used as roost sites for these species.

But it is only a small number of shorebirds that roost in Mangroves so where do the rest go? Recently, a team of QWSG counters investigated whether shorebirds that normally roost at sites in the southern parts of Moreton Bay moved to the Port of Brisbane during a king tide. Part of the reclaimed areas of the Port are not inundated by king tides.

The team of QWSG counters who conduct monthly counts at the Port compared recent count numbers with those present during a king tide in an attempt to shine some light on the question.

Of the small species, the total counts of Grey-tailed Tattler and Lesser Sand Plover showed a significant increase. These species have recently been recorded in good numbers at the Manly roost and Geoff Skinner Reserve. It is quite likely the increase in these species is because of birds displaced from those sites. The total counts for Red-necked Stint and the critically endangered Curlew Sandpiper for the first and second counts are however fairly similar between the normal and the king tide count.

Of the large species, the increase in the total count of Bar-tailed Godwit accounts a large proportion of the birds usually using the Manly roost site. However, the total count of Far Eastern Curlew was significantly lower.

In summary, the results provided a mixed picture with more investigation needed.

Here are comparisons of a few interesting total counts of waders:

Species	15 Jan count	22 Jan count	Difference
All waders at all sites	9564	11757	+2193
Sand Plover sp	611	967	+356
Greater Sand Plover	71	18	-53
Lesser Sand Plover	540	949	+409
Bar-tailed Godwit	1200	2115	+915
Far Eastern Curlew	504	357*	-147
Grey-tailed Tattler	673	1116	+443
Curlew Sandpiper	3202	3408	+206
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	79	696	+617
Red-necked Stint	1870	1867	-3



Manly Harbour roost site during ultra-high tide by Arthur Keates

QWSG extends its thanks to the Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd for arranging access for the second counts.

Correspondence between Keep Sandgate Beautiful Association (KSBA) and Foreshore Dog Off-Leash Area Project Team - BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL (BCC)

Letter from KSBA

On Sunday 18th December, KSBA set up a Shorebird Information tent on the Sandgate Foreshore at the northern end of the Dog Off-Leash area. This was in conjunction with Queensland Wader Study Group members. Our purpose was to observe the migratory shorebirds on the tidal flats, and to educate passers-by about the presence of the birds, their incredible feats of migration and the need for these birds to feed undisturbed.

In the three hours that we were there, we saw at least twenty people allowing their dogs to run free in the non-designated area. The dogs were chasing birds, and as the birds can only feed at low tide, this certainly impacts on the health and welfare of the sea birds.

Local residents frequently observe dogs off leash in this non-off-leash area.

This raises the following questions:

- Should members of the public call Council if they observe this?
- Will the Council act if a call is received?
- Are there Council officers whose role is to monitor dogs in off-leash areas?
- What is the consequence for dog owners?
- Council declared an off-leash area on a beach that was previously off-limits to off-leash dogs. Was a plan of monitoring compliance with the limits built in to this declaration and funded?

KSBA is also requesting Council improve the signage marking the northern end of the Off-Leash zone. Another dog silhouette, like the one marking the southern end would be more easily seen by dog owners out on the flats, than the current rectangular sign.

KSBA suggests a large bird silhouette facing north of the boundary would be a simple but effective reminder to dog owners to respect the boundary.

Ideally, KSBA would like to see a large sign with information about the Migratory Shorebirds that feed on the Sandgate Flats, which would help educate the public and contribute to better compliance with the rules.

At present, many dog owners are doing the right thing and staying within the boundaries. However, for those who are not complying, there seems to be no consequence for their actions, which will surely encourage their behaviour and encourage others to do the same.

The intention of the Off-Leash Zone was to protect Migratory Seabirds by confining dogs to an area not used by the birds. Surely consequences for non-compliance and clear signage should form an important part of the Council's management plan?

Reply from Brisbane City Council

RE: Monitoring and compliance with the dog off-leash boundary at Sandgate

Wed, 8 Feb, 13:19

Thank you for your e:mail.

We appreciate the great work that Keep Sandgate Beautiful Association (KSBA) and the Queensland Wader Study Group (QWSG) do to educate the community about the significance of migratory shorebirds and how to protect them.

Thank you for sharing your recent observations about dogs being walked off-leash at the Sandgate foreshore. It is disappointing that people were allowing their dogs off-leash outside of the designated off-leash area along this part of the foreshore.

Council encourages the community to report dogs being walked off-leash on the foreshore to help monitor this activity and inform dog off-leash compliance activities. To report this behaviour, residents can call Council's Contact Centre on 3403 8888, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Council will respond immediately to reports of off-leash dogs where there is an urgent risk to public safety.

If a dog attack is in progress and is urgent or life-threatening, contact Queensland Police Service immediately on 000. Otherwise, reports of unlawful activity are used to prioritise the timing of ongoing compliance.

We can confirm that Council continues to fund regular foreshore dog off-leash compliance patrols. Council compliance officers do issue fines to people walking dogs off-leash in the on-leash area of the Sandgate and Brighton foreshore. Council's compliance team also partners with the Queensland Police Service to undertake foreshore patrols to address unlawful behaviour, including dogs off-leash outside of designated off-leash areas.

There is a large amount of dog on-leash signage within the foreshore parks and at key entrances to the foreshore. Council compliance officers also provide feedback about locations that require compliance signage based on foreshore patrol activities.

In the coming months, Council will be carrying out a review of foreshore dog on-leash signage at Sandgate and Brighton, which will also consider the need for additional or changes to compliance and migratory shorebird education signs. You may have seen the dog on-leash compliance signs Council has installed at key foreshore entrances at Brighton, which include directions to the Sandgate foreshore off-leash area.

As part of the signage review, we are happy to consider your suggested dog on-leash compliance and migratory shorebird education signage.

Please contact us if you have any questions or additional feedback to share by e:mailing parks@brisbane.qld.gov.au.

Kind regards

Foreshore Dog Off-Leash Area Project Team - BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL

Editor's Note: I have included these letters as it shows how little regards the BCC has towards the welfare of shorebirds that reside in Brisbane. The letter shows their concern is their liability if someone is attacked by a dog rather than protecting the birds that they allow to run free.



Shorebird Dining Experience – Sandgate 18 Dec 2022

The “Dining” table was set up beside the path with Yatsu-higata Nature Observation Centre (YNOC) carved birds dining on their food items to fatten up for their migration.



The shorebird cut-outs were on a separate table with migration maps, so I showed people how far these birds fly on migration and made the point that imagine flying all that way, only to be disturbed by humans or dogs, when trying to rest or feed. We had water bowls and dog biscuits for the canines on leashes.



It was extremely disappointing to see so many people and dogs on the beach in what is supposed to be a 'dog on leash' area. We only saw 1 brave Eurasian Whimbrel on the beach with mostly unleashed dogs running wild. Without compliance officers, I can't see how it will improve any time soon. I'm not sure which beach is the worst for unrestrained dogs in "On Leash Areas"- Nudgee Beach or Sandgate?

Sheryl Keates, QWSG Educ Officer

Ecologists Learn from QWSG

Article by Deborah Metters

Late last year, a group of ecologists were treated to a back-of-house tour of the Port of Brisbane and Manly Harbour Roost to learn more about shorebird identification. All workshop participants had signed up to a year-long bird identification training series through EIANZ (Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand). The QWSG was delighted to assist with access to the Manly Roost and also provided scopes and shorebird identification expertise, thanks to Arthur and Sheryl Keates and Diedre Chrzescijanski.

QWSG Chairperson, David Edwards, set the scene with a talk at Swan Lake introducing participants to the plight of shorebirds within the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, and the role that QWSG has played in understanding shorebird population declines thanks to decades of regular shorebird count data. Guided by Craig Wilson, Head of Sustainability at the Port of Brisbane, we drove in convoy into the reclamation ponds at the port.

The shorebirds did not disappoint us! For some of participants, this was their first look at a flock of 3,000 plus shorebirds – all bunched together, loosely divided into the various species, mostly resting with the heads tucked in, facing into the wind. Some Curlew Sandpipers, Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, Red-necked Stints, Pacific Golden Plovers and Red-capped Plovers provided us with excellent close-up views.

The Grey Plovers, Bar-tailed Godwits, Whimbrels, Eastern Curlews, both species of knots and sand-plovers remained on the far side of the main reclamation pond, testing our scoping skills.

About an hour into the tour, one participant took me aside and asked, "Just confirming Deb that the Red-necked Stint doesn't have a red neck, is that right?". "Yes, that's correct", I replied. "And the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper doesn't have a sharp tail either?". "Yes, that's also correct". "And the Red Knot isn't red either?". "Yes, that's right. Welcome to the world of shorebirds!".

Of course, I explained that we were seeing shorebirds in their non-breeding plumage and that most of the birds were still quite thin (this was in late October) and had another five months or so to fatten-up before their return flight. We were treated to one Curlew Sandpiper still in its resplendent ochre-red breeding plumage, and if you had good scope-eyes you could see that the Grey Plovers still had quite dark bellies as remainders of their impressive breeding plumage.

The Manly Roost also put on a wonderful display of shorebirds with the late afternoon sun behind us. Ruddy Turnstones were tucked in along the rock wall and a couple of Broad-billed Sandpipers and one Marsh Sandpiper gave nice close views. The up and down 'oil well drilling' feeding motion of the Curlew Sandpipers compared to the comparative lazy feeding style of the Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and the frenetic pecks of the stints were discussed.

It is always a wonderful privilege to introduce people to shorebirds. To help make sense of the sea of grey. And to hear how others describe them to help create some system of categorisation.

For the entire year-long workshop visiting rainforests, wetlands, woodlands and urban sites across SEQ, we had not seen one bird species that was listed as threatened. On one visit to the Port of Brisbane and Manly Roost, we saw seven nationally-threatened species*! This was a clear-cut message showing how endangered this group of remarkable birds is, and the need for skilled shorebird identifiers to be involved in assessing any potential developments that may impact shorebirds.

The workshops organised by EIANZ were delivered in partnership with Birdlife Southern Queensland (BSQ) with Deborah Metters from Second Nature Environmental Services and Judith Hoyle from BSQ leading the workshops. Both Deborah and Judith have extensive expertise in bird identification by sight and sound and are passionate about teaching others. Many thanks to Craig, Arthur, Sheryl, Diedre and David for supporting these workshops. For more information, feel free to contact Deborah at deb@enature.com.au

*Nationally-threatened species listed as under the EPBC Act as: Critically Endangered - Curlew Sandpiper, Great Knot, Eastern Curlew; Endangered - Red Knot, Lesser Sand Plover; and Vulnerable - Greater Sand Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit.

Robotic traps and artificial intelligence deployed in trial to control feral cats in Queensland's wet tropics

ABC Far North By Mark Rigby Posted Mon 13 Feb 2023 at 7:45am

Robotic traps equipped with artificial intelligence are being used in a trial to control feral cats in Queensland's World Heritage-listed wet tropics area, near Cairns.

Key points:

- Specialised traps shoot a small amount of poisoned gel at feral cats, exploiting their natural grooming habits
- The trial in Wooroonooran National Park is the first of its kind in a tropical rainforest
- Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service says no animals except feral cats have been targeted or killed by the traps

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Rangers are trialling grooming traps which use light and image sensing technology to detect movement and artificial intelligence to determine if what it detects is indeed a cat.

The trial in Wooroonooran National Park is the first time the "Felixer" traps have been used in a tropical Australian rainforest. The technology has already been trialled in all other Australian states and territories.

Innisfail-based ranger Chris Roach says when the Felixer's artificial intelligence confirms its target as a feral cat, it shoots a tiny gel pellet containing sodium fluoroacetate, known as 1080 poison, onto the animal's fur.

"Because cats are such fastidious groomers, they lick that gel straight off and that's the end of that cat," Mr Roach said. "It's only 3 millilitres of gel and it contains only 8 milligrams of 1080 in it - so it's a very small amount, because cats are very susceptible to 1080.

"What we've got is a unit that is species-specific and one that will only target cats."

Mr Roach said the trap was tested in a non-lethal, camera-only mode for six months before it was loaded with pellets, and no animals other than feral cats had been killed by it during the trial.

The trap's developers, Thylation, state on their website there is some risk dingo pups could be targeted but Mr Roach said dingoes and other animals had passed the traps without activating them during the trial.



Animals that trigger the Felixer trap's motion sensors are photographed by its internal camera and the image analysed by AI. (Supplied: Department of Environment and Science)

'Shocking' cat numbers in wet tropics

Feral cats are among the biggest killers of native wildlife in Australia, and in far north Queensland also compete with native spotted-tailed quolls for food and habitat.

University of Queensland researcher Tom Bruce recently led the first ever systematic study of feral cat populations in the wet tropics and found the animals were distributed throughout the region, in far greater numbers than previously thought.

"I went to seven different sites which covered about 200 kilometres in the wet tropics and put camera traps every two kilometres along major roads and trails in the area," Mr Bruce said. "It was frankly shocking to see that they were in every national park and state forest that I went in when people had predicted they weren't going to be there."

Mr Bruce said his study and previous research into feral cat behaviour suggests they use roads through national parks. "The road almost acts like a highway for cats ... to make it easier to cross the forest and move to different patches within national parks."



The traps are set along roads in Wooroonooran National Park as research suggests cats use the roads to move through the rainforest. (Supplied: Department of Environment and Science)

Mr Roach said the trap trial was showing promising results. "Feral cat control is notoriously difficult, no matter where you are, and when you put it into a remote rainforest situation it suddenly gets a lot more difficult," Mr Roach said.

"We're two months into a three-month trial and we're only targeting a 10-kilometre stretch of road, so quite a small area, but have removed 25 cats from that area."

Development of the Felixer trap was partly funded by the Australian government, land management groups and other non-government organisations.

A Couple of Abstracts from Recent Papers

Accelerating declines of North America's shorebirds signal the need for urgent conservation action - Multiple Authors

ABSTRACT

Shorebirds are declining to a greater extent than many other avian taxa around the world. In North America, shorebirds, along with aerial insectivores and grassland birds, have some of the highest proportions of declining species of any group. Here, we apply a new hierarchical Bayesian model to analyze shorebird migration monitoring data from across North America, from 1980 to 2019, and present the most recent available estimates of trends for 28 species. Point estimates for survey-wide trends in abundance were negative for 26 of 28 species (93%). Despite challenges with low precision associated with migration count data, trends for 19 species had 95% credible intervals that were entirely negative. More than half of the species were estimated to have lost >50% of their abundance. Furthermore, estimated rates of decline have accelerated during the last three generations for most species. Point estimates of trend were more negative for 18 species (64%) during the most recent three-generation period in comparison to the previous three-generation period. Many species now exceed international criteria for threatened species listing. The analytic approach used here allows us to model regional variation in trends, although survey coverage and strength of inference were greatest in the eastern portions of North America (east of 100°W). We found the greatest declines at staging sites along the Atlantic Coast from North Carolina to Nova Scotia, and lesser declines along the Gulf Coast and in the midcontinental United States. The declines in shorebird populations reported here are worrisome and signal the urgent need for conservation action. In addition, it would be beneficial to validate these results through collection and analysis of complementary data, and to initiate demographic studies throughout the annual cycle to determine where and when declines are most likely to originate. This improved information will allow for development of more targeted efforts to reverse declines through conservation action.

No evidence for HPAI H5N1 2.3.4.4b incursion into Australia in 2022

Michelle Wille, Marcel Klaassen

Abstract

There is an ongoing and profound burden of lineage 2.3.4.4b high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) H5 on wild birds and poultry, globally. Herein we report the continued absence of HPAI in Australia from September – December 2022, in inbound migratory birds. Given the ever-changing phenotype of this virus, worldwide studies on the occurrence, or here absence of the virus, are of critical importance to understand the virus' dispersal and incursion risk and development of response strategies.

How can We Mitigate the Threats to the Shorebirds of Australia?

By C.H. Atbot

Mitigating the threats to the shorebirds of Australia requires a multi-faceted approach that involves both conservation and management efforts. Some of the key strategies that can be employed to protect these birds and their habitats include:

1. **Habitat conservation and restoration:** Protecting and restoring important habitats, such as wetlands, estuaries, and coastal areas, is critical for the survival of shorebirds. This can be achieved through the creation of protected areas, such as national parks and wildlife reserves, and through the management of coastal and wetland habitats.
2. **Control of human disturbance:** Reducing human disturbance is crucial for the survival and breeding success of shorebirds. This can be achieved through the creation of buffer zones around key habitats, the management of recreational activities, and the regulation of vehicle and boat traffic in sensitive areas.
3. **Predator control:** Addressing the impact of introduced predators, such as feral cats and foxes, and native predators, such as goannas and snakes, is critical for the protection of shorebird eggs and chicks. This can be achieved through trapping and poisoning programs, as well as the control of other factors that may attract predators to shorebird habitats, such as food waste and garbage.
4. **Sustainable fishing practices:** Implementing sustainable fishing practices, such as the use of fishing gear that minimizes bycatch and the protection of critical feeding areas, is important for maintaining the food supply for shorebirds.
5. **Pollution control:** Reducing pollution and contamination from sources such as oil spills, plastic litter, and agricultural runoff is essential for the protection of shorebirds and their habitats. This can be achieved through the implementation of pollution control regulations, the use of best management practices in agriculture, and the reduction of plastic waste through public education and outreach programs.
6. **Climate change adaptation:** Addressing the impacts of climate change on shorebirds is critical for their survival and resilience. This can be achieved through the management of habitats and migration patterns, the protection of critical feeding and nesting areas, and the development of strategies to reduce the effects of sea-level rise and changes in prey availability.
7. **Research and monitoring:** Conducting research and monitoring programs to better understand the population dynamics, migration patterns, and habitat requirements of shorebirds is important for developing effective conservation and management strategies.

In addition to these strategies, it is also important to raise public awareness about the importance of shorebirds and the threats they face. This can be done through education and outreach programs, the creation of public access programs, and the involvement of local communities in conservation and management efforts.

Effective conservation and management of shorebirds requires collaboration and coordination among government agencies, non-government organizations, and local communities. This will help to ensure that the conservation and management efforts are comprehensive, effective, and sustainable, and that the future of these important birds is secured.

In conclusion, the protection and conservation of shorebirds and their habitats is a critical issue for Australia, as these birds play an important role in maintaining the ecological health of our coastal and wetland environments. By employing a multi-faceted approach that addresses the key threats and conservation needs of shorebirds, we can ensure their continued survival and the health of the habitats that they depend on.

Editor's Note: C.H. Atbot is better known as Chat gpt, the AI program, so be careful what you read! When you do, you question some of the detail provided in the article. But.....????

Count Programme by Linda Cross

Last year's National Summer Count was hampered by flooding from unprecedented rainfall and strong swells from an ex tropical cyclone which reduced the number of sites that were surveyed. Thankfully the weather conditions for the 2023 count conducted over the weekend of 14 and 15 January were much more favourable.

Regrettably, 17 sites were not counted due to a variety of factors. Of the 95 sites that were counted, most were completed on the day (14 January) or within a few days of the actual count day. Five north Queensland sites were done in early January and Gladstone sites could not be counted until 27 January. All Sunshine Coast counts were counted between 17 and 24 January, while Moreton Island sites were counted on 10 January and St. Helena Island sites on the 25 January. The Tweed Heads sites were counted on 26 January.

The 2023 National Summer count produced a total of 29,779 waders from 95 count sites.

In the table below are the results for the National Summer count. Species listed as per IOC checklist. Also included in the last column are the totals for the 2022 count (from 66 count sites) for comparison.

Species	FNQ	CQ	GSS	SC	NMB	CMB	SMB	GC/TH	Totals 2023	Totals 2022
Bush Stone-curlew	1	1	-	-	-	7	-	-	9	1
Beach Stone-curlew	1	2	-	3	3	2	-	-	11	6
Pied Oystercatcher	28	24	144	11	124	181	133	4	649	605
Sooty Oystercatcher	-	3	1	3	1	-	-	2	10	7
Pied Stilt	32	17	-	1	1	-	14	4	69	334
Red-necked Avocet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Masked Lapwing	35	41	28	2	53	138	21	30	348	156
Pacific Golden Plover	1	171	22	101	66	430	25	-	816	566
Grey Plover	16	7	68	-	3	9	-	-	103	136
Red-capped Plover	12	115	184	27	124	214	45	-	721	447
Lesser Sand Plover	100	514	71	1	8	540	255	-	1489	1265
Greater Sand Plover	204	68	2	-	-	70	6	-	350	254
Black-fronted Dotterel	-	12	-	-	1	4	2	-	19	7
Comb-crested Jacana	-	-	12	-	1	-	-	-	13	3
Eurasian Whimbrel	35	319	9	91	139	417	87	15	1112	726
Far Eastern Curlew	37	123	146	29	767	611	204	24	1941	1272
Bar-tailed Godwit	91	38	1623	28	5571	1432	996	35	9814	6177
Black-tailed Godwit	17	-	2	-	1	6	41	-	67	492
Ruddy Turnstone	-	12	4	-	-	31	23	-	70	115
Great Knot	1213	1	679	-	108	467	40	-	2508	4062
Red Knot	4	-	50	-	6	4	-	-	64	7
Broad-billed Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	13	-	-	13	17
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	16	3	1	-	-	108	66	-	194	901
Curlew Sandpiper	28	14	30	1	23	3202	63	-	3361	1239
Red-necked Stint	6	202	27	4	665	2370	989	-	4263	2356
Sanderling	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	4
Latham's Snipe	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	3	24
Terek Sandpiper	151	20	25	-	-	-	77	-	273	363
Common Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Wandering Tattler	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
Grey-tailed Tattler	24	1	14	2	24	676	424	-	1165	1072
Marsh Sandpiper	7	-	46	-	-	14	9	-	76	65
Common Greenshank	16	13	-	-	7	8	24	-	68	72
Nordmann's Greenshank	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Unidentified small wader	-	15	-	-	-	95	-	-	110	-
Unidentified med wader	-	-	-	64	-	-	-	-	64	-
Total Wader Species	24	24	22	15	23	25	21	7	32	32
Total Wader Numbers	2076	1737	3188	369	7701	11050	3544	114	29779	22753

FNQ – Far North Queensland – Burdekin River, Cairns and Cooktown (5 sites). Six sites in the Burdekin River area were under water.

CQ – Central Queensland – Gladstone, Yeppoon and Mackay (12 sites). No count for Bundaberg.

GSS – Great Sandy Strait – Boonooroo, Maaroom and Hervey Bay (10 sites). No counts for Tin Can Bay.

SC – Sunshine Coast – Caloundra, Maroochy River and Noosa River (10 sites).

NMB – North Moreton Bay – Moreton Island, Redcliffe, Deception Bay, Bribie Island and Toorbul (25 sites). Two sites were under water and 1 site only partially counted.

CMB – Central Moreton Bay – Port of Brisbane, St. Helena Island, Luggage Point, Kedron Brook and Pine River (12 sites). No counts for 1 St. Helena Island site and 2 other sites in Pine River area.

SMB – Southern Moreton Bay – Victoria Point, Thornlands, Cleveland, North Stradbroke Island, Wellington Point, Thorneside, Manly and Lytton (14 sites). No counts for 2 sites in the southern section.

GC/TH – Tweed Heads NSW (7 sites). No count for the Gold Coast.

Note: There are 14 sub-sites within the Port of Brisbane complex but recorded as 1 site for the table.

In the table, 23 migratory (1 more than last year) and 9 resident species (1 less than last year) were recorded during the summer count. Migratory waders accounted for 94% (1% more than last year) of the count. Of those, 35% were Bar-tailed Godwit, Red-necked Stint count was 15% and Curlew Sandpiper was 12%. Resident wader numbers were 6% (1% less than last year) of the count with Red-capped Plover accounting for 39%, Pied Oystercatcher was 35% and Masked Lapwing 19% of the resident wader total. Central Moreton Bay sites recorded 37% of the total summer count followed by north Moreton Bay with 26%.

In the table below are the regional National Summer counts for the past few years for comparison

	Number of sites counted	FNQ	CQ	GSS	SC	NMB	CMB	SMB	GC/TH	Totals
2023	95	2076	1737	3188	369	7701	11050	3544	114	29779
2022	66	5167	190	447	327	3261	7746	5615	NC	22753
2021	85	103	270	7209	436	7231	10051	7333	87	32720
2020	97	720	827	2892	380	9277	11809	8622	10	34537

A week after the National Summer Count (22 January) the Port of Brisbane complex and Deception Bay claypan were counted again during a 2.77m king tide to find out how many waders use these critical king tide roosts. The counter for Kakadu Beach Bribie Island was unable to do the count on 15 January due to illness, so the count was done on 22 January instead. As Kakadu roost is also classed as a critical king tide roost, I decided to collate the numbers from those 3 count sites. The Port of Brisbane complex produced 11891 waders, Deception Bay claypan 478 and Kakadu Beach 2321 waders, making a total count of 14690 waders. Some of the highest counts include 4215 Bar-tailed Godwit, 3408 Curlew Sandpiper, 417 Far Eastern Curlew, 393 Great Knot, 21 Grey Plover, 1116 Grey-tailed Tattler, 957 Lesser Sand Plover, 667 Pacific Golden Plover, 246 Pied Oystercatcher, 192 Red-capped Plover, 2127 Red-necked Stint, 50 Ruddy Turnstone and 696 Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. Perhaps in the future further counts during king tides could be done to prove how valuable these sites are for waders.

In the table below are remaining records for juvenile Bar-tailed Godwit recorded by Arthur Keates Ted Wnorowski and Tony Longson. This exercise helps determine the breeding success of the birds on the breeding grounds.

Site	Date	Bar-tailed Godwit flock size	Juveniles in flock
Port of Brisbane complex (R3 pond)	06.11.22	278	14
Manly Harbour	07.11.22	1510	>32
Qld Aluminium Ltd Gladstone	11.11.22	3	3
Manly Harbour	13.11.22	900	>26
Manly Harbour	15.11.22	840	>25
Lytton No. 1 claypan	10.12.22	778	18

In addition to the juvenile Bar-tailed Godwit records, Arthur Keates also recorded the following juveniles:

Site	Date	Species	Flock size	Juveniles in flock
Manly Harbour	13.11.22	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	197	>10
Manly Harbour	15.11.22	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	215	>10
Manly Harbour	15.11.22	Grey-tailed Tattler	560	1

The vagrant Nordmann's Greenshank that was first recorded at the Cairns Esplanade in early 2021 and returned in the summer of 2022, has once again returned for the 2023 summer to the Esplanade and was recorded on 03.01.23 during the National Summer Count.

The other vagrant 'Semipalmated Plover' that has been seen since October 2021 has occasionally been recorded at Manly Harbour.

Other vagrants to our shores include 1 Asian Dowitcher at the Port of Brisbane complex on 06.11.22 and a Ruff recorded at the Port of Brisbane complex on 14.08.21 before it was heavily disturbed by twitchers and photographers. The bird then sought refuge in another restricted area within the Port of Brisbane complex away from people before finally moving to another restricted area (Manly Harbour) on 30.09.22 and was last seen in early November 2022.

Please feel free to make notes regarding levels of breeding plumage in the comments field alongside each species you count. I would also like to remind counters that Double-banded Plover could have arrived on our shores as I type this article, so please make a special effort to look through the smaller waders during your count.

As reported in the previous newsletter, stilts, avocets, ducks, cormorants and waterbirds continue to be in low numbers along the coast. However, many Chestnut Teal were recorded at the Port of Brisbane complex recently (see interesting sightings) and a smattering of stilts have been recorded at a few sites. Water conditions in inland Australia are probably keeping the birds in those locations.

A few extracts from counts appear below. Additional extracts (migratory and resident) can be found in the "Interesting wader sightings" section of the newsletter.

Pacific Golden Plover: Port of Brisbane complex (524) on 22.01.23, Shellgrit Creek entrance Mackay (171) on 25.01.23, Deception Bay claypan (143) on 22.01.23

Grey Plover: Boonooroo (67) on 14.01.23, Port of Brisbane complex (21) on 22.01.23 and Burdekin River 5 (16) on 08.01.23

Red-capped Plover: O'Regan's Creek westside Hervey Bay (300+) on 10.12.22 and (171) on 15.01.23 and Gregory Road Hays Inlet (110) on 14.01.23

Lesser Sand Plover: Port of Brisbane complex (1845) on 11.12.22 and (949) on 22.01.23

Greater Sand Plover: Port of Brisbane complex (250) on 11.12.22 and Burdekin River 5 (200) on 08.01.23

Comb-crested Jacana: Garnet's Lagoons Susan River Hervey Bay (22) on 10.12.22

Eurasian Whimbrel: Port of Brisbane complex (212) on 06.11.22, Toorbul (198) on 05.11.22

Far Eastern Curlew: Port of Brisbane complex (504) on 15.01.23, Toorbul George Bishop causeway (463) on 14.01.23, Dead Tree Beach Moreton Island (420) on 11.11.22 and Kakadu Beach Bribie Island (320) on 27.12.22

Bar-tailed Godwit: Mirapool Moreton Island (3470) on 10.01.23, Lytton Claypan No.1 (3010) on 08.01.23, Dead Tree Beach Moreton Island (2690) on 11.11.22 and Toorbul (2281) on 05.11.22

Black-tailed Godwit: Lytton Claypan No.1 (46) on 08.01.23 and Manly Harbour (42) on 10.12.22

Ruddy Turnstone: Port of Brisbane complex (50) on 22.01.23 and Manly Harbour (36) on 03.01.23

Great Knot: Maaroom (c1700) on 10.12.22 and (c650) on 14.01.23, Burdekin River 5 (c1000) on 08.01.23, Port of Brisbane complex (465) on 15.01.23 and Manly Harbour (420) on 10.12.22

Red Knot: Maaroom (11) on 10.12.22 and Lytton Claypan No.1 (24) on 10.12.22

Broad-billed Sandpiper: Port of Brisbane complex (14) on 22.01.23 and (13) on 15.01.23

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper: Port of Brisbane complex (840) on 06.11.22

Curlew Sandpiper: Port of Brisbane complex (3408) on 22.01.22 and (3202) on 15.01.23

Red-necked Stint: Port of Brisbane complex (2432) on 11.12.21, Geoff Skinner Reserve (1027) on 05.11.22

Sanderling: Mirapool Moreton Island (4) on 10.01.23, Barron River Cairns (1) on 12.12.22 and Pioneer River north bank Mackay (1) on 25.11.22

Latham's Snipe: Kinka Wetlands Yeppoon, Garnet's Lagoons Susan River Hervey Bay, Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone, Redcliffe Airport northside and Dohle's Rocks Road Pond all recorded 1 bird each from November 2022 to January 2023

Terek Sandpiper: Burdekin River Delta mangroves (150) on 08.01.22 and (71) at Acacia St Wellington Point.

Common Sandpiper: Wave Break Sand Island Gold Coast (2) on 03.11.22 and Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone (1) on 12.12.22

Wandering Tattler: Wickham Point (1) on 03.11.22 and 18.01.23, Manly Harbour (1) on 18.12.22

Grey-tailed Tattler: Port of Brisbane complex (1116) on 22.01.23 and Manly Harbour (580) on 03.01.23

Marsh Sandpiper: Maaroom (46) on 14.01.23 and (42) on 10.12.22, Dohle's Rocks Road Pond (36) on 10.12.22

Common Greenshank: Redcliffe Airport northside (22) on 10.12.22, Acacia St Wellington Point (21) on 14.01.23 and Deception Bay south (18) on 05.11.22.

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

Breeding records:

Beach Stone-curlew: Noosa River mouth sandbanks (2 adults and 1 chick on 16.11.22 and probably the same juvenile with adults on 24.01.23). Kakadu Beach Bribie Island (breeding behaviour recorded on 12.11.21, chick hatched 20.12.22 and observed as a well grown juvenile on 23.01.23).

Pied Oystercatcher: Maaroom (nest with 2 eggs) on 05.11.22. Kakadu Beach Bribie Island (2 half-grown chicks) on 06.11.22. Maroochy River Goat Island (adult pair feeding 1 young) on 07.11.22. Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone (1 chick) on 11.11.22. Kakadu Beach Bribie Island (adult pair with half grown chick) on 13.11.22. Noosa River mouth sandbanks (4 birds including 2 juvenile and 1 chick) on 16.11.22. Maaroom (nest found November count had hatched but no sign of chicks on December count) on 10.12.22.

Pied Stilt: Manly Harbour (1 on a nest) on 07.11.22, (pair nesting) on 15.11.22, (2 immature) on 03.01.23, (2 juvenile) on 13.01.23 and (2 juvenile) on 23.01.23. Wunjunga wetlands (8 juvenile, probably bred on site) on 25.01.23.

Masked Lapwing: Maaroom (3 x 1 week old chicks) on 10.12.22. Toorbul north (1 bird sitting on nest) on 05.11.22. Toorbul (1 young at foot) on 05.11.22. Kakadu Beach Bribie Island (6 birds including 4 chicks) on 13.11.22.

Black-fronted Dotterel: Kianawah Road Wetland (1 adult with 1 juvenile) on 14.01.23.

Red-capped Plover: Maaroom (a lone juvenile bird) on 05.11.22. Manly Harbour (1 chick) on 05.11.22. Port of Brisbane complex (1 chick in BS2 pond) on 06.11.22. Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone (2 chicks) on 11.11.22. Manly Harbour (1 adult with 1 runner) on 15.11.22. Kakadu Beach Bribie Island (mix of adults and juveniles) on 11.12.23. Port of Brisbane complex (1 runner in R3 pond) on 11.12.22. Kinka Wetlands Yeppoon (one nest) on 14.01.23.

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

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

Snail mail: 40 Thompson Road, Bellmere. Qld 4510 Phone: 5495 2758 Mobile: 0490 080 340

A reminder that Leg flag sightings must not be entered online during count entry. Please note that you can now enter flagged and banded sightings on the new website. If you prefer, you can email sightings to Jon Coleman (email address legflags@waders.org.au). You can also contact Jon, Phil or me for the Leg Flag Observation Report Form.

Happy counting.
Linda Cross.

Interesting Sightings

Interesting resident wader sightings

Bush Stone-curlew: St. Helena Island North (7) on 25.01.23, Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone (1) on 27.01.23

Beach Stone-curlew: Sandbank No. 1 Caloundra (3) on 03.11.22, Kinka Beach Yeppoon (2) on 14.01.23, St. Helena Island Pier (2) on 25.01.23, Reeder's Point Moreton Island (1) on 11.11.22, Cairns Esplanade (1) on 10.12.22 and Endeavour River claypan Cooktown (1 – unusual for this location) on 07.01.23. Other records for this species can be seen in the breeding records section of the Count Programme

Pied Oystercatcher: Port of Brisbane complex (240) on 22.01.23 and Manly Harbour (154) on 23.01.23

Sooty Oystercatcher: Wickham Point (3) on 03.11.22, Pioneer River mouth Mackay (2) on 25.01.23, Barron River Cairns (2) on 12.12.22 (Only second record for site. Last sighting (6) in October 1998) and Tweed River Entrance New South Wales (2) on 26.01.23

Pied Stilt: Kedron Brook Wetlands (55) on 11.12.22

Masked Lapwing: Kedron Brook wetlands (52) on 15.01.23, Luggage Point (39) on 15.01.23 and Bishop's Marsh Toorbul (38) on 05.11.22

Pacific Golden Plover: Wickham Point (1) on 03.11.22 (Only the second record for this site. Last record November 2001)

Black-fronted Dotterel: Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone (23) on 12.12.22 and (20) on 11.11.22

Not waders but of interest anyway

Magpie Goose: Port of Brisbane complex (229 – 3 birds nesting) on 11.12.22

Wandering Whistling Duck: Garnet's Lagoons Susan River (115) on 14.01.23 and Wunjunga wetlands Burdekin region (110) on 22.01.23

Plumed Whistling Duck: Wunjunga wetlands Burdekin region (100) on 22.01.23 and Maaroom (21) on 10.12.22

Black Swan: Garnet's Lagoons Susan River Hervey Bay (140) on 10.12.22 and Pelican Waters Caloundra (117) on 03.11.22

Grey Teal: Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone (100 – includes 16 ducklings) on 12.12.22

Chestnut Teal: Port of Brisbane complex (184) on 15.01.23

Buff-banded Rail: Kinka Wetlands Yeppoon (5) on 10.12.22 and Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone (2 adults and 2 chicks) on 11.11.22

Lewin's Rail: Kedron Brook wetlands (2 heard) on 11.12.22

Spotless Crake: Luggage Point (1) on 11.12.22

Brolga: Kinka Wetlands Yeppoon (13) on 05.11.22, Garnet's Lagoons Susan River Hervey Bay (3) on 10.12.22 and Nathan Road Redcliffe (1) on 14.01.23

Silver Gull: Sandbank No. 1 Caloundra (197) on 08.12.22, Port of Brisbane complex (182) on 15.01.23 and Cairns Esplanade (181) on 05.11.22

Greater Crested Tern: Maroochy River sand bar (865) on 20.12.22

Lesser Crested Tern: Amity Point sandbank (4) on 10.01.23

Little Tern: Port of Brisbane complex (592) on 22.01.23 and Burdekin River 5 (400) on 08.01.23

Common Tern: Maroochy River sand bar (2509) on 20.01.23 and (1010) on 20.12.22 and Noosa River mouth sandbanks (376) on 13.12.22

White-winged Tern: Garnet's Lagoons Susan River (16) on 10.12.22 and Noosa River mouth sandbanks (14) on 24.01.23

Black-necked Stork: Wunjunga wetlands Burdekin region (6) on 22.01.23 Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone (2) on 27.01.23 and Toorbul George Bishop Causeway (1 female) on 05.11.22

Little Black Cormorant: Wunjunga wetlands Burdekin region (200) on 25.01.23

Australasian Darter: Garnet's Lagoons Susan River Hervey Bay (12) on 10.12.22

Black Bittern: Endeavour River claypan Cooktown (4) on 07.01.23

Nankeen Night Heron: Cairns Esplanade (2) on 10.12.22

Great Egret: Cairns Esplanade (16) on 10.12.22

Pied Heron: Wunjunga wetlands Burdekin region (1 – a surprise visitor to this area) on 25.01.23

Pacific Reef Heron: Scarborough to Clontarf (2 – 1 white and 1 grey) on 14.01.23

Pacific Baza: Kinka Beach Yeppoon (1) on 10.12.22

White-bellied Sea Eagle: Luggage Point (4 – 2 adults and 2 young) on 15.01.23

Brown Falcon: Queensland Aluminium Limited Gladstone (1) on 12.12.22

Peregrine Falcon: Toorbul George Bishop causeway (1) on 05.11.22 and Maroochy River sand bar (1) on 07.11.22

Wader Watch by Jon Coleman

Hi everyone,

Welcome to wader watch for the period November 2022 to February 2023. As usual there were not only large numbers of our local green flagged birds resighted, but a good number of overseas birds recorded, including several birds returning to sites for another season. It's also great to see many re-sightings of the recently flagged Great Sandy birds being reported building up our knowledge base of movements and site use in both marine parks.

From November to mid-February 2023 1,049 records were received with the breakdown of those records shown below:

Green Leg Flag sightings seen in QLD

984 re-sightings of 436 birds carrying engraved green leg flags were made within Queensland during this period. This was made up of 16 species of shorebird.

Green Leg Flag Sightings seen Interstate

Nil Reports

Green Leg Flag Sightings seen Overseas

Bar-tailed Godwit

FMY- 31/01/2023, Miranda, New Zealand: Tansy Bliss

Yellow (WA) leg Flag sightings in QLD

Nil Reports

Orange (Vic) Leg Flag sightings seen in QLD

Caspian Tern

8H – 22/11/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates & Naho Mitsuhashi

8H – 05/11/2022, Buckley's Hole, Bribie: Dezmond Wells

Bar-tailed Godwit

Plain – 05/11/2022, Toorbul Wader Roost: Dezmond Wells

Plain-06/02/2023, Maaroom: Cheryl and Graham Ponter

CYE – 08/12/2022, Maaroom: Terry & Audrey Burgess

CYE – 04/02/2023, Maaroom: Arthur Keates

Curlew Sandpiper

HWU- -3/01/2023, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates

Great Knot

Plain – 15/11/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 Plain – 18/12/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 Plain – 22/12/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 Plain – 29/12/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 Plain – 12/02/2023, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 APN – 08/12/2022, Maaroom: Terry & Audrey Burgess

OVERSEAS FLAGGED BIRDS SEEN IN QLD**White over blue (Taiwan) leg flag sightings**Curlew Sandpiper

6T – 14/12/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter

Terek Sandpiper

588 – 08/12/2022, Maaroom: Terry & Audrey Burgess

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

Plain – 01/07/2022, Cunggulla Beach: John Lowry
 Plain – 28/10/2022, Cunggulla Beach: John Lowry
 Plain – 06/01/2023, Bushland Beach: John Lowry
 Plain – 04/02/2023, Maaroom: Arthur Keates & John Bell
 Plain – 07/02/2023, Maaroom: Chris Barnes
 ### – 12/02/2023, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 AA1 – 27/11/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 AA1 – 29/11/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 AA1 – 10/12/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 AA1 – 17/12/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates & Deb Metters
 AA1 – 22/12/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 AA1 – 27/12/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 AA1 – 03/01/2023, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 L75 – 17/12/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates & Deb Metters
 L75 – 18/12/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 L75 – 21/12/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 L75 – 29/12/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 L75 – 18/01/2023, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 L75 – 03/02/2023, Kakadu Beach: Terry and Audrey Burgess
 J62 – 29/12/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 J62 – 31/12/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 CM8- 06/01/2023, Bushland Beach: John Lowry

Red Knot

CT – 27/11/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 ET – 29/12/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates

Curlew Sandpiper

Plain- 31/12/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 Plain- 18/01/2023, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 Plain- 03/02/2023, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates

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

UT – 04/02/2023, Maaroom: Arthur Keates & John Bell

Blue over White and Blue (Japan) leg flag sightingsGrey-tailed Tattler

Plain – 12/11/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 Plain – 13/11/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 Plain – 13/11/2022, Manly Harbour: Sheryl Keates
 Plain – 29/11/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 Plain – 20/12/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 ### – 13/11/2022, Manly Harbour: Arthur Keates
 568 – 22/12/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 H06 – 02/01/2023, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter

Bar-tailed Godwit

C# - 18/11/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter
 C2 - 18/12/2022, Wynnum Esplanade: Tony Cotter

Black (Alaska USA) leg flag sightings

Nil Reports

White (New Zealand) leg flag sightings

Red Knot

###-04/02/2023, Maaroom, Arthur Keates & John Bell

Yellow Flagged Pied Oystercatchers from NSW

C4 – 25/01/2023, St Helena Pier: Arthur Keates and Wayne Matthews

K3 – 15/01/2023, Port of Brisbane: David Edwards

The following people and organisations contributed the data used in this report with apologies for any inadvertent omission:

Ana de Joux, Arthur Keates, Bernadette Kery, Brandon Hewitt, Cemone Hedges, Chris Barnes, David Edwards, Debbie Andrew, Deborah Metters, Dezmond Wells, Helen Leonard, John Bell, John Lowry, Jon Coleman, Leith Woodall, Linda Cross, Michael Daley, Michael Strong, Nicola Udy, Ofalia Ho, Penn Lloyd, Peter Rothlisberg, Phil Cross, Roland Odsey, Sheryl Keates, Stacey Prior, Terry and Audrey Burgess, Tony Cotter, Una Sandeman, and Wayne & Julie Cass.

Every record received is incredibly valuable so thank you to everyone who contributed their sightings. Please remember if your submitting sightings to use our web site and enter your records there as we can process them online, they're easy to enter and far easier to manage through that way. The web site is www.waders.org.au and click on the Report a Banded/ Leg Flagged Bird link on the home page. When completing a report only record what you see and don't assume anything in terms of which leg the flag is on, or any other details, we'll work with what you provide.

Wader ID Days

Shorebird ID Days - Toorbul

Monday 13 March 2023 - Meeting time 12 noon. 1.89m high tide at 13:23

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

To register for an outing, please send a text message to the leaders. Participants must comply with, the COVID-19 safe practices outlined in BQ's website:

<http://www.birdsqueensland.org.au/covid-19.php>

In addition to the COVID-19 safety practices applicable at the time, under the conditions of the access agreement for the roost, participants must wear enclosed footwear and are responsible for their own health and safety, including:

- wearing protective clothing at all times (eg. hat, enclosed footwear, sunglasses) and using sunscreen
- drinking water to avoid dehydration
- using insect repellent if necessary
- telling a leader about any health issues that may affect taking part in the field trip
- if feeling unwell, or concerned about someone else being unwell, immediately telling a group leader or another participant
- immediately telling a group leader or another participant about any injury suffered (including a slip, trip, fall and snake bite) or hazard that may cause injury to someone.

Anyone who does not comply with these conditions will not be allowed to enter the site or asked to leave.

The gate will be locked after we enter the site and late arrivals will not be able to enter.

Participation in this field trip is strictly limited to those whose registration with the leaders is confirmed by the leaders.

PLEASE NOTE: As the outings are subject to any restrictions applying in relation to COVID-19, please confirm attendance with the leaders the day before the outing.

ID Day Reports

Kakadu Beach Bribie Island Wader ID Report 24 November 2022

Last minute text messages and emails for this ID session brought the number of people planning to attend the outing (including the leaders) to 26. With this number of people, social distancing would be difficult in a bird hide, and as Covid-19 cases were on the rise, people were asked to bring and wear masks.

With a high tide of 2.53m, most of the waders were already assembled at the roost when we arrived. Weather conditions were fine, dry and warm with some high cloud.

As most of the flock were roosting at the southern end of the roost, Phil took half of the group to the other bird hide to view the birds from there, while I stayed with the rest of the group in the northern hide.

Disappointingly, wader species were low (9) with Bar-tailed Godwit making up most of the flock. With only a small number of Great Knot hiding within the large flock of godwits, it was difficult for the leaders to get the attendees to see them. Thankfully attendees got to view 3 smaller wader species to help learn the differences between them.

Green engraved leg flags (banded in south-east Queensland) were observed on Bar-tailed Godwit and a Great Knot but were too distant to read. The group observed 5 migratory and 4 resident wader species. The 2 Sooty Oystercatcher were seen by 2 members prior to the start of the ID session and although included in the species list below, they have not been included in the total resident wader species observed by the group. The count was entered into the QWSG database.

2 Beach Stone-curlew (1 sitting on nest), 6 Pied Oystercatcher, 2 Sooty Oystercatcher, 3 Masked Lapwing, 5 Red-capped Plover, 6 Lesser Sand Plover, 30 Far Eastern Curlew, c 1500 - 1600 Bar-tailed Godwit, 21 Great Knot, 11 Red-necked Stint, 19 Silver Gull, 1 Common Tern, 2 Little Pied Cormorant (F/O), 1 Australian White Ibis (F/O), 2 Striated Heron, 1 Great Egret (F/O), 2 White-faced Heron, 1 Little Egret, 1 Australian Pelican (F/O).

Birds seen: (F/O – Flying over).

Linda Cross.

Kakadu Beach Bribie Island Wader ID Report 23 January 2023

A total of 5 members and 2 guests joined the leaders at the bird hide for another wader ID session. With a king tide of 2.79m, the waders were already assembled at the roost when we arrived. Weather conditions were fine, dry, and warm with some clouds and a gentle south south-east wind.

During the time we spent observing the birds they were disturbed at least half a dozen times. Disturbance included Sea Eagles flying over, a boat with a lady photographer on the back pulling in close to the roost, and a paddle boarder that came too close. The last disturbance saw the birds circling over the passage for at least half an hour, and they were still airborne when we left.

Disappointingly, wader species were low (9) with Bar-tailed Godwit making up most of the flock. With only a small number of Great Knot and 1 lone Red Knot viewed briefly while hiding within the large flock of godwits, it was difficult for the leaders to get the attendees to see them. Thankfully attendees got to view 3 smaller wader species to help learn the differences between them.

Green engraved leg flags (banded in south-east Queensland) were observed on a few Bar-tailed Godwit and were added to the QWSG flag database. The group observed 6 migratory and 3 resident wader species. The count was added to the QWSG database.

1 Buff-banded Rail, 3 Beach Stone-curlew (1 immature), 4 Masked Lapwing, 10 Red-capped Plover, 12 Lesser Sand Plover, 10 Far Eastern Curlew, c 2000 Bar-tailed Godwit, 60 Great Knot, 1 Red Knot, 10 Red-necked Stint, 15 Silver Gull, 1 Australian White Ibis (F/O), 1 White-bellied Sea Eagle (F/O).

Birds seen: (F/O – Flying over, H - Heard).

Linda Cross.

Manly Boat Harbour Shorebird Roost ID Report 28 January 2023

The line of storms passing through south-east Queensland did not interfere with this field trip. However, observers were disappointed to find only 7 species of migratory shorebirds (in total less than 100 birds) together with 3 species of resident shorebirds; surprisingly including a Black-fronted Dotterel.

Compared to the ID Day held at this roost site on 23 January last year, a further 11 migratory species were recorded: Pacific Golden Plover, Greater Sand Plover, Black-tailed Godwit, Marsh Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Grey-tailed Tattler, Terek Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, Great Knot, Red Knot and Broad-billed Sandpiper,

The following species were observed at the roost:

White-faced Heron (1), Australian Pelican (1), Little Pied Cormorant (3), Buff-banded Rail (2), Pied Oystercatcher (c 100), Red-capped Plover (c 12), Lesser Sand Plover (4), Black-fronted Dotterel (1), Bar-tailed Godwit (8), Far Eastern Curlew (22), Eurasian Whimbrel (41), Red-necked Stint (c 15), Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (1), Curlew Sandpiper (3), Silver Gull, Australian Tern (6) and Caspian Tern (1).

by Arthur & Sheryl Keates

Book Sale

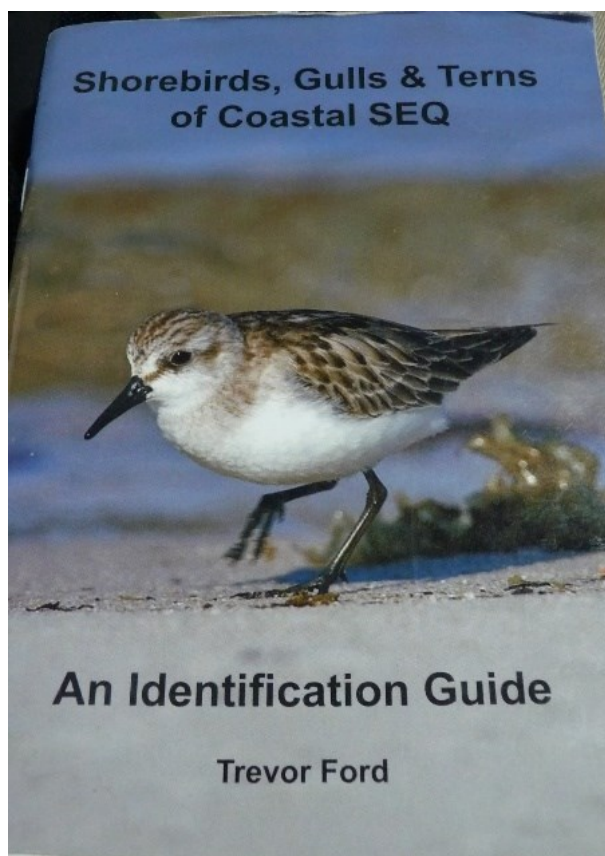
Stock of this very popular shorebird booklet produced by the late Trevor Ford is currently very limited and we would like to get it reprinted. However, funding is required to do this, and Kym Ford (Trevor's wife) has very kindly given us all of Trevor's bird books to sell, proceeds of which will be used to go toward a reprint.

There are many bird field guides for numerous countries, as well as bird and wildlife reference books. Phil has laboriously recorded all books into an excel file listing the books for each continent into separate worksheets. This file can be emailed to anyone who is interested in purchasing a book at a bargain price compared to retail.

Please contact us by email or phone if you are interested.

Phil Cross phillipcross50@gmail.com

Linda Cross 0490 080 340 xenus69@bigpond.com





The Queensland Wader Study Group is looking for monthly high tide roost counters.

In the last three months we have surveyed the Greater Mackay region and the Great Sandy Strait with great success.

Both these areas are wonderful and critical areas for shorebirds. However, surveys done every two years is not enough to provide data that can be used to protect the birds and their habitat.

So, if you can help, please contact our Count Co-ordinator
Linda Cross ph 07 5495 2758 Email counts@waders.org.au

Also Linda is wanting some help with the position of Count Co-ordinator.
Richard is sharing some of the load however, if you feel that you could take on a little section of the work or are wondering how you could help please contact Linda.
Linda Cross ph 07 5495 2758 Email counts@waders.org.au



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, Andrew Thelander president@birdsqueensland.org.au

Secretary, Janette Thurley secretary@birdsqueensland.org.au

Treasurer, Wayne Lock treasurer@birdsqueensland.org.au

Shorebird Education Program at Port of Brisbane's Artificial Roost for Year 3 Students

For just over 5 years, a group of birding volunteers from Queensland Wader Study Group, Birds Queensland and BirdLife Southern Queensland have assisted with the Moreton Bay Environmental Education Centre's Year 3 'Birds and Beaches, Dogs and Leashes Program'. Over the 5 years, 3,975 students from many different schools have visited the Port Roost to look for shorebird and waterbird species which may be found there.

More volunteers are needed for the 2023 year to assist the year 3 students when they visit the Port of Brisbane Roost and Hide in terms 1 (February and March) and 4 (October and November). There could be up to 12 groups coming through over both terms and with a pool of volunteers it is not envisaged that you would be required for all of the visits. Those volunteers participating in the program would need to be at the Port Roost from 12.45 - 2.15 p.m.

For any member interested in becoming involved, you will need –

- A knowledge of shorebirds (although you don't need to be an expert)
- You must have a telescope
- You must have, or be prepared to obtain, a Blue Card

Retired teachers are ideal but any member who wants to encourage Year 3 aged children to learn more about shorebirds and has the requirements above, will be very welcome. Four volunteers are required for each visit with two at each Hide.

If you would like to volunteer or should you require more information, please contact Rae Clark on (07) 3391 1642 or email rae.clark@bigpond.com.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined recently:

Belinda Charlton, Kathy Clark,
Merryl Cook, Paul Cuddihy
Cemone Hedges, Rod Gardner,
Mata Henry, David Mead,
Leander Mitchell, John O'Malley,
Eamon O'Meara, Mark Tarnawski,
Lisa Turner, Aidan Williams, Yang Wu

PLEASE CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR RENEWAL IS DUE!

QWSG CONTACTS

QUEENSLAND WADER

The Official Quarterly Publication of Queensland Wader Study Group

Website www.waders.org.au

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

MEMBERS of the MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE of the QWSG

CHAIRPERSON:	David Edwards	(07) 3262 2017	chairperson@waders.org.au
TREASURER	Judith Giles	0428 545 801	treasurer@waders.org.au
SECRETARY:	Peter Rothlisberg	(07) 3822 3759	secretary@waders.org.au

QWSG COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Robert Bush	0404 805 558	Dierdre Chrzescijanski	0439749149
Jon Coleman	0467 785 682	Peter Driscoll	0418 212 627
Paul Finn	0480 177 792	Andy Jensen	0404 348638

Note that QWSG AGM takes place after the issuing of this Newsletter so details may change.

COUNT COORDINATOR:	Linda Cross	07 5495 2758	Email	counts@waders.org.au
LEG FLAG COORDINATOR	Jon Coleman	0467 785 682	Email	legflags@waders.org.au
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Brenda Smith		Email	membership@waders.org.au
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	David Edwards	(07) 3262 2017	Email	gouldian6@bigpond.com

BQ PRESIDENT Andrew Thelander Email president@birdsqueensland.org.au

CORRESPONDENCE All correspondence to:
The QWSG Secretary,
PO Box 3138,
SOUTH BRISBANE,
QLD 4101.

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

SUBSCRIPTIONS Annual subscription rates:
Single: \$15:00
Student/Pensioner: \$10:00
Family: \$25:00
A receipt will be forwarded if required.

Forward application to:
Membership Secretary or QWSG Treasurer,
PO Box 3138,
SOUTH BRISBANE,
QLD 4101.

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

Copy Deadline for the next issue of Queensland Wader is May 14th, 2023

Contributions should be addressed to:

David Edwards, the QWSG Editor, 54 Elliott Street, Clayfield, Qld 4011

or E-mail to: gouldian6@bigpond.com

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

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Count Activities – 2023

QWSG High Tide – Monthly Count Program 2023

Sat 11 Mar	2.18m at 11:40		Sat 2 Sep	2.19m at 11:08
		\		Additional optional count; see Linda
Sat 1 Apr	2.12m at 06:29	Ask for message from Linda	Sat 16 Sep	2.03m at 10:10
Sat 6 May	2.07m at 09:38		Sat 14 Oct	2.13m at 09:12
Sat 3 Jun	1.97m at 08:29	Nat Winter Count	Sat 11 Nov	2.15m at 08:08
Sat 8 Jul	1.91m at 13:34		Sat 9 Dec	2.06m at 06:55
Sat 5 Aug	2.05m at 12:18			

Counters Rockhampton and north – please select a date as close as possible to the count programme Sat day with suitable tides to enable you to complete your counts.

Port of Brisbane Count Dates 2023

Sun 12 Mar	2.04m at 12:14	Meet	10:45	Sun 6 Aug	2.06m at 13:08	Meet	11:40
Sun 2 Apr	2.20m at 07:15	Meet	06:00	Sun 17 Sep	2.07m at 10:45	Meet	09:15
Sun 7 May	1.98m at 10:18	Meet	08:45	Sun 15 Oct	2.20m at 09:46	Meet	08:15
Sun 4 Jun	1.92m at 09:15	Meet	07:45	Sun 12 Nov	2.27m at 08:45	Meet	07:15
Sun 9 Jul	1.94m at 14:33	Meet	13:00	Sun 10 Dec	2.22m at 07:38	Meet	06:10

Because of the ever-present worry of Covid please check to see what Government restrictions apply

MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION

A reminder to members: please check to see if your renewal is due and please let the Treasurer know if you change your contact details.

I / We wish to join / renew: (Single: \$15; Family: \$25; Student/Pensioner: \$10)

Title:..... First name: Surname:

Address:..... Membership: \$.....

..... Postcode:..... Donation: \$.....

Payment enclosed: \$

Do you require a receipt? Yes / No

Phone: (Home) (Work) (Mobile).....

Email

How did you hear about QWSG?.....

Are you a member of Birds Queensland?

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

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

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

Signature Date:.....

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

Direct funds transfer to:

Qld Wader Study Group

BSB: 313 140 (Bank Australia)

Account number: 08305297

OR

Please post this form to: QWSG Membership Secretary

PO Box 3138,

SOUTH BRISBANE,

QLD 4101.

PLEASE CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR RENEWAL IS DUE!