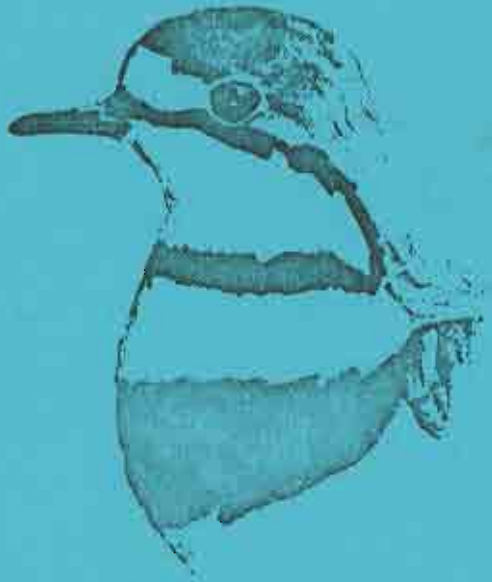


Angela

VICTORIAN WADER STUDY GROUP



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STUDY GROUP



VICTORIAN WADER STUDY GROUP

BULLETIN No. 6

JULY 1982

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EDITORIAL

The Role of the V.W.S.G.

When you are racing through semi-treated sewage on the Werribee Sewage Farm splashing yourself with black muck to run to a net, piercing through the rain to count a flock of stints or massaging your cramped feet while sitting huddled in an overcrowded hide with fifteen other wader enthusiasts, the question may arise..."Why am I doing this?"

Since the V.W.S.G. was formed we have achieved many things. We now know where the most important sites for waders are in Victoria; a picture of the relationship between coastal populations of waders is slowly emerging; and the use of these sites as moulting and pre-migratory fattening grounds is becoming clearer. Apart from the sheer enjoyment of it all, this work is vital to a knowledge of how to conserve Victoria's internationally significant wader populations.

Recently, the Victorian Fisheries and Wildlife Division appointed John Martindale to study the waders of Corner Inlet because of possible port development there. The division's move is a welcome one, and is no doubt due in part to the fact that V.W.S.G. members, participating in counts discovered that this area was of immense importance for waders. Australasian Wader Study Group counts show it to be the seventh most important place yet discovered for waders in Australia.

Since the V.W.S.G. nets started catching back in 1978, cannon netting has started in southern Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia and New Zealand. In Newcastle, cannon and mist-nets have been catching waders since the early 1970's. Mist-netting of waders also now takes place in Darwin and on the north coast of Tasmania. This surge of activity around the country will no doubt increase the number of banded birds exchanged between wader banders and greatly increase knowledge about wader migration strategies in Australasia. This activity makes it even more vital that the V.W.S.G. continue its research programme and help fill the gaps in our knowledge of waders, both resident and migratory.

Clive Minton visited Japan recently with a delegation from the Australian Government which discussed ways in which the two countries could fulfill their obligations to one another under the Japan-Australia Migratory Birds Treaty. Much was learnt on both sides about wader studies in the other country, and it is to be hoped that meetings of this kind can become a regular occurrence.

So, go on carrying cannons across fast-flowing tidal channels, braving the wind at Queenscliff and maybe even the sands of Corner Inlet; your efforts are starting to pay off.

BRETT LANE

HIGHLIGHTS OF JANUARY-JUNE 1982

The start to the year was memorable. The visit to Corner Inlet from 1-4 January has already been reported in lighter vein in the article on "Dream Island" by Ken Rogers in the last VWSG Bulletin. Suffice it to say here that the team endured four days of continual blasting by horizontally blown sand, and the vagaries on an unpredictable tide, to catch a most useful sample of 299 waders. This included 11 Large Sandplover (the first banded by VWSG - and only 10 had been banded in Australia prior to the visit to Broome in August/September 1981), 41 Mongolian Plovers (trebling the VWSG's previous total - including one originally banded from Newcastle, New South Wales) and 11 Sanderling (previous Australian total was only three). This success encouraged a further return to Corner Inlet over the Labour Day weekend in early March. This time we failed completely to catch a wader but were consoled by a nice catch of 40 Common Terns and the observation of an individually colour-banded Doublebanded Plover which had been marked as a chick near Lake Tekapo in South Island, New Zealand in November 1981. Once again unpredictable tides were a problem in spite of generally fine weather, but the biggest problem of all was with the boats.

Extremely hot weather on some of the planned catching days at Werribee in January and February caused problems. However a catch of 661 birds on the South Spit at Werribee on 20 February was most valuable - 28% of the 576 Rednecked Stints caught were already carrying bands, as were 17 of the 26 Redcapped Plovers caught that weekend. A catch of 237 Rednecked Stints at Yallock Creek was our first in Westernport Bay in February.

Throughout the summer the paucity of Curlew Sandpipers in the wader populations observed and the catches made was apparent. It would appear that this species has now had three consecutive relatively unsuccessful breeding seasons and the overall population level is noticeably reduced in relation to Rednecked Stints.

The Group made its best ever catch at Queenscliff on 27 March with a total of 736 birds. This provided valuable additional data on weight gains prior to departure on northward migration, the same of 19 Sharptailed Sandpipers being the best ever in March. Seventeen of these birds were females confirming previous indications of the earlier departures of males. The weekend of 27-28 March at Queenscliff also produced some interesting recaptures of banded birds, full details of which are given later in this report. Highlight was a Rednecked Stint banded in May 1980 in Hong Kong. There was also however a Sooty Oystercatcher which had been banded as a chick on nearby Mud Island eight years previously. It was also nice to recapture two of the Fairy Tern chicks which we had banded in the successful colony on the Spit at Werribee only a couple of months earlier.

In April and early May considerable effort went into obtaining samples of Doublebanded Plovers, which had not previously been caught at that time of year. Success was moderate with 57 being caught in three catches at Spectacle Ponds (Pt Cook), Yallock Creek and Stockyard Point - the latter being our first visit to this location and our first catch of any sort on Westernport Bay outside the summer season. However there were also failures, including a complete day spent at Spectacle Ponds on 9 May, where 500 Doublebanded Plovers were present but none were caught.

In early June a return visit was paid to Lake Victoria, near Pt Lonsdale, where nine Hooded Plovers had been caught in June 1981. Twenty-six birds were present but only three were caught, the extremely low water level making success difficult. A pleasing feature, however, was the observation of seven colour-banded birds still present in the flock from the nine banded the previous year. The highlight of June, however, was undoubtedly the mist netting at a new site, Bendigo Sewage Works, in mid-June. Seventy waders were caught including 43 Redkneed Dotterel (doubling the Group's previous total) and 16 Black-fronted Plover (trebling our previous total). Valuable information was gained on ageing these infrequently handled species.

The period ended as it began - with a visit to Corner Inlet and another "accident" with a firing box by a member who shall be nameless (the author of the "Dream Island" article in the last VWSG Bulletin!). In January he accidentally fired the net prematurely - this time he switched in and therefore fired the wrong net (luckily for the 200 Rednecked Stints at the new site at Barry Beach). Let us hope that lightning doesn't strike three times in the same place!

Full details of recoveries of waders which show movement from their banding place, and of similar sightings of colour-banded and colour-dyed birds, are detailed as usual later in this Bulletin. Particularly pleasing was the report of a Bartailed Godwit which had been banded in Botany Bay near Sydney when the Group visited there in March 1981. It was recovered in South Korea on 10 May 1982, presumably again on the way to its breeding grounds in Arctic Siberia. A new feature of this report is the inclusion of some interesting local recaptures of waders banded by the Group. There are a number of examples of birds being recaptured in the last few months which were banded at Werribee as long ago as 1976. Some of these have now been recaptured as many as six times - old friends! This recapture data will become ever more valuable as the years progress.

C D T MINTON

LOCATIONS OF WADERS CAUGHT IN VICTORIA

	<u>TO DEC 1981</u>	<u>JAN-JUNE 1982</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Werribee	16,657	854	17,511
Westernport Bay	2,932	367	3,299
Queenscliff/Point Lonsdale	1,328	784	2,112
Corner Inlet	886	301	1,187
Anderson's Inlet	988	-	988
Altona	198	18	216
Seaford Swamp	98	-	98
Bendigo (Sewage Farm)	-	70	70
Mud Island	35	-	35
Seaspray (Lake Reeve)	18	-	18
	<u>23,140</u>	<u>2,394</u>	<u>25,534</u>

Totals include 22,508 newly banded birds and 3026 retraps of 29 species.

WADER BANDING TOTALS

CATCHES IN VICTORIA - JANUARY TO JUNE 1982

	<u>NEW</u>	<u>RETRAP</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Pied Oystercatcher	18	18	36
Sooty Oystercatcher	1	1	2
Masked Lapwing	19	-	19
Red-kneed Dotterel	43	-	43
Hooded Plover	2	1	3
Mongolian Plover	40	1	41
Double-banded Plover	60	1	61
Large Sand Plover	11	-	11
Red-capped Plover	41	21	62
Black-fronted Plover	16	-	16
Red-necked Avocet	3	-	3
Ruddy Turnstone	15	-	15
Terek Sandpiper	2	-	2
Red Knot	1	-	1
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	58	2	60
Rednecked Stint	1464	343	1807
Curlew Sandpiper	182	19	201
Sanderling	11	-	11
	<u>1987</u>	<u>407</u>	<u>2394</u>

REPORT ON THE VICTORIAN RESULTS OF THE
AUSTRALASIAN WADER STUDIES GROUP
NATIONAL WADER COUNT - 6th-7th FEBRUARY, 1982

The Victorian part of the A.W.S.G. National wader count was a great success, with the best coverage of Victorian wetlands ever achieved. Inland areas were particularly well covered. One hundred and eighteen people participated in Victoria and over 136,000 birds were counted. Table 1 summarises the results for each area.

As can be seen, inland areas accounted for over 36,000 birds. The Swan Hill-Kerang Lakes were comprehensively covered, and are clearly a major site for waders (13,000+ birds). Good inland coverage would also account for the considerably higher count of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers (25,700, compared to 18,400 last year). Banded Stilt numbers were much higher than last year (7,900 compared to c.1,300). This reflects the movement of large numbers of this species into South-eastern Australia evident from counts in South Australia as well (e.g. 59,000 Banded Stilts on The Coorong!). Most of the large number of Avocets counted were on lakes in the Horsham area. Another exciting fact to emerge from the better inland coverage was the high proportion of Red-capped Plovers on inland sites (3,040 compared to 1,055 on the coast).

Despite equal coastal and better inland coverage, numbers of Curlew Sandpipers were much lower than in previous counts. This decline was particularly marked in Port Phillip Bay. V.W.S.G. banding data have revealed that for the last two Northern Hemisphere summers, Curlew Sandpiper breeding success has been very low. This is reflected in the very low numbers of juvenile birds in catches. Poor recruitment has obviously left stocks somewhat depleted. This illustrates the value of banding data in understanding count trends.

Table 2 lists the numbers of some wader species at the three main coastal wader sites over the last three years of counting (sources; Dann, 1980; Marindale, 1981). The 1979 count, conducted in December, was not as complete because of insufficient information about the whereabouts of wader roosts in Corner Inlet. Despite this, some interesting points emerge.

1) The total number of Pied Oystercatchers in Victoria appears to have risen in the last year, despite equal coverage of the coast. (This species was not counted in December, 1979).

2) Eastern Curlew numbers in Westernport and Corner Inlet increased. In the latter area this probably reflects better coverage. This contrasts with a decline in the species in Port Phillip Bay.

3) Almost all of the total decline in Red-necked Stint numbers in Victoria occurred in Port Phillip Bay.

4) The decline in the Curlew Sandpiper was consistent in the three areas (allowing for incomplete coverage of Corner Inlet in December, 1979)

TABLE 1

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	TOTAL
Pied Oystercatcher	61	50	81	26	153	7	932	-	15	24	-	-	1349
Sooty Oystercatcher	11	-	-	3	1	-	96	-	-	-	-	-	111
Masked Lapwing	181	649	417	174	498	71	20	127	60	-	383	1580	4160
Banded Lapwing	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	229	231
Grey Plover	-	65	-	53	-	-	333	-	-	-	-	-	451
Lesser Golden Plover	14	37	16	59	76	120	3	-	-	-	-	-	325
Red-kneed Dotterel	-	-	33	8	-	-	-	1	-	-	148	611	801
Hooded Plover	165	2	-	-	5	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	174
Mongolian Plover	-	48	-	43	7	-	130	-	-	3	-	-	231
Double-banded Plover	10	-	-	1	8	-	-	5	-	-	-	3	27
Large Sand Plover	-	3	-	-	4	-	16	-	-	-	-	-	23
Red-capped Plover	227	315	109	10	82	18	60	131	44	59	1327	1713	4095
Black-fronted Plover	-	7	3	1	-	-	-	-	6	-	2	93	112
Black-winged Stilt	2	81	231	74	-	-	-	21	-	-	744	3028	4181
Banded Stilt	-	1950	506	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1132	4312	7900
Red-necked Avocet	-	670	619	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	540	2869	4698
Ruddy Turnstone	249	7	4	53	60	-	112	-	-	-	-	-	485
Eastern Curlew	-	21	25	-	1286	30	1723	-	-	19	-	-	3104
Whimbrel	1	-	-	6	13	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	21
Wood Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Grey-tailed Tattler	4	35	1	1	6	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	51
Common Sandpiper	-	2	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Greenshank	8	138	78	30	75	179	288	24	-	-	23	114	957
Marsh Sandpiper	-	72	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63	35	178
Terek Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	9	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Latham's Snipe	8	94	1	112	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	13	229
Black-tailed Godwit	-	2	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	4	52
Bar-tailed Godwit	-	150	21	3	286	-	6376	-	-	52	-	-	6888
Red Knot	24	220	25	120	6	-	2700	4	-	-	-	-	3099
Great Knot	-	55	-	65	-	-	370	-	-	-	-	-	490
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	1000	6367	6558	170	89	666	247	750	1306	1	5686	2962	25766
Peitoral Sandpiper	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Red-necked Stint	1278	5176	11604	1700	4507	3000	12175	3600	375	110	1802	1183	46510
Curlew Sandpiper	1	3025	2285	800	2728	650	3700	300	-	-	1286	4530	19305
Sanderling	248	-	-	-	-	-	111	-	-	-	-	-	359
Ruff/Reeve	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Australian Pratincole	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	12	17

TOTAL 3484 18991 27134 3511 9899 4743 29397 4966 1809 268 13038 23640 136789

A = S.A. Border - Warrnambool, B = Bellarine Peninsula, C = Western Shores Port Phillip, D = Eastern Shores Port Phillip (incl. Mud Is.), E = Westernport Bay, F = Anderson's Inlet, G = Corner Inlet & Shallow Inlet, H = Jack Smith's Lake, I=Gippsland Lakes, J = Mallacoota Inlet, K = Kerang-Swan Hill Lakes, L = Other Inland areas

TABLE 2 : COMPARISON OF COASTAL POPULATIONS OF SOME WADER SPECIES IN VICTORIA, 1979 TO 1982

SPECIES	TOTAL				LOCATION							
					PORT PHILLIP BAY			WESTERNEPORT BAY			CORNER INLET	
	1979	1981	1982	NC	1979	1981	1982	1979	1981	1982	1979	1981
Pied Oystercatcher	NC	1182	1349	NC	120	156	NC	124	153	NC	823	932
Grey Plover	149	464	451	124	31	118	0	0	0	25	433	333
Mongolian Plover	110	261	231	29	83	91	1	0	7	80	172	130
Ruddy Turnstone	250	274	485	125	62	64	72	82	60	8	21	112
Eastern Curlew	1803	2782	3104	236	113	46	652	914	1286	899	1563	1723
Bar-tailed Godwit	6094	5485	6888	364	187	174	229	280	286	5500	4965	6376
Red Knot	1834	1279	3099	209	426	365	34	0	6	1560	850	2700
Great Knot	48	291	490	18	216	120	0	0	0	30	74	370
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	13344	18404	25766	12369	11075	13095	293	213	89	111	80	247
Red-necked Stint	40585	57964	46510	17232	29160	18480	4800	3337	4507	10450	14527	12175
Curlew Sandpiper	15369	30441	19305	10367	20099	6110	3580	3222	2728	1103	5758	3700

5) For the less abundant species (e.g. Mongolian Plover, Turnstone, Red Knot), the relative importance of the three sites is similar comparing 1981 with 1982 data. This suggests that even in these species, discrete populations occur along the Victorian coast, a suggestion proposed by Dann (1980) for the more abundant species.

I would like to thank the following people for their assistance with the count:-

* Peter Dann, Richard Alcorn, Richard Loyn, Margaret Cameron, Claire Appleby, Tom Lowe and Chris Sonter for organising coverage of regions.

* The Victorian Fisheries and Wildlife Division for providing boats and personnel for Corner Inlet.

* Alexandra Djurovich for entering count data onto computer

* All those 118 people who braved the sweltering heat to count waders.

The next national project of the A.W.S.G. in the Hooded Plover Survey on October 16th - 17th, 1982. I hope most members will help with this, so that we can see what has happened to Hooded Plovers in Victoria since the V.W.S.G. survey in 1980.

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BRETT LANE

"GREATER AND LESSER SAND PLOVERS

I read with interest the identification paper on these two species (*British Birds* 73:206-213). I see the difference between them as lying in their character. The Lesser Sand Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*) is quite a pleasing little bird. The Greater (*C. Teschenaultii*) strikes me as an ugly brute, with a body too small for its legs, a head too large for its body and a bill too large for its head. Perhaps, like the camel, the Greater Sand Plover was designed by a committee?"

M.J. Rogers, 195, Vicarage Road, Sunbury,
Sunbury-on-Thames, M'x, England.

(With acknowledgements to *British Birds* (Vol. 75 No.2, Feb. 1982) which contained this description of a strikingly practical method of identification. Eds.).

THE TECHNIQUES OF PROCESSING WADERS

A N H ROBERTS

INTRODUCTION

The original, and still important purpose of banding birds was to study their migration. It has become apparent that other information about the birds could also be obtained from banding studies. From the conservation point of view, information about feeding sites, wintering and moulting areas, and breeding territories can be obtained. From the scientific aspect, the moult, and the differences in behaviour between age groups, the sexes, and different races can also be obtained and are of interest.

However much one improves one's catching technique with experience, there is still a risk to the bird in trapping it. It is therefore extremely important that the maximum information is obtained from each bird caught. Obtaining this information is known as processing, and the object of this paper is to describe how to obtain this information with the minimum discomfort to the bird.

AGEING

In most species, it is possible to separate first year waders from more adult birds. These age differences are extremely important, as they can give information about the breeding success from year to year of the population. Secondly, the different age groups will often behave differently in their moult, movements, and especially mortality. The younger birds may show different, or no return migration during the next breeding season. For example, the Red Necked Stint (*Calidris ruficollis*) first year birds spend their first year in Australia instead of returning to Siberia with the breeding adults.

The technique of ageing is based on one of four characteristics:-

A. Distinctive Feathers

The plumage that the bird first obtains after hatching is downy. During the first

few weeks of life, feathers of an adult structure, but often differing in their markings from the final adult feathers are grown. The bird is then said to be in juvenile plumage. Typical ways in which these feathers differ in the different groups of waders are shown in Figure 1. Typical examples of these are the buff fringes in the Red Necked Stint and Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*), and the sub-terminal bands in the Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*) and Double Banded Plover (*Charadrius bicinctus*). Much less obvious are the differences in the colours in such species as the Eastern Curlew (*Numenius madagascariensis*), Bar-Tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*) and Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*).

B. Feather Wear

A grown feather is dead, and because the bird is therefore unable to replace the feather cells, wear occurs. This is of course the reason that a bird must moult its flight feathers, normally every year. The amount of wear of the feathers, and especially the primaries, is detectable, and differences between recently moulted and older feathers are very obvious.

The importance of this is that, for example, the Red Necked Stint can normally be aged from January onwards because the adult will have new flight feathers, but the juveniles will have six months old worn feathers. For a fuller description of ageing in this species see Forest (1981).

The other important fact about feather wear is that white or pale feathers (or part of a feather) wear more rapidly than dark feathers. This means that ageing based on buff tips becomes less reliable as the juvenile bird becomes older, and it is important to look for unworn feathers. These are most commonly found in the inner median coverts and the scapulars above the tertial feathers. The wear of the pale tips is not important when sub-terminal bands or the colour pattern of the tertials are used for ageing.

C. Moult

Although there is not yet sufficient data for Australian waders, it is known that in some species, either moult strategy and/or timing differs between the age groups. This subject is worth an article on its own when more information has been recorded.

D. Colour of Soft Parts

The colour of the eyes, eye rings, legs, palate and beak is often a very useful guide to ageing birds. This is especially true in raptors and some passerines.

In waders, its use at present is restricted to the Oystercatchers, but it may be found to be of use in the Stilts and Avocets.

In the European Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus), with experience, birds can be aged at first, second, third year or adult.

SEXING

There are three general characteristics for sexing birds. These are:-

- A. Plumage differences
- B. Size differences
- C. Differences in the cloaca and presence or absence of a brood patch.

A. Plumage Differences

Waders show much less difference between the sexes than many passerines, and with many species no external differences are known. Some species, for example the Red-capped Plover (Charadrius ruficapillus) are distinguishable in the field, and several other species, for example the Double-banded Plover and the Ruddy Turnstone (Arenaria interpres) are sexable in the hand, but only in their breeding plumage. It should be noted that most of the examples given are Charadriidae, and in general it is this family which displays distinct sexual plumage characteristics when in their breeding plumage. Fuller details of the Northern Hemisphere breeding waders are given by Prater, Marchant and Vourinen (1977).

B. Size Differences

Differences in size amongst one species may be related to individual variation in the same community (as in humans), to sexual differences, to different races of a species, or to the fact that if a species occurs in a large area with a range of temperature, the birds in the higher temperature zone will be smaller (Bergmann's Rule). Great care must be taken, therefore, before using size differences as a sexing characteristic, and where possible results should be checked against museum specimens which have been sexed by dissection. If this is not possible, it may be possible to correlate size differences with other sexing characteristics which are obvious for a part of the year. Finally, if in an homogeneous population of waders, measurements fall into two groups with approximately equal numbers, then there is probably a sexual size difference. A good example of an homogeneous population is a large catch of one species of wader. The birds are a group that is in one place at one time. If by banding recoveries members of this group can be shown to have identical migration routes and breeding sites, then homogeneity is assured.

A large part of the work of the V.W.S.G. has been looking for such size differences, and this is why, whenever possible, birds are measured. The measurements that have been found to be most useful are the wing length and the total head length, and these are discussed later.

C. Differences in Cloaca and Brood Patch

When there are differences between the sexes of cloacal shape and the presence or absence of a brood patch, these differences only occur during the breeding season. It is therefore only waders who breed in Australia that need to be considered. The females of at least some species of wader do moult a brood patch. This is an area on the abdomen, between the legs and extending up to the ribs, where all the

feathers are lost. In this area of exposed skin, the blood vessels become larger, and the area redder and thicker. The idea of this is that the eggs and small young can be pressed against this skin and kept warm during the incubation period. In waders, it is normal for the male to share the incubation, but they do not develop a fully vascularised brood patch. These remarks do not apply to many sea birds, and some passerines; so each species should be treated separately. The way to observe a brood patch is to hold the bird upside-down, pointing away from one, with the legs under control, and then blow firmly on the abdominal feathers.

Although the difference in shape of the cloaca in males and females is a useful guide in some passerine families, it has not been widely used for waders, but merits further investigation.

Finally, there is one species, the Red Necked Avocet (*Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*) which may be able to be sexed on bill shape. This is the case with the American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*), but further Red Necked Avocets need to be caught to evaluate the accuracy of the method.

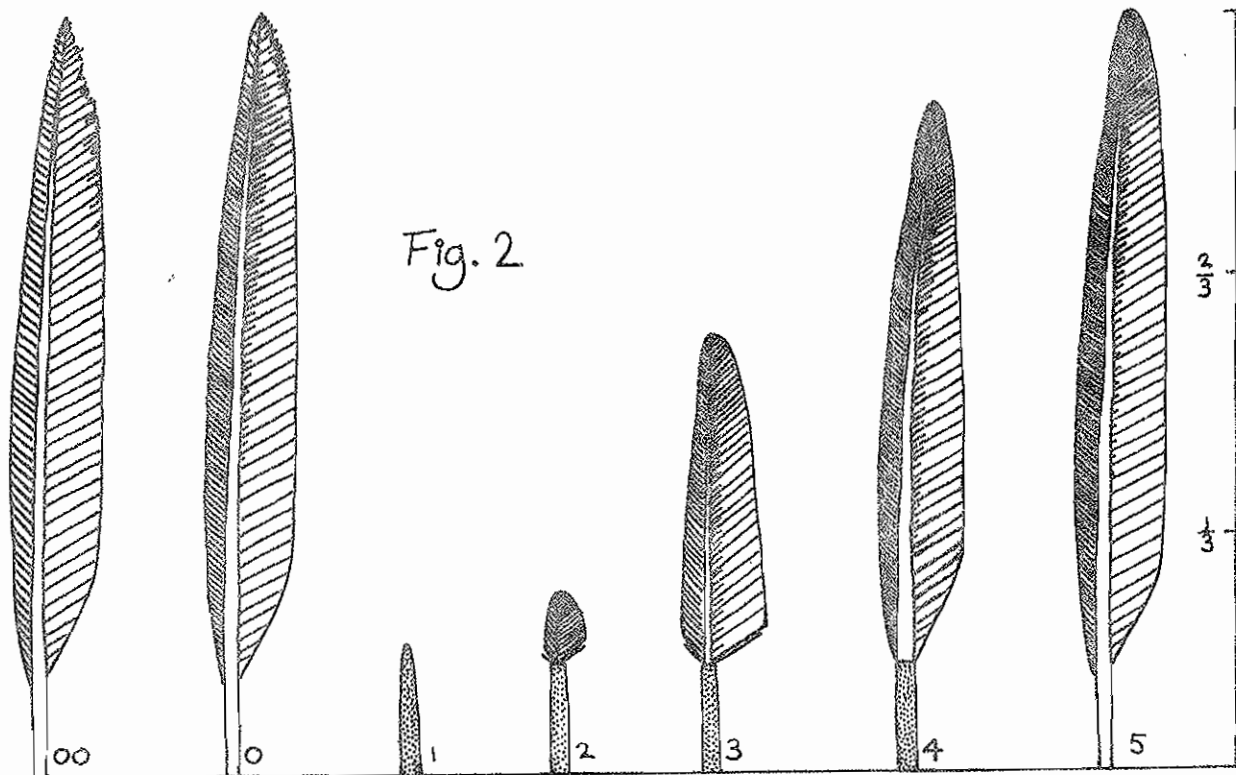
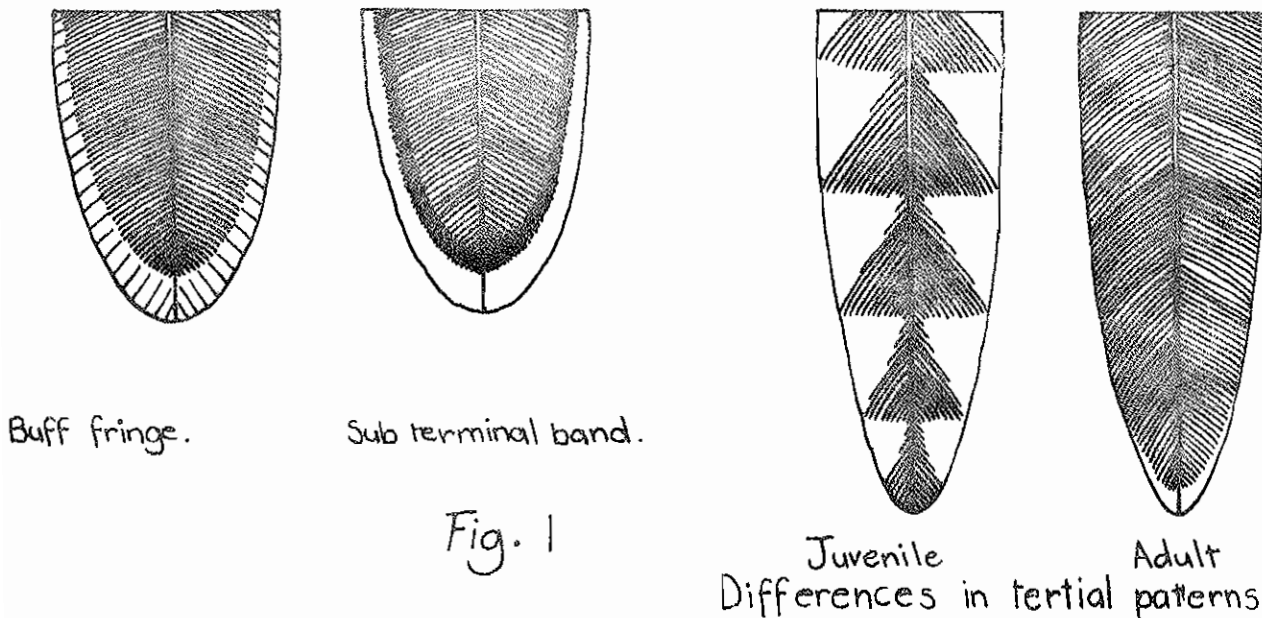
MOULT

After ageing and sexing the bird, the next part of processing is to see if the bird is moulting, and if so, what stage it has reached. The study of moult is important because, along with breeding, wintering and two migrations, it is a major annual stress on the wader. The reason that moult is a stress is that it requires a large amount of energy, most importantly to grow the new feathers, but also to keep warm with less efficient body feathering, and to fly with less efficient wings. The bird is also in greater danger because of its reduced ability to take-off rapidly, and this is particularly the case with a rapid moult as more flight feathers are lost at any one time. Waders fit moult between breeding and wintering, but may migrate before, partway through or at the end of their moult.

The way that each species fits in these events is known as its moult strategy, and was fully described by Minton (1974). In Australia, where the Southern hemisphere is the Siberian wader's winter, the period is much less stressful than for other waders that winter in more severe parts of the world. It is interesting that here some waders, for example the Sharptailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*), can tolerate an extremely long moult.

Although each adult bird normally does a complete wing, tail and body moult once each year, it has been found that a good guide to the state of moult is to look only at the primary wing feathers. In all waders there are ten primaries, and a score of 0-5 is given to each feather. An old feather is scored 0. When the feather is lost, the pin appears. This is a chitin covered spike in which the new feather forms and which has an excellent blood supply. A gap or a "feather in pin" scores 1. The true feather, now of course dead, sprouts from the top of this pin and continues to grow from its base until it is of full length. At the end of the growth, the blood vessels in the base regress, and the base colour changes from dark grey to white or very pale grey. When this has occurred, the new feather scores 5. The intermediate stages and scores are shown in Figure 2.

The usual technique for reading and recording scores is the number of feathers with each score. For example if there are four new feathers, two with score 4, one with score 3, one with score 1, and two old feathers—this is recorded as $5^4 4^2 3^1 1^1 0^2$. The large figure is the feather score and the small superscript the number of feathers with that score. Some people use the nomenclature N (or new) for the score 5, but this involves an extra process in the calculation of the moult score. When processing the bird it is easy to miss a feather with score 1, particularly if the pin has not started to grow,



More than one year old.
Very worn and light brown.

More than six months old.
Tip abraded and browner than when new.

Gap or pin only.

Sprouting but less than one third grown.

Between one third and two thirds grown.

Between two thirds and full grown.
Blood vessels still at base.

Full grown.

and it is the responsibility of the scribe to add the number of feathers for each bird, and to tell the processor if he has missed one (or more). Occasionally when a bird has had an arrested moult the previous year's feathers more than one year old may be present as well as the normal old feathers. These are recorded as 'old 0' feathers and written as 00.

A moult score between 0 and 50 can now be calculated by adding the ten individual scores.

MEASUREMENTS

Wing length

The idea of wing measurement is to measure the length of the flattened, straightened wing from the carpal joint to the end of the longest primary (Fig. 3). The problem is to do it accurately and consistently. It does not matter if one's wing length measurements differ from another person's measurements as long as the difference is consistent. It is important to standardise regular measurements by both people measuring 100 birds. The method of obtaining consistent results is to:

- 1) Hold the bird firmly in your non-dominant hand so that it can not flap or obtain a purchase for its legs.
- 2) Make certain that the carpal joint is firmly held against the butt of the ruler.
- 3) Keep the wing as close to its normal folded position alongside the bird.
- 4) Use the fingers of the hand not holding the bird to flatten and straighten the wing.

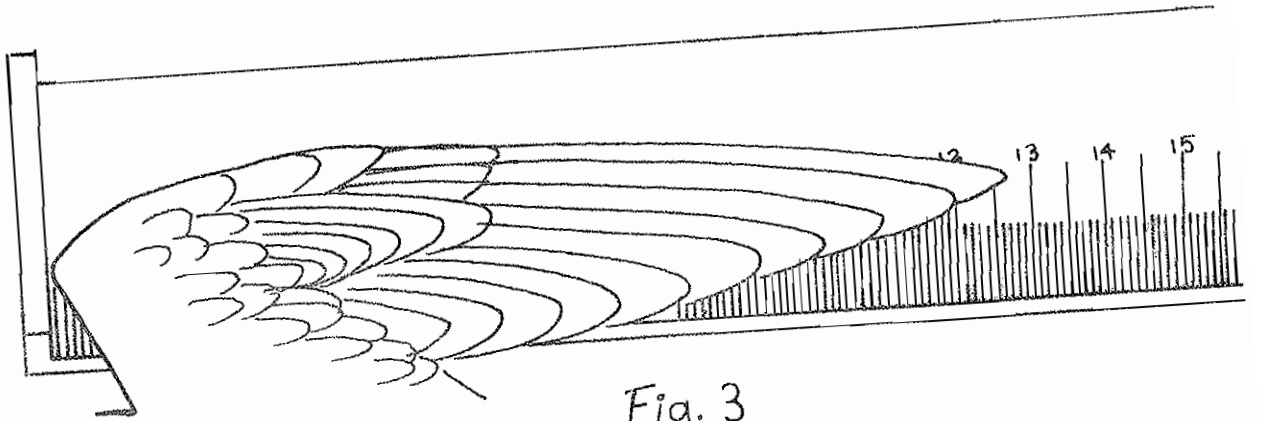


Fig. 3

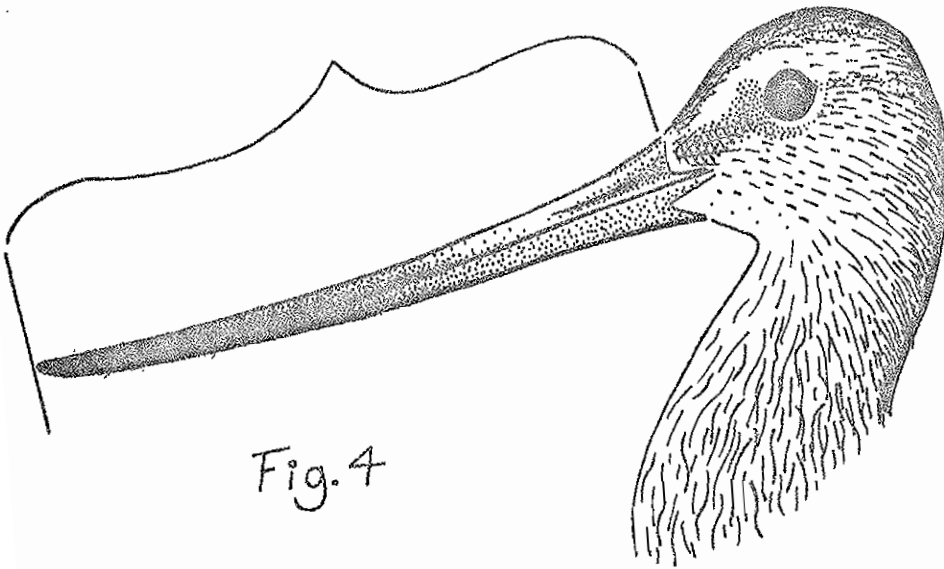


Fig. 4

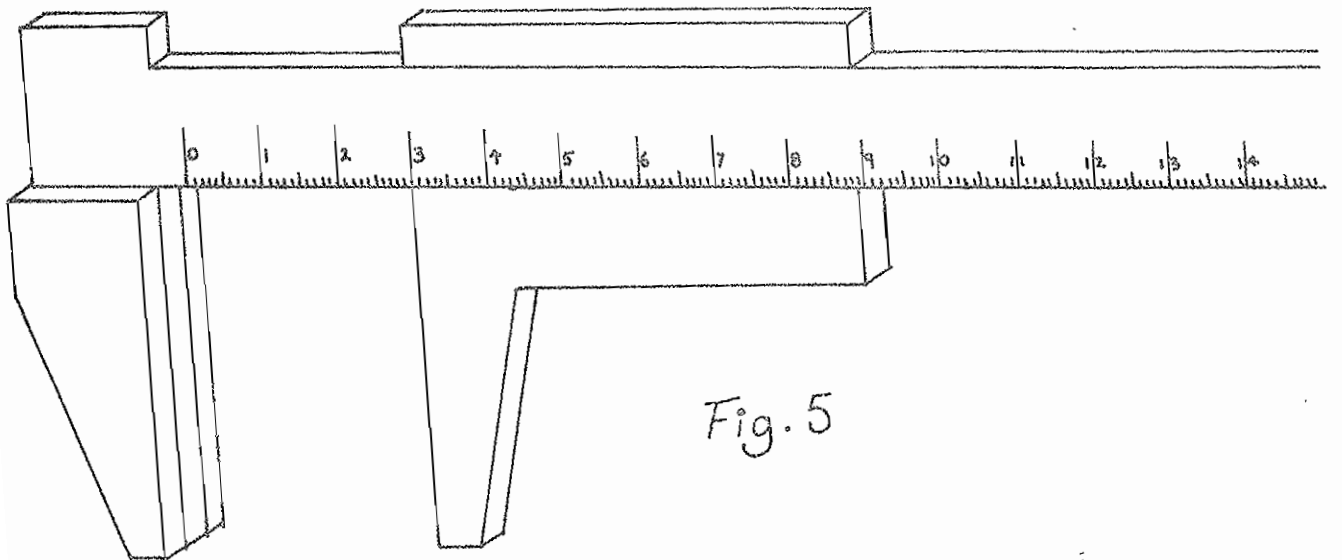


Fig. 5

- 5) Finally stroke the end of the feathers along the ruler so that the maximum length is read.

The greatest accuracy that can be attained is $\frac{1}{2}$ mm up to 100mm, and 1 mm above this. The best method to develop accuracy is by regular practice and by comparing your measurements with an experienced processor. There are three catches:

- 1) If the longest feather is broken then the other wing should be measured.
- 2) If the bird is moulting such that the longest feather is still growing, then there is no point in measuring the wing length, and an M should be recorded by the scribe in the wing length column. This assumes the measurer knows the longest feather or wing point as it is called.
- 3) If the wing point is abraded more than the average, then the wing length should be recorded with an A following (e.g. 131A) to enable anyone using the results to discard the information if they wish.

Bill & Total Head Length

Bill length has been measured for many years. In the last two years the bill measurement is being superseded by the measurement of the total head length (THL). Why is this? There are four reasons. Firstly, from a statistical viewpoint it is easier to find differences between two groups of measurements if the basic measurement is greater.

For example, the difference between two groups of average length 100 mm and 105 mm is detectable on smaller samples than if the lengths were 50 and 52.5 mm. Secondly, from the practical aspect, THL can be measured to 0.1 mm with reproduceability both between measurers and on different occasions of ± 0.2 mm. This is about ten times better than bill length measurement. Thirdly, as bill length in waders has traditionally been measured from the tip to the feathers at the base of the bill, these feathers are not a fixed point, as the feathering varies a little with season and wear. And finally, THL is beginning to give more useful results. Early analysis shows for example, that it might be possible to sex Rednecked Stints on THL which was not possible on bill length.

The measurement of bill length is still important as groups of all species will need both measurements so that comparison can be made between the measurements, and the older results can be used in addition to new results. Bill length is best measured with an ordinary ruler. The butt on the wing length ruler makes it more difficult, but is still usable. The bird if small is held in the non-dominant hand (i.e. the left hand for right handers), and the bill held between the thumb and index finger (Fig. 4). Oystercatchers and other large birds are best held on the left side of the lap, and controlled by the left forearm, leaving the left hand free to hold the bill, and the right hand to hold the ruler. A waterproof or piece of covering material is recommended under the bird. The reading is taken to the nearest millimetre.

THL is measured with a Caliper Gauge. These are available in two types, the less expensive vernier type which are more difficult and slower to read, especially in bad light; and the dial type which has the disadvantage on the shore that small particles of sand can get into the works giving a wrong result. In both types the ease of use and accuracy can be improved by fitting metal blocks on to the fixed caliper (Fig. 5). This makes it much easier to fit the gauge on to the back of the bird's head (the occiput) as it cannot slip off the ridge on the skull. The technique is shown in Fig. 6. The important points are:

- 1) Hold the bird firmly, with the bill between thumb and index finger. In short-billed birds it may be easier to put the index finger over the bill from behind, and control the head between that and the middle finger (Fig. 7).
- 2) Making sure that the head is firmly butted against the widened caliper, rock the head (as shown by the arrow) upwards and downwards as the second caliper is closed. As soon as contact occurs, take the reading to the nearest 0.1 mm. This rocking movement makes certain that the longest head length is measured (Fig. 6).

Tarsus

Although tarsus is rarely measured in waders, it is useful to know how it is done, so that when a rarely caught species is trapped tarsal measurements can be taken. In the two species on which this has recently been tried - Eastern Curlew and Japanese Snipe (*Gallinago hardwickii*), tarsal length has not been found to be useful, as a wide scatter of lengths was obtained.

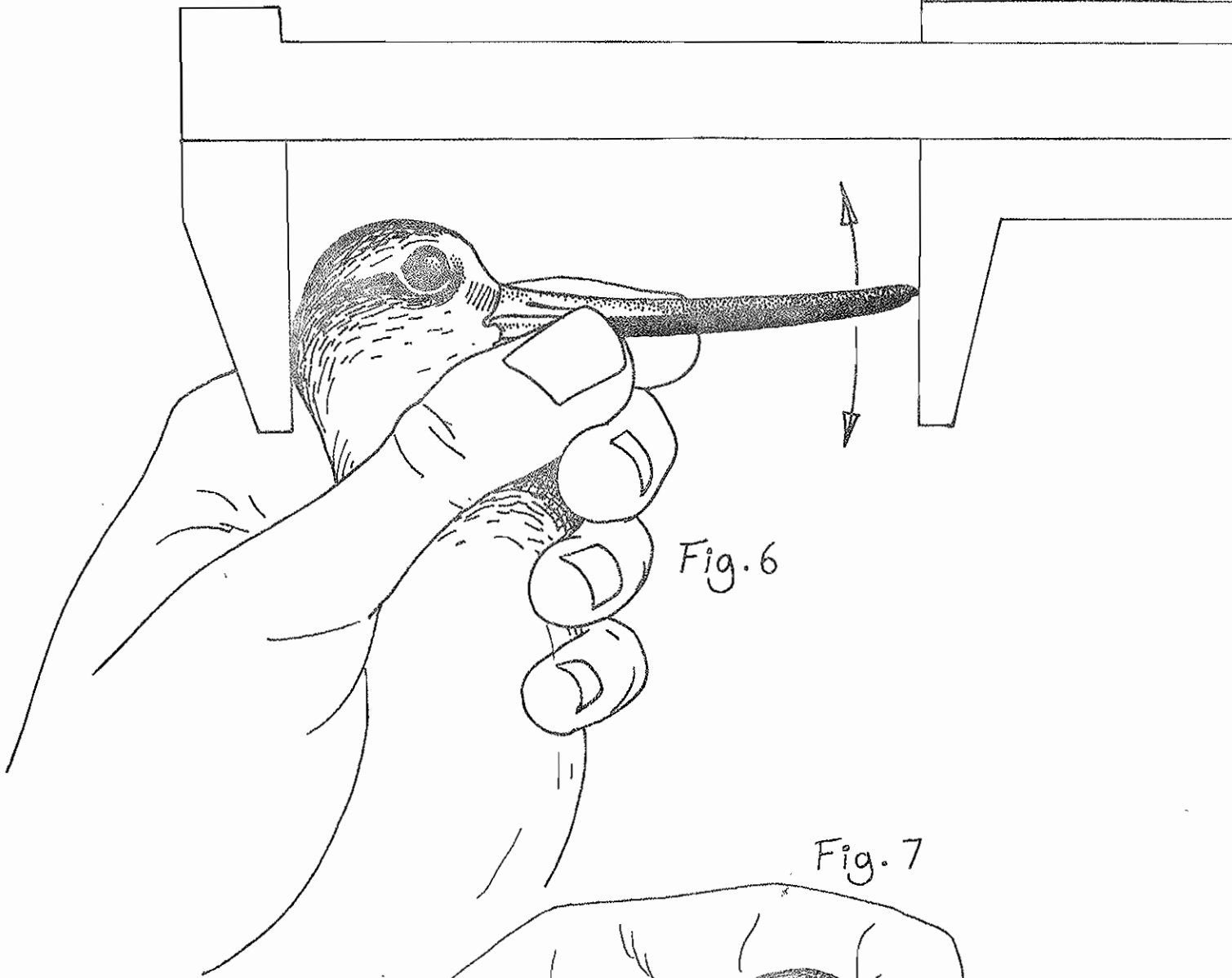


Fig. 6

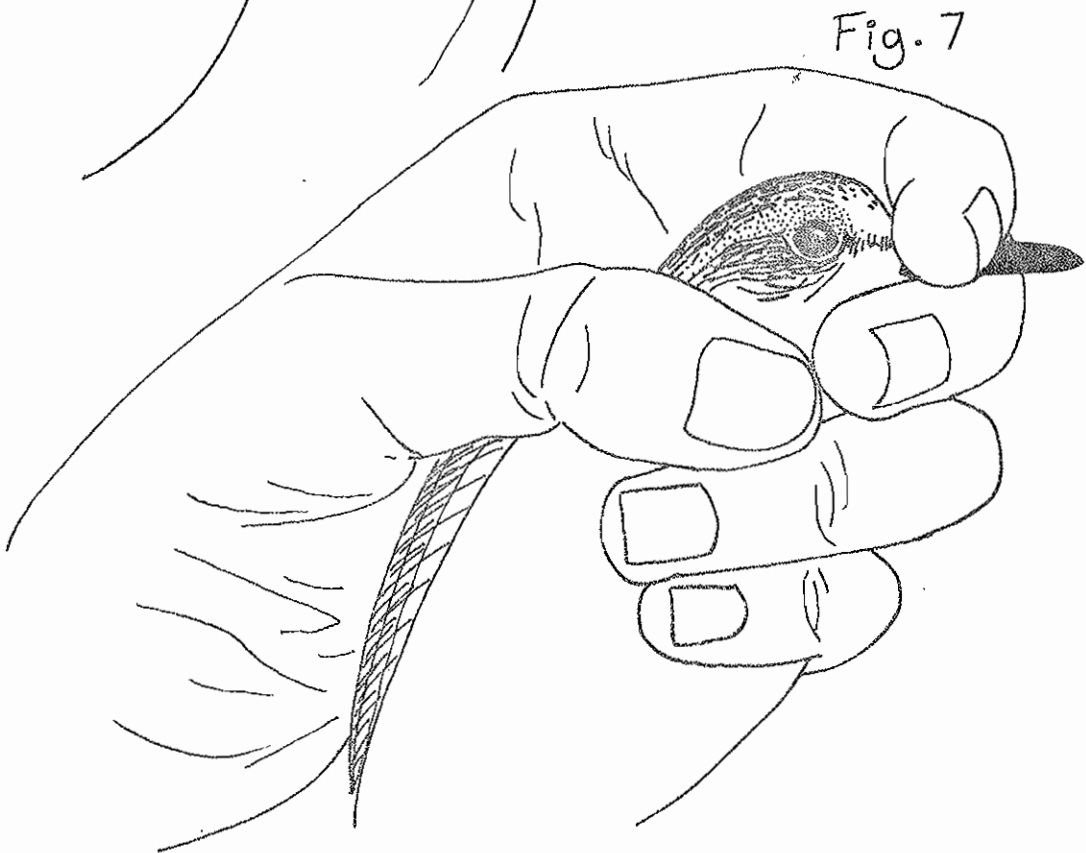
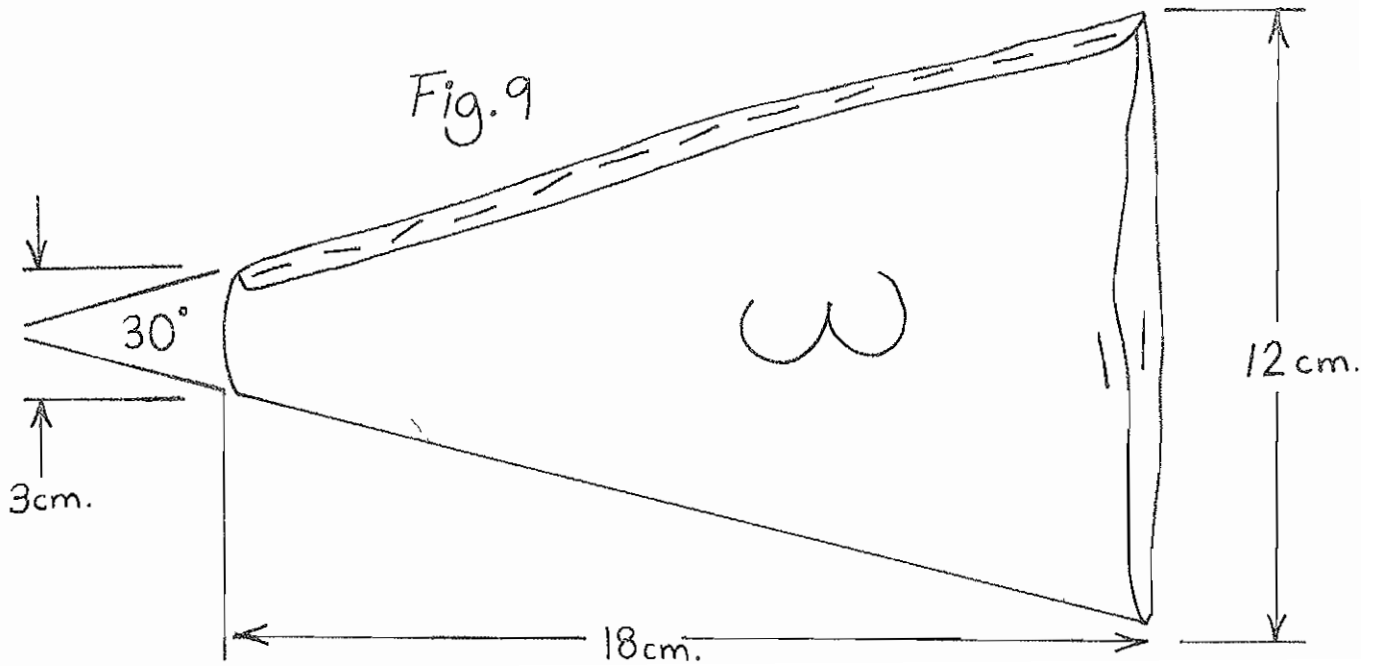
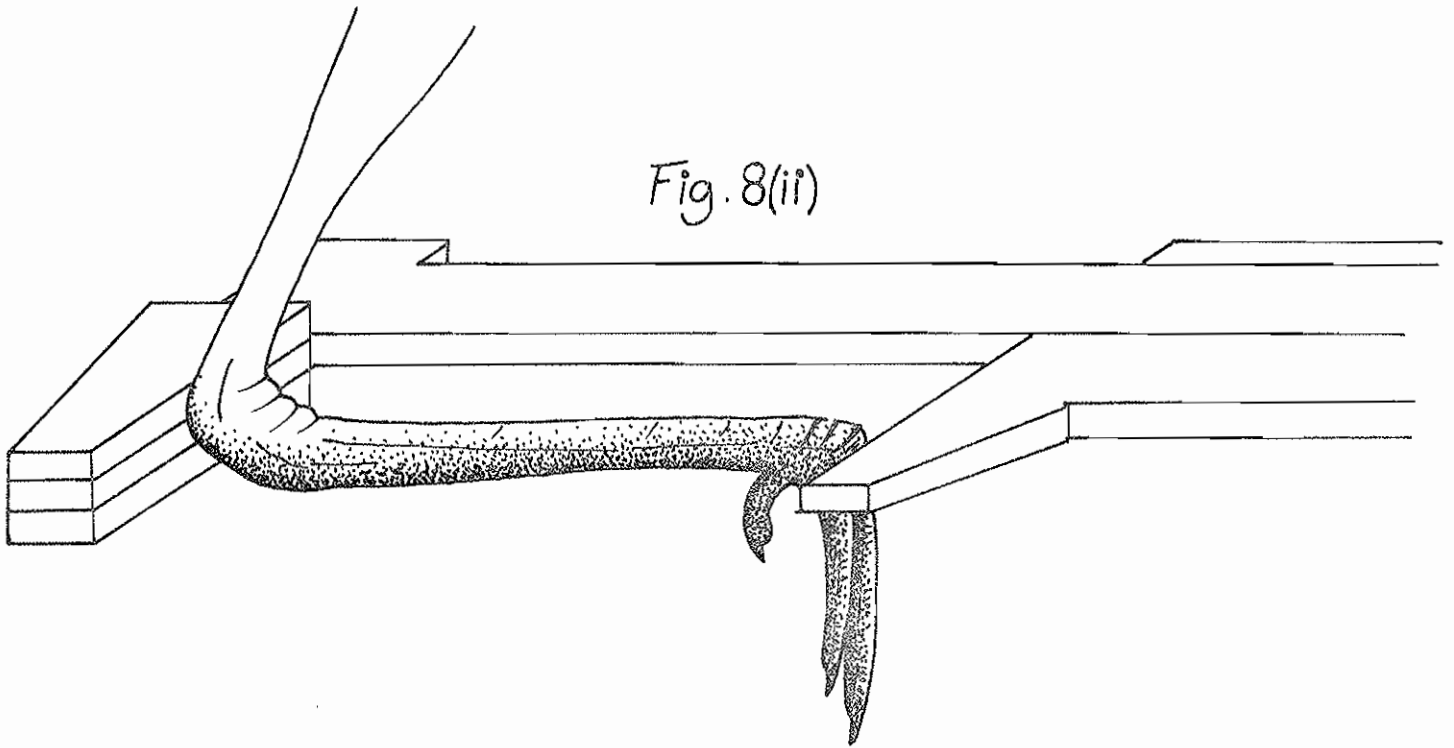
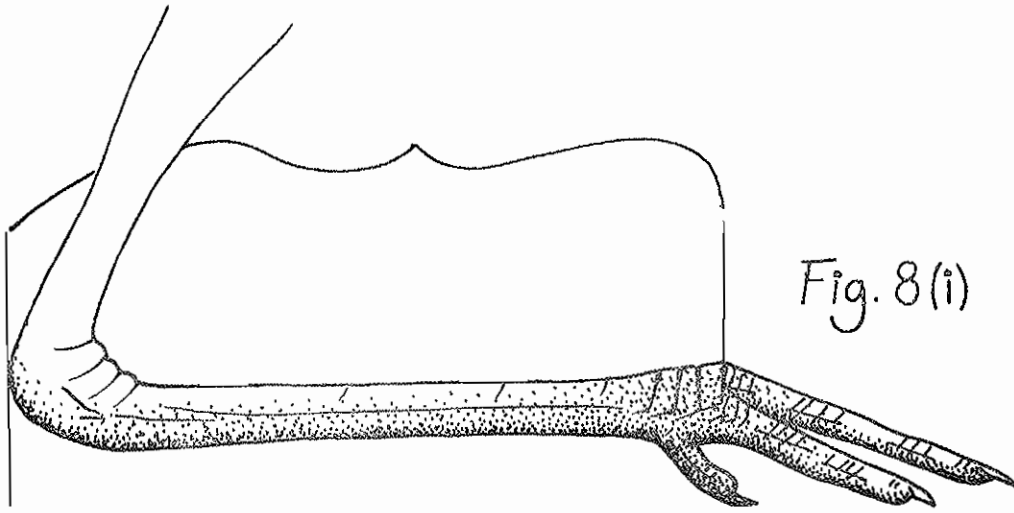


Fig. 7



There are two methods of increasing tarsus, the older method is to take the length from the tibio-tarsal joint (normally thought of as the knee, although it corresponds to the upper part of the angle joint in humans), to the last complete scale which passes all the way across the leg (Fig. 8(i)). This is often not particularly easy, and the easier method, provided a caliper gauge is available, is shown in Fig. 8(ii). It is important that the method used is recorded, as the results differ.

WEIGHING

The weight of birds is a major indicator of their state of health. It is also important in migration studies. Prior to migration, waders feed intensively for two to three weeks and put on up to 70% extra on their fat free weights. It is possible to calculate theoretically how far a bird can fly using this extra weight, and therefore predict stopping places. These feeding places are as important to the bird as their breeding and wintering areas, for without them the species is severely endangered. For Australian waders, most of these areas are either unknown, or their relative importance for different species is poorly understood. This information is urgently required; many of these areas are in the rapidly expanding and industrialising parts of South East Asia, and the areas can so easily disappear if their importance is not discovered so that conservation pressure can be generated. This is one of the major conservation aspects of wader banding in Australia and the whole eastern seaboard of Asia.

Weighing of waders is done using accurate spring balances. The commonest type are the 'Pesola' range, which provided they are checked annually are accurate to $\pm 3\%$. The wader is best put into a plastic cone. This has several advantages over weighing the bird in a bird bag - a technique which should be discarded. The advantages are:

- 1) The bird is firmly and safely held. It can not flap, which may damage the bird, and also upsets the balance reading.
- 2) It is mathematically more accurate to subtract a small reading from a large reading, than to subtract two larger readings e.g. $(50 \pm 1.5) - (30 \pm 1.0)$ gives a minimum possible error of 2.5 or $12\frac{1}{2}\%$ $(23 \pm 0.7) - (3 \pm 0.1)$ gives a maximum possible error of 0.8 or 4%.
- 3) The cones should be made so that they have simply calculated weights e.g. 3.0g, 5.0g and 10.0g. This makes the process of subtraction much simpler than taking away a variable figure of say, 31.2g, 27.4g etc. and therefore less errors are made.

Cones can easily be made from medium or heavyweight polythene sheeting. Dark opaque material is the best as a bird that is shown light through the narrow end of the cone will often move in itself, and the dark inside causes the bird to struggle less. Typical dimensions are given in Fig. 10. A series of bags is needed for various sizes of birds. Fixing of the edge is either by double-sided Sellotape or by stapling.

The bird is best put into the bag by the measurer, as this involves one less handling. Pesola balances can be read to 0.1g for the 50g and 100g ranges, and 1g for the 300g and 1000g ranges, providing that a strong wind is not blowing. It is important that the weighing is done out of the wind as far as possible and essential that the balance is held by the swivel on the top and allowed to swing freely. If the shaft of the balance is held errors will result.

RELEASING

Where possible the weigher should release the bird by allowing it to walk into wind through an area clear of people and obstructions and take off in its own time. Where this is not possible an experienced releaser should take the bird away and either put it on the ground or let it fly off their hand. Waders should never be thrown into the air.

SCRIBING

One of the most important jobs, and certainly the most difficult, is that of scribe. It does not matter how accurately measurements are taken, if they are wrongly recorded they are not only useless but may prejudice other useful results. As well as accuracy, the scribe should ideally also pick up errors. The number of feathers in moult recording has already been mentioned. They can also notice an error of recording by drawing the measurer's attention to figures which do not fit in with previous results. Very high or very low values which have been checked and found to be correct should be underlined on the processing sheets.

The essentials of a good scribe are:

- 1) Intensive concentration
- 2) Knowledge of the expected readings
- 3) The ability to keep people around the processing team quiet

SUMMARY

Although this paper describes well used techniques of processing waders, these are not universal, and extra measurements or different techniques are used by various people for specific purposes. Whatever methods are used, speed and accuracy are obtained by constant practice and by working with experienced people. But above all, the wader comes first. If there are any signs of distress, then it should either be released immediately, or given first aid as appropriate. Frequently the only first aid needed is a less firm grip, and the sign that a bird is being held too firmly is "gasping", a slow rhythmic opening and closing of the bill; equally distressing to the bird is too loose a grip, allowing it to flap and move around. During all stages of handling, no part of the bird should be moved into a position that the bird would not use during its normal life. Finally if a bird escapes from the hand during any stage of extracting, banding or processing, let it go and do not try to catch it. There is no quicker way of damaging the bird.

Our thanks to Jeff Davies for the excellent illustrations accompanying Anthony's paper.

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British Trust for Ornithology, Tring, Herts.

VICTORIAN WADER STUDY GROUPFinancial Statement from 1/7/81 to 30/6/82

<u>INCOME</u>	\$	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	\$	\$
Membership Fees	555.00	Equipment		
Library Subscriptions	50.00	Replacement		
Sale of Bulletins	19.00	net/ropes	309.84	
Donations	60.00	Firing box	93.50	
Hire of equipment	143.60	Balances/rulers		
Insurance payment on		etc.	110.19	
stolen net	253.60	Colour bands	83.20	
		Miscellaneous	95.98	692.71
		Stationery &		
		photocopying		44.75
		Printing Bulletins*		57.31
		Postage		90.78
		Bank Fees & Charges		18.16
	1081.20			903.71
Cash in Bank at 1/7/81	279.33	Cash in Bank at 30/6/82		555.56
Cash/cheques in hand		Cash/cheques in hand		
at 1/7/81	172.79	at 30/6/82		74.05
	\$ 1533.32			\$ 1533.32

NOTE: * Accounts not yet received for printing Bulletins during the above financial year estimated to be approximately \$160.00

A TAXONOMY OF LOONIFORMES

by Danny Rogers

(Editorial Note: Herewith some most perceptive observations of a 14 year old VWSG member. Any resemblance of the species described to any individual VWSG members is purely coincidental!)

This is an extract from the 'Field Guide to Australian Banders', a work compiled by birds who have had the opportunity to make a close study of them.

This work is an aid to identification. Brief descriptions of appearance, habits, distribution and calls are included. Feeding habits are given where they aid identification.

The group called "Looniformes" is found on the coast of Victoria during weekends. Despite their apparent insanity (they ring almost every free weekend) this group manages to catch and ring 42% of all Australian waders caught.

This peculiar order of banders calls itself the VWSG.

Aussiedea

These banders are native to Australia, so it is thought that perhaps they are not true looniformes. There are three species found regularly.

Pseudoloonii lanius

Skinny, lanky appearance, with large round spectacles. Usually long-haired. His bright orange anorak is conspicuous when he twinkles. He is also found in the firing position.

Calls: "I've run out of cigarettes again, Anne".
"Damn, I've lost my hair-grip"
Various orders.

Pseudoloonii julius

Plumpish with pale hair. Note - very gentle bird handler. Alternating moods of jocularly and irritation at incompetence and stupidity; therefore she is often irritated.

Calls: Exasperated, worried "Stop pulling on the net".
Various orders.

Pseudoloonii davii

Strong, young bander with receding hairline. Works hard - often works on boats or net-making. Found in all fields, especially twinkling. Rarely wears trousers.

Calls: None. More often seen than heard.

Loonidea

Genuine looniformes. None of these are born in Australia.

Mintonius tyrantius

Plumpish bander, with non-matching tennis shoes. Often centre of attention. Top of pecking order. Shows social dominance by giving orders to everyone. Displays strength and endurance in the field, as well as unnatural enthusiasm.

Calls: An enquiring "Are you winning?" followed by a satisfied "Good" in answer to a positive or negative answer.

A loud, excited "everyone should be doing something".

Many loud, demanding orders.

Feeding habits: Omnivorous

Mintonius patringa

Largish, with short, curly blonde hair. Works hard during need (small party, large catch) but otherwise involved in serving Mintonius tyrantius.

Call: "I've only got two pairs of hands, Clive"

Savage diligence

Short, with dark, curly hair. Very hardworking, but no-one holds it against him. Found in all positions and in a green van with trailer. Dislikes wind, but bears it.

Call: "I'll do it, Clive" (generally reluctantly)

Robertii * bleepus

Medium height, glasses, white hair and army camouflage trousers with bulging pockets running down the thighs. Unusually well prepared (equipment-wise). Always in firing position. Often grins, especially when someone gets a gumboot full. Presence indicated by a jigglers round peg.

Calls: Loud, double-note laugh. Remark preceded by "At the Wash".

Feeding habits: Porridge

* Note: All Robertii are palearctic migrants.

Robertii geepers

Tallish with long hair put in a pony tail. Only occasionally involved in actual banding; thought to be a slave of Robertii bleepus.

Calls: "Your porridge is getting cold, Anthony".

Robertii infantus (2 species)

Small, with long, blonde hair, put in what is known by some as a "handle". One is perpetually clean; the other is invariably grubby.

Calls: Indignant "Let go of my handle".
Various giggles.

Rogersii patersoni

Tall with dark, wavy hair. Note conspicuous bow legs. Found in all areas, but usually in firing or other sheltered positions. Rarely seen working, so thought to be high in pecking order. Usually seen with cigarette in hand.

Calls: Loud snoring noise, only from hides and horizontal position.
Reassuring "I can do it with a screwdriver"

Feeding habits: Anything edible and beer.

Rogersii ceramix

Very short with long, waving, gold hair. Always with cigarette in hand. Usually industrious. Wet trousers from knee down, due to kneeling to extract birds. Banded several times on right wrist.

Calls: Loud coughs in the mornings.
An exclamation of "crumbs!"

Rogersii bludgensis

Short and skinny with blonde hair. Found in all areas. Industrious in catching, extracting and processing, but a fine bludger in all other respects. Almost as accomplished as Rogersii patersoni, he is thought to be the most promising bludger in the VWSG.

Call: Inquiring "Can I ring it?" followed by a pleased "thanks" or belligerent "why not?"

Feeding habits: Disgusting

Rogersii tichus

Small with Mowgli-like appearance. Note long eyelashes and rubber nose. Industrious, delights in doing laborious fiddly tasks.

Calls: "Have you got any jobs for me, Clive?"
 Accusing "Danny did it"
 Varied requests, preceded by "can I have?"

Unpronouncable americanus

Spectacled, but told from Pseudoloonii lanius by shorter hair. Works hard - peculiar trait in a regular visitor.

Call: "Oh, my God" in an American accent.

Dawsonius firer

Oldish and obviously wise. Usually connected with the cannons and always in firing position whilst the looniformes attempt to trap. Never called a bludger - he works hard when being observed - he is wily enough to do very little work at other times.

Call: "Have you got any of that cake, Berrice?"

Gooz Berrius

Plump, with greyish hair. A reasonably good bludger - although she works very hard sometimes. This is usually in order to get under shelter without incurring the wrath or envy of the others. Accompanied by a smell of cup-cakes and requests for the former.

Calls: Constant cockney expressions of cheerfulness.
 A frequently-heard chuckle.

MIGRATION MAP

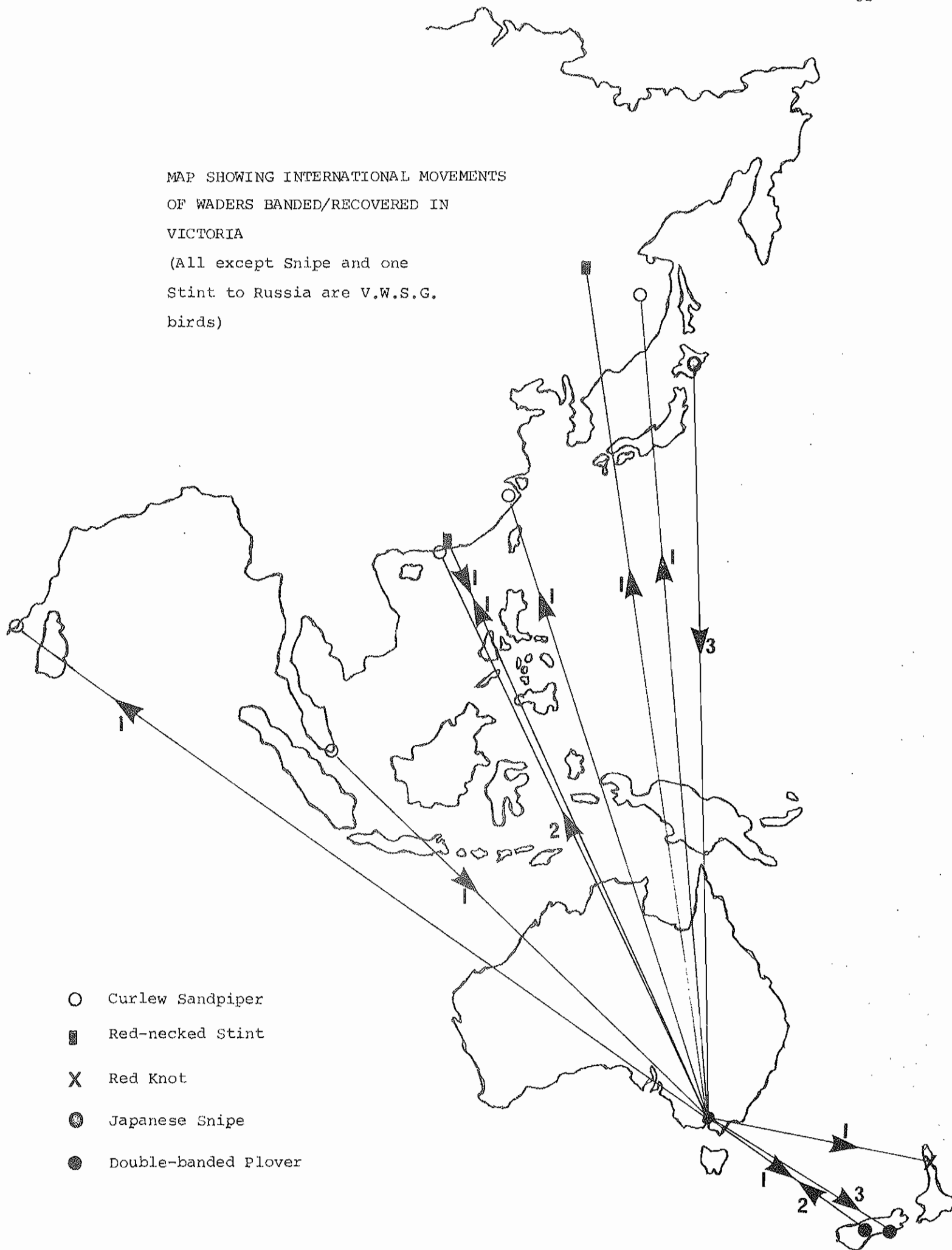
The outline map on page 32 shows the distribution of recoveries, retraps and sightings of colour-marked waders outside Australia banded by the V.W.S.G.

The straight lines are of course only connecting lines between banding and recovery points. For most recoveries these probably do not represent actual flight routes of birds. The details of this will only be determined by further recoveries.

There was a strong temptation to show routes passing through North-western Australia given the large numbers of waders up there, but this would be premature, and must await further recoveries within Australia.

MAP SHOWING INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENTS
OF WADERS BANDED/RECOVERED IN
VICTORIA

(All except Snipe and one
Stint to Russia are V.W.S.G.
birds)



RECOVERIES OF BANDED BIRDS

The original banding details are on the top line and the recovery details on the lower line. Local retraps and recoveries are not included. Werribee = The Spit and/or the adjacent sewage farm.

Pied Oystercatcher

100-82043	1 yr old	21.2.82	Werribee	
	Recaptured	28.3.82	Queenscliff	25 km SSE
100-82079	Adult	8.3.80	Werribee	
	Recaptured	28.3.82	Queenscliff	25 km SSE
100-82052	Adult	1.3.80	Rhyll, Phillip Is.	
	Recaptured	21.2.82	Werribee	82 km NW

Three further examples of the widespread local movements of Pied Oystercatchers within the Port Phillip Bay/Westernport area.

Sooty Oystercatcher

100-36556	Chick	26.1.74	Mud Island	
	Recaptured	28.3.82	Queenscliff	8 km WNW

This bird was 8 years old when recaptured. It had been banded originally by Dorothy Moroney.

Red Knot

051-08046	Juvenile	10.3.79	Werribee	
	Recaptured	19.12.81	Queenscliff	25 km SSE

This is the third Werribee-banded Red Knot to be recaptured subsequently at Queenscliff.

Doublebanded Plover

B31706 New Zealand	Chick	13.11.81	Cass River Delta, Lake Tekapo, New Zealand	
	Sighted	5/6.3.82	off Mann's Beach, Corner Inlet	2000 km WNW

This bird was recognised by its individual colour band combination (two yellow on left leg, metal above light green on the right leg). It was with a group of 15 Doublebanded Plovers and had presumably arrived recently after its first trans-Tasman flight.

Bartailed Godwit

082-43963	Adult	20.3.81	Botany Bay, NSW	
	Female			
	Found dead			
	on shore	10.5.82	nr. Mokpo, South Korea	7900 km NNW

This bird was banded (on S.G. Lane's bands) during the March 1981 visit of VWSG to work with local wader banders in Botany Bay and at Newcastle, N.S.W. It is the first overseas recovery of a Bartailed Godwit from Australia. The place and timing of recovery fits in well with the expected migration to arrive on the breeding grounds in Siberia in late May/early June.

Rednecked Stint

032-28907	Juvenile Recaptured	7.2.81 31.10.81	Hobart, Tasmania Werribee	610 km NNW
032-28749	Adult Recaptured "	7.12.80 29.11.81 27.3.82	Hobart, Tasmania " " Queenscliff	585 km NNW
031-91132	Free-flying Recaptured	6.11.78 27.3.82	Werribee Queenscliff	25 km SSE
032-11760	Free-flying Recaptured	12.12.74 27.3.82	Stockyard Point, Westernport Yallock Creek, Westernport	13 km NNE
NB19517 Brit.Museum	Adult Recaptured	12.5.80 27.3.82	Hong Kong Queenscliff	7200 km SSE
032-25237	Juvenile Recaptured	17.5.80 27.3.82	Werribee Queenscliff	25 km SSE
032-24004	Juvenile Recaptured	28.12.79 20.12.81	off Mann's Beach, Corner Inlet Yallock Creek, Westernport	125 km WNW
032-26205	Adult Recaptured	8.11.80 20.12.81	Werribee Yallock Creek, Westernport	85 km ESE

The above recoveries include

- (a) further evidence of birds visiting Victoria on passage to/from "summering grounds" in Tasmania.
- (b) several further movements - all in different years - between locations in Victoria. These are however the exception rather than the rule viz. 340 local retraps in the period Jan-June 1982 which were at the original banding location and therefore showed no movement.
- (c) our first Hong Kong-banded bird. Another Rednecked Stint banded in Hong Kong on the same day was recaptured in Tasmania in November 1980 - not a bad recovery rate out of less than one hundred birds banded that day!
- (d) a bird recaptured in Westernport Bay 7 years and 2 months after it had originally been banded (by Dr Peter Evans, on sabbatical leave from Durham University in the UK, who was working with the late Dr D F Dorward at Monash University).

Curlew Sandpiper

040-96975	Juvenile	22.12.79	Yallock Creek, Westernport	
	Recaptured	27.3.82	Queenscliff	74 km W
040-96278	Adult	16.12.79	Werribee	
	Recaptured	27.3.82	Queenscliff	25 km SSE
040-96843	Adult	22.12.79	Yallock Creek, Westernport	
	Recaptured	22.12.81	Newcastle, N.S.W.	
	"	23.1.82	"	810 km NE

Note the apparent change of "summering area" of 040-96843 between 1979/80 and 1981/82.

FURTHER SIGHTINGS OF COLOUR-MARKED BIRDSColour-banded or colour-dyedPied Oystercatcher

- 22/1/82 Werribee Brett Lane
Two birds out of a flock of 46 were from Queenscliff (light green bands - moved 25 km NNW)
- 23/1/82 Werribee Brett Lane
Two birds with orange bands ex 1/3/80 Rhyll, Phillip Island (moved 82 km NW)
- 24/4/82 Stockyard Point, Westernport Eric Jones
One bird out of a flock of 30 was from 1/3/80 Rhyll, Phillip Island (orange band - moved 23 km NE)
- 6/6/82 Queenscliff Ira Savage
Two birds out of a flock of 26 were from Werribee (blue bands - moved 25 km SSE). Twelve other birds had light green colour bands (local).
- 3/7/82 Yallock Creek, Westernport VWSG
Two birds out of a flock of 29 were from 1/3/80 Rhyll, Phillip Island (orange bands - moved 30 km NNE)

The above sightings provide considerable further evidence of the extensive movements of Pied Oystercatchers within Port Phillip and Westernport Bays.

Sooty Oystercatcher

- 7/5/82 Long Island Point, Hastings Kim Lowe
The same bird as seen on 1/8/81 (see VWSG Bulletin No. 5) was again present (with another Sooty and 27 Pied Oystercatchers). It had originally been banded as a chick on 4/1/80 at Seal Rocks, Phillip Island - movement of 27 km NNE. Recognised by black colour band on right leg.

Hooded Plover

- 5/9/81 Pt Lonsdale to Ocean Grove (ocean beaches) David Eades
Five out of eight birds observed had been banded (red colour bands) on 28/6/81 at Lake Victoria, Pt Lonsdale. Two birds were paired - with unbanded mates. Movements less than 5 km.
- 5/6/82 Lake Victoria, Point Lonsdale VWSG
Of the 26 Hooded Plovers present (23 adult, 3 juvenile) 7 had red-colour bands - a high resighting/survival rate from the nine birds marked at the same location on 28/6/81.

Doublebanded Plover

- 19/3/82 Lake Ellesmere, Christchurch, New Zealand Colin
Miskelly
et al

A colour banded bird (red above white on left tarsus, blue on right tarsus, metal band on right tibia) was seen amongst many others feeding on a drying salt marsh. The colour band combination indicates this was definitely a different bird from that seen at the same location on 5/11/81 (see VWSG Bulletin No. 5). The absence of any trace of colour dye on the plumage suggests it may also have been a different bird to that seen on 24/11/81. The bird would have been banded between 23/5/81 and 15/8/81 at either Pt Wilson (Werribee) or Pt Cook (Altona) on the west side of Port Phillip Bay. Movement c. 2200 km ESE.
- the bird reported on 19/11/81 on the Cass River Delta, Lake Tekapo, New Zealand (see VWSG Bulletin No. 5) remained at the same location (breeding male) until 15/12/81 - further report from Ray Pierce.
- 4/6/82 Queenscliff Gail Gibbs
A yellow-dyed bird was seen in a flock of about 100. This must have been marked at either Altona on 25/4/82 (movement 32 km SSW) or Yallock Creek, Westernport, on 8/5/82 (movement 74 km W). This is only the second movement so far recorded of Doublebanded Plovers moving between sites in Victoria.

All the information generated to date on movements of Doublebanded Plovers - both to/from New Zealand (6) and within Australia (2) - has been derived from sightings of colour banded and/or colour-dyed birds. This is a clear demonstration of the value of these supplementary techniques - if carefully planned and controlled - in greatly expanding the amount of information generated from banding activities.

Erratum

The report (VWSG Bulletin No. 3) of a Werribee colour-dyed Rednecked Stint in Hong Kong in late April 1980 was not correct. The bird seen (yellow-dyed) was in fact a Curlew Sandpiper, the exact date was 27 April 1980, and the actual observer was Mike Webster.

SOME INTERESTING LOCAL WADER RETRAPS

Redcapped Plover

032-12757	Adult Female	25.6.76	Werribee
	Retrapped	25.4.79	"
	"	17.5.80	"
	"	7.9.80	"
	"	3.4.81	"
	"	21.2.82	"

Caught six times over a six year period.

032-12819	Adult Male	16.9.76	Werribee
	Retrapped	21.2.82	"

First recapture 5½ years after banding.

Rednecked Stint

032-14800	Adult	6.11.78	Werribee
	Retrapped	26.1.80	"
	"	13.4.80	"
	"	1.3.81	"
	"	1.11.81	"

Caught five times in three years.

032-21546	Adult	22.12.79	Yallock Creek
	Retrapped	23.11.80	" "
	"	31.1.81	" "
	"	13.2.81	" "

Only five catches of Rednecked Stints have been made at Yallock Creek and this bird has been present in four of them.

032-16347	Juvenile	27.12.78	Werribee
	Retrapped	21.7.79	"
	"	20.10.79	"
	"	12.4.80	"
	"	20.2.82	"

Caught five times in 3½ years.

Additionally several Rednecked Stints banded at Werribee in 1976 were retrapped there in the summer of 1981/82.

Curlew Sandpiper

040-91206	Free-flying	7.3.76	Werribee
	Retrapped	13.3.76	"
	"	14.12.79	"
	"	26.1.80	"
	"	31.10.81	"

Caught five times in 5½ years.

RECENT RECOVERIES OF NON-WADERS BANDED
OR RETRAPPED BY VWSG

Silver Gull

080-26373	Chick	6.10.79	Mud Island	
	Band read through binoculars	8.3.82	Mann's Beach, Corner Inlet	181 km E

Caspian Tern

091-06003	Chick	3.1.82	off Manns Beach, Corner Inlet	
	Found injured	11.4.82	Fraser Island, Qld	1700 km NNE

This is the longest movement so far recorded of a Caspian Tern in Australia. Only 3 months had elapsed between banding and recovery.

Common Tern

050-80680	Free-flying	22.11.80	Newcastle, N.S.W.	
	Recaptured	6.3.82	off Mann's Beach, Corner Inlet	830 km SW

This was one of a group of 40 Common Terns caught together on 6 March.

Fairy Tern

040-68668 and 040-68672 (2 birds)	Chicks Recaptured	19.1.82 28.3.82	Werribee Queenscliff	25 km SSE
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These were two of the 30 chicks banded at the successful Fairy Tern colony on The Spit at Werribee (see VWSG Bulletin No. 5 for details of habitat improvement work undertaken by VWSG). They were recaptured in a group of 29 mixed terns caught at Queenscliff on 28 March - 2 months after their original banding.

LAMINGTON NATIONAL PARK
by Maryam Rogers (aged 10)

Dad said we were going to go for a holiday to Queensland. My Mum and brother were so excited that we couldn't wait. When I came home from school I had to change into something comfortable for the train.

We were going to the city. When we were there, we were looking for a pub called Kilkenny - that was where my Dad was. We had dinner there and caught the train to Sydney. We had one whole day at the Taronga Zoo. We had to get a boat to take us to the Zoo. While we were on the boat, we could see the harbour, the bridge and all sorts of things. We took a lot of time looking at the birds in the cages, then we had something to eat. We looked at the platypus, the snakes and so on. Although we missed one or two things, it didn't matter.

We caught another train to Brisbane. We then went to see the Sunshine Coast. The road was so crowded. When you wanted to cross the road it was very busy. Then we went out of the city to find a caravan site for one night as you wouldn't find one in the city - I would be surprised if you could. Well, we found a caravan site - it was a great place. They had a horse that kids could ride on but they would have to have their parents to keep their eyes on them. In the morning we went for a birdwatch and came back and packed up.

And then it was really THE day. We wanted to go to the Lamington National Park. It wasn't far; we were 3000 ft high. It was all tropical forest and we found a sign saying "Lamington National Park". There was one mile to go and then we were there. We booked in for two nights. We were sleeping at O'Reilly's. They had two snooker tables and a table tennis table.

There were so many Crimson Rosellas around. There was a boy, about 20 years old, who had Crimson Rosellas on the side of his legs, on his head, arm, foot and on his back! So Mum bought a bag of seeds for me and there I was every morning feeding the Crimson Rosellas; they were all over me, like I said. Dad wanted to get a photograph of a Crimson Rosella on my head so I put some seeds on my head. After I fed the Crimson Rosellas we would go for a walk every morning and they would serve you a packed lunch.

The really special birds that we saw were a Riflebird, Albert Lyrebird, Logrunners, Rufous Scrub-bird, Brush Turkey, Green Catbird, Satin Bowerbird, Regent Bowerbird, Brown Pigeon, Oriental Cuckoo, Topknot Pigeon (but we weren't exactly quite sure) and a Peregrine. The four best birds that I really liked were the Albert Lyrebird, Peregrine, Rufous Scrub-bird, Paradise Riflebird.

We went for a walk and saw the waterfall and the cliffs and we reached the top of the mountain. Up in the sky was a plane, a bird, superman? But no, it was a Peregrine. When we were up in the mountains there was a very long goanna.

It was the best look I ever had and there were plenty of trees for him to climb on. Mum had spotted him before anyone else and Mum saw its head sticking up. I said "I am glad you brought the camera, Dad" so we took a photograph of him on the side of the tree. He wasn't very high so that was lucky. Then we had something to eat and went back to O'Reilly's.

Every night there are films of birds that are very good. My brother and I were having a good time playing table tennis. We were having good fun playing snooker and then it was time to go and I said good-bye to the Rosellas and the people.

And off we went, back to the city, gave the car back, caught a taxi, caught the train and another one and back in Melbourne. Then MacDonaldis and 12.30 we came back home.

MARYAM ROGERS

(Editorial Note: We now await a contribution from Annie Rogers for the next VWSG Bulletin to demonstrate the capability of the whole of the Rogers family.)

VICTORIAN WADER STUDY GROUP

DATES FOR FIELD WORK - JULY TO OCTOBER, 1982

		<u>TIME OF HIGH TIDE (SAT)</u>
July 24-25	: Werribee/Altona	1808
Aug/Sept	: Expedition to Broome/80 Mile Beach, Western Australia. "Core" periods 17-25 August and 2-10 September, inclusive	
October 2-3	: Werribee	1437
October 16-17	: National Hooded Plover Count	

A New programme will be available in September

Normally the meeting time is 5 hours before high tide. Please phone CDTM, or one of the contacts listed below, a few days beforehand for full details of rendezvous time/location.

CONTACTS (* note new phone numbers)

Clive Minton	- 568 1017 (home) 267 5800 (office) Address: 10 Omama St, Murrumbeena, 3163.	
Julie Strudwick	- 375 2346 (home) 370 1272 (RAOU office)	
Brett Lane	- 514594 (home) 3701272 (RAOU office)	
Ira Savage	- 052 216253 (home)	
Berrice Forest	- 786 9717 (home)	
Peter Dann	- 059 568395 (home)	
Brenda Murlis	- 874 2860 (home)	
John Dawson	- 787 2082 (home) 781 2791 (office)	
Ken Rogers *	- 714 8433 (home) 609 7968 (office)	

C D T MINTON 21/7/82

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

Mrs Brenda Murlis
Treasurer
Victorian Wader Study Group
34 Centre Road
VERMONT VIC 3133

I would like to join/renew membership of the Victorian
Wader Study Group as a * Full/Country/Associate/Interstate/
Student member. Enclosed is cheque/money order for \$.....
in payment of membership fee for the year ended 30 June 1983.

Full membership	\$10 per annum	} 1 July to 30 June
Country, Interstate, Student, Associate membership	\$ 5 per annum	

* cross out whichever is not applicable

NAME
(please use block letters)

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