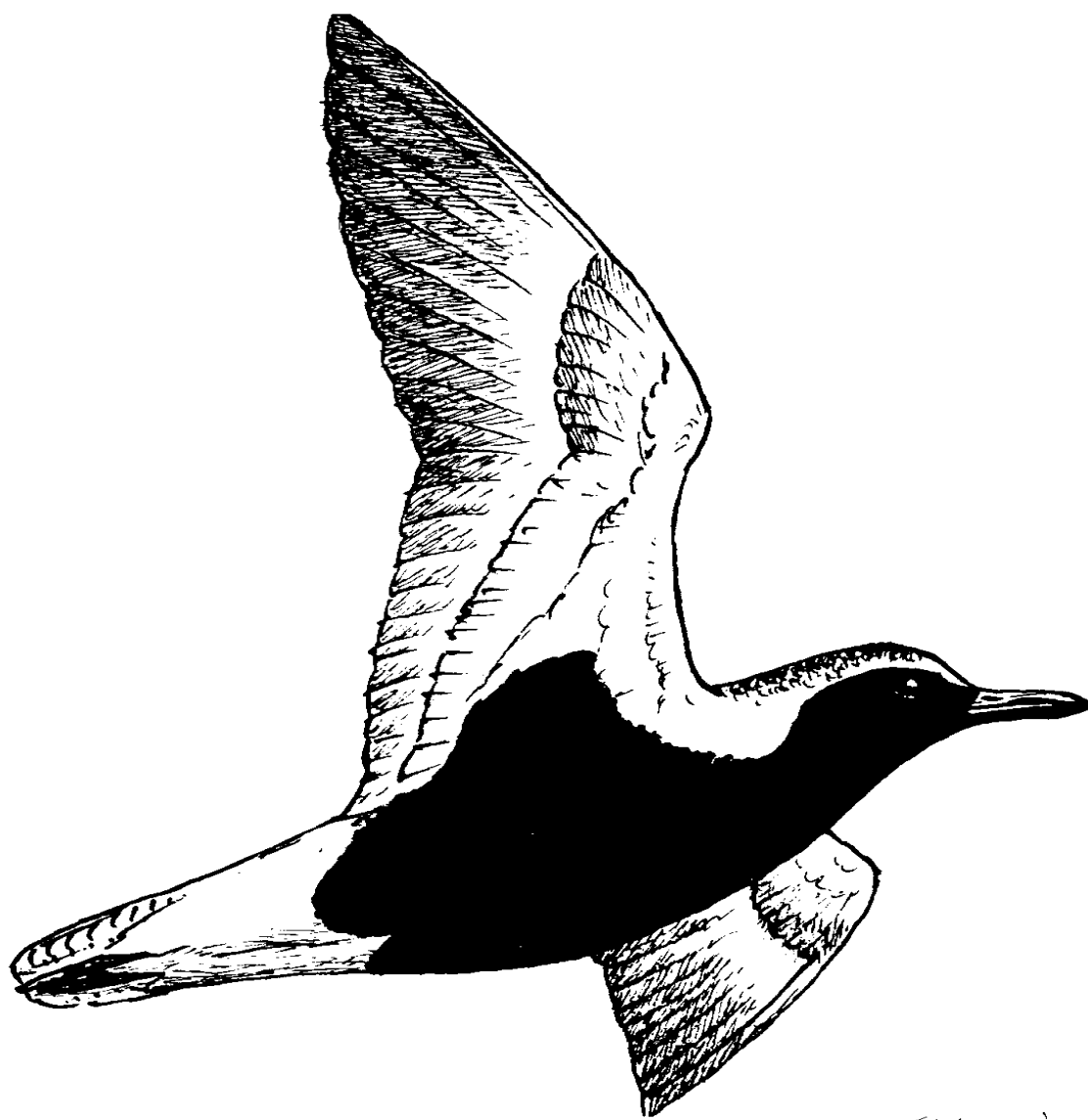


VWSG BULLETIN

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VICTORIAN WADER STUDY GROUP INC.

MISSION STATEMENT

The principal aim of the Victorian Wader Study Group is to gather, through extensive planned fieldwork programs, comprehensive data on waders and terns throughout Victoria on a long-term basis.

This scientifically collected information is intended to form a factual base for conservation considerations, to be a source of information for education of a wider audience, to be a means of generating interest of the general community in environmental and conservation issues, and to be a major contribution to Australian, Flyway and Worldwide knowledge of waders and terns.

FORMATION/BACKGROUND

The wader banding fieldwork, which led to the formation of the Victorian Wader Study Group, commenced in December 1975. The Group was formally named in late 1978 and incorporated in 1986.

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Subscriptions for 2008/09 (payable in advance on 1st July 2008)

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This bulletin is usually published on the date of the Annual General Meeting and contains reports and cumulative records of fieldwork of the Victorian Wader Study Group with articles, field notes and other material. Contributions are welcome. Please consult the editor or assistant editor on questions of format. Line illustrations reproduced from the AWSG journal *Stilt* with permission of the editor.

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Our web site is maintained by Roger Standen

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Summary of VWSG Activities to July 2008

Clive Minton

The preparation of the VWSG Bulletin each year is a trigger to look back and take stock of what has been achieved in the past year and an opportunity to think about forward plans. Every year feels to have been a good year, measured by objectives achieved, scientific results obtained and enjoyment. But perhaps I should look more critically at just what were the highlights and lowlights of the past year as far as VWSG activities are concerned.

We'll start off with a (relatively) lowlight. The total number of birds caught in 2007 was only 5613, the lowest total since 1997. This was mainly because we did not make any large catches of Red-necked Stints at Werribee Sewage Farm, Yallock Creek, Inverloch etc. at either the beginning or the end of the year. But, most importantly, we did get good samples of nearly all the other migratory wader species on our menu – 725 Sanderling, 425 Ruddy Turnstone, 303 Red Knot, 292 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, 227 Bar-tailed Godwit and 200 Curlew Sandpipers. And 2008 has started well with 3806 in the first six months, including one catch at Yallock Creek containing 202 Curlew Sandpipers. This was the largest single catch of this declining species for over a decade.

Another disappointment was only catching 63 Pied Oystercatchers and 15 Sooty Oystercatchers in the 2007 “Oystercatcher Season”, against annual minimum targets of 150/50 respectively. However we have more than compensated for this by an excellent 2008 Oystercatcher season with 170 Pied and 109 Sooty already caught by mid-July.

The catching highlight of the past 12 months was probably the 419 Ruddy Turnstone during our week-long visit to King Island in March 2008. Adding King Island to our portfolio of banding sites has enormously increased the rate at which we are generating data on the migratory movements of Ruddy Turnstones and it will also ultimately become extremely important in helping to determine their annual survival rates.

It is probably in the recoveries, flag-sightings and retraps area that the overall highest achievements for the year are apparent. There were 16 overseas recoveries of Ruddy Turnstones (many from the resightings of birds carrying individual leg flags), almost doubling the previous total. There were also six overseas leg-flag sightings. One Ruddy Turnstone has now been seen in Taiwan on three successive migrations – northward and southward in 2007 and northward again in 2008.

But Sanderling recoveries and flag sightings took first prize. There were 14 recoveries and 18 flag sightings in the Sakhalin Island region of eastern Siberia – obviously an extremely important stopover area. Most had been banded in South Australia and the recoveries/flag sightings were both on northward migration in late May/early June and on southward migration in late July/early August.

Other flag sighting highlights during the year were 13 birds from Chongming Dao in China and three Sharp-tailed Sandpipers from Alaska seen in Victoria and South Australia. The Chinese birds were a good variety of species and are the result of the now very successful and intensive wader banding which is taking place there.

Amazingly, the Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were all from a batch of 27 juveniles caught on the shores of south-west Alaska just prior to migration in mid-September 2006. A Bar-tailed Godwit flagged in Alaska and seen in Corner Inlet added to this list of Alaskan firsts in Victoria and South Australia.

Another important series of flag sightings were 110 Bar-tailed Godwits and 10 Great Knots in South Korea during northward migration in April/May 2008. These were seen by the teams of wader enthusiasts monitoring the effects of the disastrous Saemangeum Reclamation Project (two large adjacent estuaries were enclosed with a 35 km. sea wall). We are likely to see significant negative effects on wader populations in Australia, particularly on Great Knot and Bar-tailed Godwit.

Retraps (recaptures of our own birds) are generally considered quite dull by fieldwork teams! But they are the vital ingredients for calculating survival rates, one of the two key demographic parameters (factors which control population levels). However much more excitement is generated when an examination of the retrap data reveals particularly old birds. We were delighted to recapture for example a 23½ year old Bar-tailed Godwit. But this was eclipsed when we recaptured a Pied Oystercatcher at Rhyll which was 29¼ years old. This bird had not been recaptured at all during the intervening period. Surprisingly neither bird is an Australian age record with a 27 year old Bar-tailed Godwit having been recaptured in 2007 at Broome and with Mike Newmann now having a breeding Pied Oystercatcher in his study area in south-east Tasmania which is over 30 years old.

One of the highlights of each year is the gradually emerging picture we develop in the November to March period as we monitor the proportion of juvenile birds in the population. This is a measure of the breeding success in the preceding Arctic summer. 2007 was a particularly good year and most species had an average or higher than average proportion of first-year birds in their population. But, as always, there is an exception and this year it was (again) Red-necked Stints which fared poorly. Particularly pleasing however was that Curlew Sandpipers, whose population has declined markedly over the last 25 years, had an exceptionally good breeding year.

Tern studies remain an important component of our long-term studies in Victoria. This year the shortage of food in the early part of the season caused a major reduction in the number of pairs of Crested Terns which nested at The Nobbies and Mud Islands colonies and as far as we could ascertain no Crested Terns at all nested in Corner Inlet. In contrast Caspian Terns had a reasonably good breeding season.

Much effort continues to go into curating the data we collect and analysing it for publication. Rather less progress was made during the past year but a highlight was the publication, in Emu, of the 'magnum opus' Bar-tailed Godwit paper. This was 10 years in gestation! A renewed drive is planned for 2008/09 to get more of our results into print.

The condition of the equipment used by the group and the group's financial position are closely linked. With generous contributions from members, from Coast Action Coast Care, from DSE and Parks Victoria we have been able, through the efforts of Paul Buchhorn and Rod McFarlane, to keep the Group's cannon-netting equipment in excellent condition. We also now have good portable radios. The result is that

fieldwork efficiency is maximised and we rarely experience the frustration of malfunctions.

I mentioned at the beginning that “enjoyment” was one of the key measures of the success of any year. We are all operating as unpaid volunteers when we have our VWSG hat on. We do this partly because of a wish to contribute to science and conservation but also because we enjoy sharing our experience of seeing birds in the field and close up in the hand with others of similar interests. We now have an excellent large core (corps?) of experienced people who really enjoy the teamwork of fieldwork. It is a great relief to me that their enthusiasm and commitment these days results in most people phoning me to let me know whether they can come on a planned outing rather than, as in the earlier days, me having to spend two whole evenings phoning around everyone.

In addition to this fieldwork support a large number of members do other things in the background to support VWSG activities. I thought it would be of interest to list some of these in this year’s Bulletin (see end of Bulletin). I’m bound to have left out some people/activities so, firstly, apologies and secondly please let me know so that I can amend the list!

The Group also is enormously indebted to many other organisations and individuals who assist it in so many different ways. This is especially through permission to enter private property and through logistical assistance, particularly with boat transport. Can we please thank everyone who’s helped facilitate our wader and tern studies over the last year?

The VWSG fieldwork program for the foreseeable future is likely to continue along the lines of previous years. The principal components are –

- a) The monitoring of annual breeding success via the percentage of juveniles in catches in the mid-November to late March period.
- b) Week-long visits to South Australia and King Island, usually in the February/early April period, as well as continuation of the local wader banding efforts organised by Maureen Christie in the south-east of South Australia.
- c) The autumn/winter banding of Pied/Sooty Oystercatchers.
- d) Monitoring of Crested, Caspian and Fairy Tern populations and banding of chicks (and recapturing already-banded Crested Tern adults at the nest).
- e) Assisting with the AWSG twice-a-year wader counts at various locations.

Possible additions to the program for the 2008/09 season include involvement with placing radio transmitters on waders in the Swan Bay/Swan Island/Mud Islands area and putting satellite transmitters on Eastern Curlew (in conjunction with Peter Dann/Phillip Island Nature Park).

Finally hearty congratulations to Maureen Christie for her personal award for “Outstanding Service to the Friends of the Parks Network” a well deserved recognition of her contribution to conservation. Congratulations also to Shorebirds SE for receiving the 2007 SA Great Regional Award for Science & Sustainability sponsored by SA Water.

Have a great year, everyone!

Total Number of Waders Caught – VWSG 2007

Species	New	Retrap	Total
Bar-tailed Godwit	186	41	227
Ruddy Turnstone	327	98	425
Great Knot	37	6	43
Red Knot	249	54	303
Sanderling	507	218	725
Red-necked Stint	2833	460	3293
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	289	3	292
Curlew Sandpiper	183	17	200
Pied Oystercatcher	50	13	63
Sooty Oystercatcher	6	9	15
Grey Plover	5	0	5
Red-capped Plover	3	1	4
Double-banded Plover	12	3	15
Hooded Plover	1	1	2
Masked Lapwing	1	0	1
15 Species	4689	924	5613



Masked Lapwing (Photo Roz Jessop)

Total Waders Caught by Species 1975 to December 2007 – VWSG

Species	New	Retrap	Total
Latham's Snipe	347	14	361
Black-tailed Godwit	4	0	4
Bar-tailed Godwit	3996	533	4529
Short-billed Dowitcher	1	0	1
Whimbrel	46	3	49
Eastern Curlew	814	72	886
Marsh Sandpiper	2	0	2
Common Greenshank	510	62	572
Terek Sandpiper	37	1	38
Grey-tailed Tattler	38	3	41
Ruddy Turnstone	3261	1187	4448
Great Knot	681	89	770
Red Knot	4882	735	5617
Sanderling	3958	1462	5420
Little Stint	8	0	8
Red-necked Stint	109167	30054	139221
Long-toed Stint	1	0	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	2	0	2
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	8871	420	9291
Curlew Sandpiper	24886	4781	29667
Cox's Sandpiper	1	0	1
Broad-billed Sandpiper	5	0	5
Pied Oystercatcher	2452	1269	3721
Sooty Oystercatcher	792	227	1019
Black-winged Stilt	38	0	38
Banded Stilt	486	0	486
Red-necked Avocet	368	5	373
Pacific Golden Plover	265	25	290
Grey Plover	160	23	183
Red-capped Plover	674	185	859
Double-banded Plover	3637	1001	4638
Lesser Sand Plover	115	11	126
Greater Sand Plover	31	3	34
Black-fronted Plover	57	4	61
Hooded Plover	29	2	31
Red-kneed Dotterel	136	11	147
Masked Lapwing	182	3	185
37 Species	170940	42185	213125

New and Retrapped Waders Caught Each Calendar Year by VWSG

Calendar Year	New	Retrap	Total
* 1975	9		9
* 1976	616	4	620
* 1977	482	12	494
* 1978	1296	42	1338
1979	7436	486	7922
1980	6121	1206	7327
1981	4561	869	5430
1982	3774	796	4570
1983	2875	628	3503
1984	4272	1045	5317
1985	4073	1051	5124
1986	7144	2057	9201
1987	5350	1559	6909
1988	8019	2697	10716
1989	5437	1584	7021
1990	4094	1950	6044
1991	3224	850	4074
1992	4652	861	5513
1993	8831	2588	11419
1994	4839	1753	6592
1995	2708	625	3333
1996	5263	1035	6298
1997	4366	1050	5416
1998	8083	1408	9491
1999	6515	1591	8106
2000	10350	2594	12944
2001	4839	1320	6159
2002	10421	2162	12583
2003	8495	2854	11349
2004	5110	1224	6334
2005	6320	1893	8213
2006	6676	1467	8143
2007	4689	924	5613
Totals to end 2007	170940	42185	213125

Average annual total for 1979-2007 = 7264 (* excluded)

Total Waders Caught Each Six Months

1979-2007 - VWSG

Calendar Year	January to June	July to December	Total
1975			9
1976			620
1977			494
1978			1338
1979	4289	3633	7922
1980	4127	3200	7327
1981	2113	3317	5430
1982	2394	2176	4570
1983	2882	621	3503
1984	2654	2663	5317
1985	3972	1152	5124
1986	5000	4201	9201
1987	3135	3774	6909
1988	5235	5481	10716
1989	3854	3167	7021
1990	1661	4383	6044
1991	2376	1698	4074
1992	3357	2156	5513
1993	5287	6132	11419
1994	2789	3803	6592
1995	1521	1812	3333
1996	1802	4496	6298
1997	1913	3503	5416
1998	5568	3923	9491
1999	4142	3964	8106
2000	5987	6957	12944
2001	3851	2308	6159
2002	8174	4409	12583
2003	3033	8316	11349
2004	1288	5046	6334
2005	5003	3210	8213
2006	5192	2951	8143
2007	3646	1967	5613
Totals to end 2007	106245	104419	213125

Location of Waders Caught in Victoria and South Australia

	To Dec 2006	2007	Total
Victoria			
Werribee	60655	688	61343
Western Port/Flinders	55418	252	55670
Queenscliff/Swan Bay	29763	1261	31024
Anderson Inlet (Inverloch)	22228	0	22228
Corner Inlet	24596	2151	26747
Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet	1930	0	1930
Laverton	956	0	956
Mud Islands	753	0	753
Killarney Beach	426	0	426
Geelong (Point Henry/ Belmont Common	257	0	257
Bendigo SF	143	0	143
Seaford Swamp	98	0	98
Braeside/Croyden	79	0	79
Gippsland Lakes	40	0	40
Toowong	10	0	10
South Australia			
Canunda/ Carpenter Rocks/ Brown Bay/Beachport/Coorong	10250	954	11204
Tasmania			
King Island	0	307	307
Total	207602	5613	213215



Red-necked Stint at Werribee (Photo Roz Jessop)

Numbers of waders processed by the VWSG each month to December 2007.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	TOTAL
Latham's Snipe	51	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	106	99	35	61	396
Short-billed Dowitcher	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Black-tailed Godwit	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	4
Bar-tailed Godwit	566	601	685	99	24	638	127	286	77	334	276	441	4154
Whimbrel	3	0	37	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	3	0	49
Eastern Curlew	16	148	19	0	22	18	13	75	175	124	180	100	890
Common Greenshank	42	135	122	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	176	60	572
Marsh Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Terek Sandpiper	17	2	1	1	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	12	39
Grey-tailed Tattler	31	0	1	3	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	41
Ruddy Turnstone	364	431	1249	726	39	23	77	63	75	138	597	540	4322
Great Knot	196	83	26	0	0	29	21	6	16	116	74	130	697
Red Knot	852	391	302	201	2	426	469	139	85	1000	532	284	4683
Sanderling	376	1265	1772	385	0	0	1	5	0	265	414	463	4946
Little Stint	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	8
Red-necked Stint	2643	1541	6582	2420	546	749	1032	705	891	1939	3457	3685	26190
Long-toed Stint	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	1763	795	237	2	0	0	0	16	525	547	625	2572	7082
Curlew Sandpiper	1487	1361	1716	231	223	128	266	479	261	1138	923	1365	9578
Broad-billed Sandpiper	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
Pied Oystercatcher	112	218	357	479	635	769	549	289	146	38	15	59	3666
Sooty Oystercatcher	6	70	82	97	201	306	212	55	0	1	0	0	1030
Black-winged Stilt	1	9	0	0	0	0	1	12	0	4	2	9	38
Banded Stilt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	151	151
Red-necked Avocet	39	0	0	0	0	0	3	67	76	46	47	89	367
Pacific Golden Plover	40	27	60	2	0	0	0	0	0	28	62	65	284
Grey Plover	14	14	4	6	0	9	0	0	2	92	42	1	184
Red-capped Plover	41	85	62	115	210	110	77	26	12	22	24	12	796
Double-banded Plover	0	2	204	280	757	956	1053	938	1	0	0	0	4191
Lesser Sand Plover	54	5	13	7	3	2	2	0	0	1	15	12	114
Greater Sand Plover	21	3	6	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	33
Black-fronted Dotterel	0	7	1	0	11	16	7	9	2	0	4	8	65
Hooded Plover	0	0	1	1	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
Red-kneed Dotterel	0	10	0	20	0	44	11	17	12	8	23	1	146
Masked Lapwing	5	6	88	14	4	13	4	1	1	5	21	18	180
Cox's Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	8743	7259	13627	5089	2679	4259	3927	3189	2464	5989	7553	10147	74925

Numbers of Waders Leg Flagged in Victoria (orange)

Species	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Latham's Snipe	0	0	0	0	40	0	110	56	70	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	278
Black-tailed Godwit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	4
Bar-tailed Godwit	0	1	157	6	64	0	43	173	16	84	388	324	196	80	208	256	223	320	186	2725
Whimbrel	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	4	18	0	43
Eastern Curlew	0	0	8	0	73	88	87	4	37	35	91	27	18	18	38	0	20	0	0	544
Marsh Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Common Greenshank	0	0	21	21	51	0	1	109	131	19	0	0	0	1	41	24	0	12	0	431
Terek Sandpiper	0	0	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	13
Grey-tailed Tattler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
*Ruddy Turnstone	0	99	188	37	35	1	194	129	194	372	75	54	34	22	20	154	1	31	328	1968
Great Knot	0	0	2	0	4	0	3	36	31	21	21	53	38	78	3	20	3	28	36	377
Red Knot	0	0	302	26	88	1	52	59	295	289	175	334	377	681	54	176	246	274	248	3677
*Sanderling	0	0	163	0	191	1	47	328	148	342	51	118	36	37	26	140	64	104	506	2302
Little Stint	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	6
Red-necked Stint	0	799	1259	2516	2282	1661	1384	3065	1434	3224	4215	6038	2570	5792	5839	3489	4502	3363	1727	55159
Pectoral Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	0	4	250	111	71	21	69	145	155	474	212	105	18	670	1068	421	299	329	285	4707
Curlew Sandpiper	146	462	367	1255	808	839	469	753	270	633	770	1162	417	373	517	51	164	524	94	10074
Cox's Sandpiper	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Broad-billed Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Black-winged Stilt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	1	14	0	0	0	20
Banded Stilt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	151	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	152
Red-necked Avocet	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	27	0	0	46	0	6	0	56	0	0	0	140
Pacific Golden Plover	0	10	10	1	0	0	0	6	0	10	13	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	64
Grey Plover	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	0	22	0	0	21	0	24	1	2	9	0	5	91
Red-capped Plover	0	0	0	0	0	19	0	0	29	3	10	2	2	12	4	6	10	1	1	99
Double-banded Plover	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	40	24	98	3	90	19	46	18	21	10	377
Lesser Sand Plover	0	0	0	14	6	8	9	13	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55
Greater Sand Plover	0	0	0	0	3	6	0	0	0	2	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Hooded Plover	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Black-fronted Dotterel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Red-kneed Dotterel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
Masked Lapwing	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	2	5	4	1	12	1	1	1	32
32 Species	146	1375	2729	3992	3739	2656	2475	4881	2867	5554	6053	8538	3735	7895	7844	4870	5565	5030	3428	83372

*Includes Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderling flagged with orange (only) in the south east of South Australia between 1993 and 1998.

Numbers of Waders Leg Flagged in South Australia (orange/yellow)

Species	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Latham's Snipe	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Grey-tailed Tattler	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Bar-tailed Godwit	0	0	0	3	0	8	0	0	0	11
Ruddy Turnstone	234	226	73	193	76	141	74	258	84	1359
Red Knot	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	11	0	12
Sanderling	63	420	2	315	328	76	220	250	506	2180
Red-necked Stint	126	383	22	319	163	93	174	465	54	1799
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	0	2	0	27	7	73	27	21	0	157
Curlew Sandpiper	24	11	0	190	13	2	103	8	21	372
Pied Oystercatcher	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Banded Stilt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	334	0	334
Pacific Golden Plover	0	2	0	0	1	0	16	13	0	32
Red-capped Plover	0	0	1	7	5	0	7	4	1	25
Double-banded Plover	0	0	4	5	1	0	0	27	2	39
Black-fronted Plover	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Hooded Plover	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Masked Lapwing	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	4	1	13
Total	447	1045	106	1062	599	396	623	1395	671	6344

VWSG FIELDWORK PROGRAM
January to December 2008

DATE	PLACE AND OBJECTIVES	HIGH TIDE	
*Wed 2 Jan	Yallock Creek Red-necked Stint & Curlew Sandpiper	0800	2.55
*Thur 3 Jan	Swan Island, Queenscliff Large & small waders	0640**	1.25
[Thur 10 Jan to Mon 21 Jan	[Clive, Roz & others away catching Roseate Terns on the Barrier Reef]		
*Sat 26 Jan to Mon 28 Jan (Mon is public holiday for Australia Day)	Werribee TP (Stay at Cocoroc Hall, Werribee) Small waders	0645 1833 0720 1924 0752	0.85 0.75 0.85 0.79 0.86
Thur 31 Jan	Count of Nooramunga N.P. area of Corner Inlet by Clive Minton & Susan Taylor & recce for cannon netting Set cannon nets p.m.	0650	2.37
*Fri 1 Feb to Mon 4 Feb	Corner Inlet (Stay at Manns Beach hall) Large waders	0715 to 0848	2.37 to 2.26
*Tue 12 Feb to Thur 14 Feb	Western Port – Stockyard Point & Yallock Creek (Stay at Pat MacWhirter's house, Harewood, at Tooradin) Small waders	1756 0558 1843 0632	2.74 2.75 2.79 2.72
*Sat 16 Feb to Sun 17 Feb	Barry Beach Small waders	2026 0747	2.45 2.58
Mon 18 Feb	Count of West Corner Inlet (Peter Dann & Peter Anton)	0831	2.50
*Sat 23 Feb to Sat 1 Mar	South Australia (Stay at Paul Feast's cottage and Iain and Sandy Stewart's farm) Sanderling & Turnstone	1501 to 1817	0.87 to 0.87
Sat 8 Mar to Sat 15 Mar	King Island (Stay in/near Currie) Turnstone	1316 to 1810	1.17 to 1.49
Fri 21 Mar (Good Friday)	Sandy Point Sanderling	1233	1.17
Mon 5 May Or Tues 6 May	Hastings Pied Oystercatcher-(date will depend on weather)	1223 1330	2.68 2.90
Sun 18 May	Rhyll Bar-tailed Godwit & Pied Oystercatcher	1148	2.51
Sat 24 May	Stockyard Point Pied Oystercatcher	1608	2.95
Tues 17 June & Wed 18 June	Count Corner Inlet & recce for cannon netting West on 17 th , Nooramunga 18th	1117 1211	2.22 2.26
Thurs 19 to Sun 22 June	Corner Inlet Over-wintering migratory waders and oystercatchers (Stay at Rosemary Davidson's at Yanakie)	1300 1345 1427 1505	2.28 2.29 2.31 2.33
Fri 4 to Sun 6 July	Roussac's, Charles Hall Road, Barry Beach, Lyons Downs - Oystercatchers (Stay at Rosemary Davidson's at Yanakie)	1247 1352 1450	2.46 2.49 2.52
Fri 18 July	Fairhaven, French Island Pied Oystercatchers	1303	2.64
Sat 26 & Sun 27 July	AWSG AGM Ken Gosbell's house		

Sun 3 Aug	Barry Beach Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers	1324	2.32
Sat 9 Aug	VWSG AGM (Clive & Pat's house) 10am – 10pm 10am Equipment maintenance 4pm AGM 7pm Talks Small charge to cover meal costs applies		
Sat 20 Sept	Stockyard Point Pied Oystercatcher	1603	2.69
Sat 4 October	Yallock Creek Red-necked Stint & Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	1555	2.58
Fri 24 to Sun 26 October	Queenscliff Bar-tailed Godwit & Red Knot * at The Heads, two hours later in Swan Bay	0804* 0906* 1005*	1.27 1.22 1.20
Sat 1 Nov	Mud Island Caspian & Crested Tern * at The Heads, two hours later in Swan Bay	1443*	1.27
Tue 18 Nov	Flinders Ruddy Turnstone	1605	1.35
Sat 29 Nov	Mud Islands Caspian & Crested Terns * at The Heads, two hours later in Swan Bay	1330*	1.18
Sun 30 Nov	Sandy Point Sanderling	1412	1.20
Sat 13 Dec	Mud Islands Caspian & Crested Terns * at The Heads, two hours later in Swan Bay	1203	1.20
Sat 20 Dec	Yallock Creek Red-necked Stint, Curlew Sandpiper & Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (set nets previous evening and camp or stay at Harewood House, Tooradin)	0725	2.80
Sun 21 Dec	Rhyll Bar-tailed Godwit (set nets previous evening and stay at Roz Jessop's house)	0801	2.69
Mon 22 Dec	The Nobbies Crested Tern chicks (meet at 11.30am)	Low tide 1352	0.23
Tues 23 Dec	Clonmel Island, Corner Inlet Caspian and Crested Terns	0829	2.40
Mon 29 to Wed 31 Dec	Werribee TP Red-necked Stint, Curlew Sandpiper, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (set nets 28 th Dec and stay overnight at Cocoroc Hall)	0550 1616 0626 1708 0658	0.87 0.75 0.87 0.76 0.87



Recoveries of Waders Banded in Victoria

Clive Minton, Roz Jessop and Maureen Fitzgerald

Listed below are all recoveries of waders banded by VWSG in Victoria which have come to our notice in the last year. Because some have not yet been formally processed by the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Office movement distances and directions are not always shown and the lists may not be complete. Birds with individual leg flags or colour band combinations are treated as recoveries rather than flag sightings. All birds recaptured (alive) unless otherwise stated.

Bar-tailed Godwit

Band No.	Banding Details			Recovery Details		
	Age	Date	Location	Date	Location	Movement/ Age
Alaska 86403144	Juv	7/9/04	Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, S.W. ALASKA	5/3/08	Corner Inlet	
071-51226	Juv	30/12/84	Queenscliff	20/10/07 (Retrapped)	Queenscliff	23½ years old

This very old (23½ years) retrap – a record for a VWSG-banded Bar-tailed Godwit – is not an Australian longevity record as a 27-year-old Bar-tailed Godwit was recaptured at Broome in north-west Australia in 2007. The individually leg-flagged (AO) bird from Alaska seen in Corner Inlet in March was the first Alaskan-marked bird recorded in Victoria. In contrast, there have been a few recoveries and many flag sightings of VWSG-marked Bar-tailed Godwits in Alaska.

Ruddy Turnstone

052-51975	Adult	19/4/07	Flinders	4/5/08	Kao Hsiung, TAIWAN	
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This bird was recognised by its engraved leg flag (TY). Taiwan seems to be a major stopover location for Turnstones from south-east Australia (see SA and King Island recoveries).

Red Knot

052-29671	Juv	5/2/06	Corner Inlet	26/5/08 (Shot)	N.Sea of Okhotsk, Russia	10,932 km. N.
052-52114	Juv.	20/10/07	Queenscliff	24/3/08 (Found dead)	Manukau Harbour, North Island, NZ	
China F05-5924	Juv	27/9/06	Chongming Dao, Shanghai, CHINA	22/2/07	Corner Inlet	
052-38934	Juv	22/10/05	Queenscliff	25/1/07	Parengarenga, North Island, NZ	
052-22848	Juv	20/1/02	Barrallier Island, Western Port	8/4/07	Chongming Dao, Shanghai, CHINA	
052-38631	Juv	23/1/05	Corner Inlet	13/4/07	Chongming Dao, Shanghai, CHINA	
052-39504	Juv	16/4/04	Corner Inlet	19/4/07	Chongming Dao, Shanghai, CHINA	
052-38766	2 nd Year	24/6/05	Corner Inlet	28/4/08	Chongming Dao, Shanghai, CHINA	
052-24185	Juv	2/4/02	Barry Beach	26/4/08	North Bohai, CHINA	
052-03952	Adult (2+)	10/2/01	Queenscliff	15/5/08	North Bohai, CHINA	
052-29771	Juv	5/2/06	Corner Inlet	31/5/08	North Bohai, CHINA	

This is an excellent crop of recoveries, mainly deriving from the most successful banding programs at Chongming Dao and North Bohai in China. It is notable that all recoveries in Asia were of birds on northward migration, when the Yellow Sea is the principal stopover site. A different route – a direct flight from the Sea of Okhotsk – is used by some on southward migration. Both birds later found in New Zealand had been banded as juveniles – again, a regular pattern. 052-52114 died of a mystery illness which affected more than 100 Red Knot in the Manukau Harbour in late March. The bird recovered in Russia at the end of May seemed to be heading for the Chukotsk breeding grounds, the breeding stronghold of the *rogersii* population of Red Knot which spend the non-breeding season in eastern Australia (and New Zealand).

Sanderling

042-46834	Adult	26/12/06	Sandy Point	29/7/07 (Shot)	Chayvo Bay, Sakhalin, RUSSIA	10,144 km.
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This bird was collected, for scientific purposes, at a major stopover site for adult Sanderling on southward migration in late July and August (see S.A. Recoveries Report for more records).

Interstate Sanderling controls (recaptures of our own birds away from the banding location) have not yet been formally processed. They will be included in a future Bulletin.

Red-necked Stint

036-08251	Juv	28/12/02	Werribee S.F.	20/8/07	Muara Gembong – Bekasi, INDONESIA	
036-20613	Juv	8/2/06	Corner Inlet	14/10/07	Broome, W.A.	3,298 km NW
036-18583	Adult	23/1/05	Corner Inlet	15/8/07 (shot)	Tugurskiy Bay, RUSSIA	10,321 km. N
035-83165	Adult	23/12/01	Stockyard Point	20/3/07	King Island, TAS.	222 km. SW
036-17619	Adult	6/1/05	Barrallier Island, Western Port	17/5/07	Chongming Dao, CHINA	
035-01679	Adult	30/11/96	Inverloch	2/6/08	North Bohai. CHINA	

A real mixture of recoveries. One of the two on northward migration through China was caught on the rather late date of 2nd June. Southward migration of Red-necked Stints (and Sanderlings) along the eastern coast of Siberia in July and August is common. The bird caught at stopover in August in Indonesia is less frequent whereas the movement through north-west Australia is regular. The southward passage of adults through there can continue well into October. The bird caught in King Island appears to have changed its non-breeding area.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper

China E07-4163 (A9)	Adult	27/4/07	Chongming Dao, Shanghai, CHINA	20/12/07	Edithvale Wetlands	
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This is the first Chinese-banded Sharp-tailed Sandpiper to be reported in Victoria. It was identified by the engraved leg flag A9, noted in the field by sharp-eyed Andrew Silcocks.

Curlew Sandpiper

042-15389	Juv	2/1/00	Barrallier Island, Western Port	20/8/07	Muara Gembong – Bekasi, INDONESIA	
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Curlew Sandpiper recoveries are few and far between these days (none the previous year). This is a reflection of the smaller numbers banded in recent years as a result of lower

population levels. There have been few previous reports of Curlew Sandpipers making migratory stopovers in Indonesia. This one was recaptured by the Avian Influenza Survey team.

Pied Oystercatcher

100-85056	Adult	8/2/88	Stockyard Point	8/4/08	Stockyard Point	20 years 2 months
100-85046	Adult	8/2/88	Stockyard Point	8/4/08	Stockyard Point	20 years 2 months
100-82059	2	1/3/80	Rhyll	24/3/08	Rhyll	28 years
101-22064	3	13/9/03	Stockyard Point	07/08 (breeding)	Grafton, NSW	1269 km. NE
100-03956	3	13/8/94	Barry Beach	15/3/08	Wingan Inlet	293 km. E
101-07493	3	8/4/01	Rhyll	14/3/08	Manuka, King Island	199 km. SW
101-21174	Adult	14/4/02	Stockyard Point	14/3/08	Manuka, King Island	220 km. SW
101-04746	Adult	15/6/96	Corner Inlet	25/2/08	Mallacoota	285 km. NE
101-23600	2	30/3/06	Hastings	5/2/08	Marlo	298 km. E
101-23686	3	12/7/06	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet	5/2/08	Marlo	298 km. NE
101-22081	2	21/12/03	Barry Beach	17/1/08	Mallacoota	319 km. NE
101-07079	Juv	31/7/04	Corner Inlet	17/1/08	Mallacoota	283 km. NE
101-15947	Juv	20/6/00	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet	17/1/08	Mallacoota	336 km. NE
101-15973	Adult	2/8/00	Rhyll	17/1/08	Mallacoota	400 km. E
101-22049	2	21/12/03	Barry Beach	31/10/07 5/1/08	Batemans Bay, NSW	478 km. NE
101-22052	Adult	2/8/03	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet	21/12/07	Narrawallee Inlet, NSW	541 km. NE
101-21216	3	13/5/02	Fairhaven, French Island	19/11/07	Bournda, NSW	446 km. NE
101-07051	3	20/6/04	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet	7/11/07	NW King Island, TAS.	229 km. SW
101-07470	Juv	22/7/01	Barry Beach	31/10/07	Wallagoot, NSW	378 km. NE
101-23508	Juv	25/6/05	Corner Inlet	21/10/07	Sydenham Inlet	215 km. NE
101-24116	2	13/8/08	Barry Beach	21/10/07	Sydenham Inlet	251 km. NE
101-22055	Adult	2/8/03	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet	21/10/07	Sydenham Inlet	266 km. NE
101-23508	Juv	25/6/05	Corner Inlet	21/10/07	Sydenham Inlet	215 km. NE
101-24152	3	15/7/07	Barry Beach	17/10/07	Narooma, NSW	437 km. NE
101-24088	3	13/8/06	Barry Beach	17/10/07	Narooma, NSW	437 km. NE
101-24112	3	13/8/06	Barry Beach	12/8/07 17/10/07	Narooma, NSW	437 km. NE
101-07499	Juv	4/8/01	Rhyll	11/10/07	Lakes Entrance	244 km. E
101-24088	3	13/8/06	Barry Beach	8/10/07	Merimbula, NSW	368 km. NE
101-22014	3	19/6/03	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet	8/10/07	Merimbula, NSW	384 km. NE
101-16003	Juv	26/2/00	Stockyard Point	10/6/07 31/7/07 2/10/07 9/10/07	Port MacDonnell, SA	418 km. W
101-23602	2	30/3/06	Hastings	3/10/07	Bridgewater Bay	327 km. W
101-23617	2	30/3/06	Hastings	3/10/07	Bridgewater Bay	327 km. W
101-23564	3	37/8/05	Stockyard Point	3/10/07	Bridgewater Bay	356 km. W
101-07382	Juv	26/5/01	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet	26/9/07 (Killed by plane)	King Island, TAS	236 km. SW
101-16018	3	19/4/02	Hastings	9/6/07 14/7/07 13/8/07 9/9/07	Pelican Point, SA Blackfellows Caves, SA Blackfellows Caves, SA Carpenters Rocks, SA	421 km. W

101-07339	Adult	8/4/07	Stockyard Point	22/5/07 15/7/07 28/8/07	Port MacDonnell, SA	424 km. W
101-24163	3	15/7/07	Barry Beach	12/8/07	Narooma, NSW	437 km. NE
101-24152	3	15/7/07	Barry Beach	12/8/07	Narooma, NSW	437 km. NE
101-23649	Adult	27/5/06	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet	12/8/07	Narooma, NSW	453 km. NE
101-23553	Adult	24/7/05	Yallock Creek	12/8/07	Narooma, NSW	473 km. NE
101-07099	Juv	31/7/04	Corner Inlet	12/8/07	Narooma, NSW	407 km. NE
101-03970	3	11/9/94	Stockyard Point	12/8/07	Narooma, NSW	476 km. NE
101-23593	Adult	23/6/06	Barry Beach	4/8/07	Shoalhaven, NSW	577 km. NE
101-23575	3	18/9/05	Stockyard Point	27/7/07	Narooma, NSW	476 km. NE
100-96873	Juv	6/5/90	Werribee TP	9/6/07 14/7/07	Nene Valley, SA	350 km. W 17 years 2 months
101-15915	Juv	20/6/00	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet	24/3/07	Narooma, NSW	446 km. NE

Another absolutely fantastic collection of reports of very old birds or birds which had moved (more than 200 km.). Although there may have been some reduction in sightings since the change from colour bands to engraved leg flags in 2003 there have been some excellent series of sightings from keen observers – especially near Narooma (NSW), Merimbula (NSW), Mallacoota (VIC) and Sydenham Inlet (VIC). They presumably use a telescope to read some of the individual engraved codes (A1, 1A, 01, AA etc.)

101-22064 still remains the furthest movement for a VWSG Pied Oystercatcher (1269 km.). It is now a regular breeding bird on the northern NSW coast.

The first three birds on the list are included because of their age. Incredibly the first two were both banded on the same day and retrapped at the same place 20 years later. 101-82059 is the oldest VWSG banded bird of any species that we have caught so far – minimum age of 29¼ years.

Sooty Oystercatcher

101-21905	Adult	13/6/02	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet	18/1/07 8/3/08	Christmas Island, NW King Island, TAS Whistler Point, King Island, TAS	230 km. SW Local
101-03691	Adult	9/7/94	Altona	15/2/08 (dead)	Port Fairy	227 km. W
101-21273	3	12/6/02	Lyon Downs, Corner Inlet	10/7/07	Nora Creina, SA	585 km. W
100-99543	Adult	22/3/92	Corner Inlet	4/7/08	Corner Inlet	16¼ years after banding

Most of the above birds were identified by individual colour band combinations. The movement to Nora Creina is one of the furthest west recorded for VWSG-marked Sooty Oystercatchers. Only recoveries showing movements greater than 200 km. are included in the list.

101-99543 was a minimum of 19¼ years old when trapped – one of the oldest VWSG Sooty – the record still being held by a bird seen regularly at Phillip Island that is now over 23 years old.

Recoveries of Waders Banded in South Australia

Clive Minton, Roz Jessop, Maureen Christie and Iain Stewart

Introduction

Wader banding is carried out in South Australia by Maureen Christie and her team, supplemented by a once-per-year week-long visit by a team from Victoria. Banding results are given elsewhere in this bulletin. Listed below are the recoveries reported in the past year. The engraved leg flag details are given under the date of recovery for birds where this was the means of identification on which the recovery was based.

Ruddy Turnstone

Band No.	Banding Details			Recovery Details		
	Age	Date	Location	Date	Location	Movement/ Age
051-93543	Juv	18/1/98	Beachport	9/3/07 15/9/07 (SP)	Beachport Broome, WA	
052-51662	Adult	9/3/07	Beachport	9/5/07 (XS)	Shanghai, CHINA	
052-49648	Adult	17/4/06	Nora Creina	19/3/07 (EX)	King Island, TAS	446 km. SE
052-24037	Adult	18/3/02	Carpenter Rocks	30/7/07 (Shot)	Sakhalin, RUSSIA	10,014 km. N
052-03817	Juv	11/12/00	Port MacDonnell	21/3/07	King Island, TAS	333 km. SE
052-51973	Adult	24/2/08	Port MacDonnell	4/5/08 (YR)	Kao Hsiung, TAIWAN	
052-38647	Adult	16/3/05	Port MacDonnell	3/5/08 (S7)	Kim Men, TAIWAN	
052-22215	Juv	30/5/06	Nene Valley	3/5/08 (HW)	Kim Men, TAIWAN	
052-22243	2 nd year	06/08/06	Port MacDonnell	8/3/08 (JN)	King Island, TAS	

This excellent series of recoveries has almost entirely been derived from resightings of Ruddy Turnstones individually marked with engraved leg flags (ELFs). Taiwan is clearly a principal stopover site on northward migration. Sakhalin, in eastern Siberia, is widely used by southward migratory waders, especially Sanderling. There have also been previous recoveries and flag sightings which indicate that N.W. Australia is used as a staging area within Australia during migration. Information is now building up suggesting there is quite a strong link between the King Island and south-east South Australia Turnstone populations (see also King Island Recoveries).



Bar-tailed Godwit (Photo Digger Jackson)

Sanderling

042-53624	Adult	5/3/07	Nr. Port MacDonnell	19/8/07	Chayvo Bay, Sakhalin, RUSSIA	10,056 km. N
042-53483	Adult	5/3/07	"	17/7/07	"	"
042-53352	Adult	4/3/07	"	19/8/07	"	"
042-53263	Adult	5/3/07	"	20/8/07	"	"
042-46379	Juv	5/3/06	"	19/8/07	"	"
042-44826	Adult	15/3/05	"	20/8/07	"	"
042-44797	Adult	"	"	16/8/07	"	"
042-44787	Adult	"	"	26/8/07	"	"
042-36457	Juv	11/3/03	"	29/7/07	"	"
042-36321	Adult	"	"	19/8/07	"	"
042-29525	Adult	6/2/03	"	20/7/07	"	"
042-27433	Adult	9/3/00	"	17/7/07	"	"
041-97612	Adult	19/1/98	"	24/8/07	"	"
042-53357	Adult	4/3/07	"	19/8/07	Kahoku, Ishikawa JAPAN	8326 km. N
042-44700	Adult	15/3/05	"	3/9/06 26/8/07	Ishikawa JAPAN Hakui, Ishikawa JAPAN	8332 km. N 8332 km. N
042-30017	Adult	8/12/00	Canunda N.P.	18/8/07	Kahoku, Ishikawa, JAPAN	8275 km. N

This is by far the largest crop of Sanderling recoveries the VWSG has ever received. Unfortunately all the birds reported from Sakhalin Island, eastern Siberia, were shot (for museum/research purposes). It is clear from this, as well as other recovery and flag-sighting data from earlier years, that Chayvo Bay is an important stopover area for this species. This is also the case for Japan where, amazingly, all four recoveries were obtained by the number being read (and often photographed) on the metal band on a live bird in the field. It is interesting that 042-44700 was using the same stopover area in Japan on migration in two successive years.

Red-necked Stint

035-99846	Juv	19/3/02	Port MacDonnell	12/5/07 (recaptured)	Chongming Dao, CHINA	
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A nice recovery at a stopover site.



Double-banded Plover at Barry Beach 6th July 2008 (Photo Roz Jessop)

Recoveries of Waders Banded on King Island, Tasmania

Clive Minton, Penny Johns and Maureen Christie

When the first banding visit by the VWSG to King Island was made in March 2007 it was not foreseen that such interesting recoveries, controls (recaptures of birds banded elsewhere) and flag sightings would accumulate so quickly. A second visit was made in March 2008 (see report elsewhere in this Bulletin). Listed below are the recoveries and controls which have emanated so far from this "project". Flag sightings are covered elsewhere in this Bulletin.

Note that all birds where the engraved flag details are given below the band number were recognised by this individual code in the field (and often photographed).

Two of the Ruddy Turnstone records, the two Pied and one Sooty Oystercatcher, and the Red-necked Stint controls are included in these lists for completeness, even though they also appear in the Victorian/South Australian recoveries lists. Movement distances are not given because most of these recoveries have still to be "processed" by the ABBBS Office.

Ruddy Turnstone

Band No.	Banding Details			Recovery Details	
	Age	Date	Location	Date	Location
052-51886 (XO)	Adult	24/3/07	Currie TAS	4/5/07 8/5/07 3/8/07 17/4/08	Hanbou, TAIWAN
052-51862 (S8)	"	22/3/07	Surprise Bay TAS	8/8/07	Hokkaido, JAPAN
052-51863 (SO)	"	"	"	19/8/07	Chu-An, TAIWAN
052-52039 (4H)	"	9/3/08	Whistler Point TAS	5/4/08 17/4/08 18/4/08 22/4/08 23/4/08	Hanbou, TAIWAN " " " "
052-52405 (2M)	"	10/3/08	"	12/4/08 13/4/08 15/4/08	Taoyuan, TAIWAN
052-51724 (E1)	"	20/3/08	Manuka TAS	17/4/08	Hanbou, TAIWAN
052-59031 (AKS)	"	14/3/08	Manuka TAS	1/5/08	Fujian Province, CHINA
052-52445 (00)	"	11/3/08	Surprise Bay TAS	18/5/08	Hanbou, TAIWAN
052-52378 (93)	"	13/3/08	Manuka TAS	25/3/08	Blackfellow Caves, SA
052-52203 (5B)	Juv	9/3/08	Whistler Point TAS	20/4/08 29/4/08	Nene Valley, SA "
052-52277 (1Y)	Adult	11/3/08	Surprise Bay TAS	20/4/08	"
052-552224 (9J)	Juv	0/3/08	Whistler Point TAS	29/4/08	"
052-52363 (58)	Adult	12/3/08	Manuka TAS	"	"
Japan 5A-28657	"	10/8/99	Hokkaido, JAPAN	9/3/08	Whistler Point, TAS
Taiwan D30008	Adult	28/8/04	Chang Wha, TAIWAN	"	"
052-03817	Juv	11/2/00	Brown Bay, SA	21/3/07 13/3/08	Currie TAS "
052-29956	Adult	13/4/00	Brown Bay, SA	10/3/08	Whistler Point TAS
052-49648 (EX)	Adult	17/4/06	Nora Creina, SA	19/7/07	Currie TAS
052-22243 (JN)	Second Year	6/8/06	Port MacDonnell, SA	8/3/08	Whistler Point TAS

This wonderful series of recoveries and controls almost doubles previous VWSG movement data for Ruddy Turnstone. Several features are apparent.

- a) Taiwan is an important stopover site on northward migration in April and May
- b) Both Taiwan and Japan are important on southward migration
- c) One bird – 052-51886 – has been seen in Taiwan on three successive migrations (2 northward, 1 southward)
- d) Birds may stay up to three weeks at a stopover location
- e) Birds may reach Taiwan as early as 5th April
- f) Although most probably make the journey to Taiwan in a single non-stop flight a few birds seem to make a short movement to SA before embarking on the main journey.
- g) Some first year birds also cross Bass Strait to SA in April. It is not clear whether these remain in SA for the austral winter or proceed further north.

Red-necked Stint

035-83165	Adult	23/12/01	Stockyard Point VIC	20/3/07	Manuka TAS
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This bird had obviously relocated to a different non-breeding area in a subsequent season.

Pied Oystercatcher

101-07493	Adult	4/8/01	Rhyll VIC	14/3/08	Manuka TAS
101-21174	"	14/4/02	Stockyard Point VIC	"	"

There are now quite a few records indicating that many King Island Pied Oystercatchers spend part of their lives in the autumn/winter flocks on the Victorian coast. This probably relates to both immature birds and to adults which breed on King Island.

Sooty Oystercatcher

101-21905	Adult	13/6/12	Roussac's Farm, Corner Inlet, VIC	18/1/07 8/3/08	Quarantine Bay TAS "
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This bird was recognized by its unique colour band combination. Comments as for Pied Oystercatcher.



Pied Oystercatcher chick (Photo Peter Collins)

Sightings of Waders Leg-flagged in Victoria

Report Number 15

Clive Minton, Roz Jessop and Heather Gibbs

Sightings of Victorian-flagged waders have continued to flow in during the past year from throughout Australia and elsewhere in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. The table below summarises the flag sighting reports which have been received and processed into the Leg-Flag Database (by Heather Gibbs) since last year's VWSG Bulletin (September 2007).

Species	Australia	New Zealand	Korea	China (mainland)	Taiwan (China)	Hong Kong (China)	Japan	Russia	USA	Thailand	Total
Bar-tailed Godwit	50	283	119				2		3		457
Red Knot	35	359	3	24	6		2				429
Red-necked Stint	66			13	6	4		1		1	91
Sanderling	8		1	3	2	1		4			19
Great Knot	11		10								21
Curlew Sandpiper	58			3	1	3					65
Ruddy Turnstone	4			1	1						6
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	6				2						8
Whimbrel			1								1
Eastern Curlew							1				1
Double-banded Plover	1	1									2
Black-tailed Godwit	1										1
	240	643	134	44	18	8	5	5	3	1	1101

The largest number of records has, for some years, related to Bar-tailed Godwits and Red Knot which have moved to New Zealand. This pattern has continued in the past year though the total number of sightings (648) is lower because of some reduction in the fieldwork effort in New Zealand now that a major project has been completed.

Red-necked Stint sightings are markedly down from the previous year (250→91). This may in part be due to the current lower populations of this species (due to a run of poor breeding seasons) but is also related to reduced flag searching activities in Hong Kong. Eastern Curlew sightings were also down (9→1); very few have been marked in recent years. There was a welcome increase in Great Knot reports (12→21), which mainly resulted from the intensive fieldwork on the west coast of South Korea in April/May associated with monitoring the effects of the Saemangeum Reclamation Project.

Another major change from other recent years was the absence of Bar-tailed Godwit flag sightings from the south west shores of Alaska in August/September. No searching for flags in the pre-migratory flock assemblies was undertaken in 2007.

Gone are the days when the VWSG Bulletin used to list full details of every flag sighting away from the original marking area. The lists for each species given below are highly selective, covering only the most noteworthy flag sighting reports. Full details of all sightings are of course kept in the Leg Flag Database and updated versions of this are periodically exported to the Australian Bird Banding Scheme in Canberra for incorporation into their data storage facilities.

Black-tailed Godwit

<i>Resighting Details</i>		
Date	Location	Location
22/2/08	Kooragang Island, Newcastle, NSW	873 km. NE

There has been a previous sighting of a Vic-flagged Black-tailed Godwit in the Hunter Estuary. Given that so few have been flagged (4) this may well be the same bird.

Bar-tailed Godwit

24/5/07 (2 birds)	Yukon-Kuskokwin Delta, S.A. ALASKA	11,195 km. NNE
28/5/08	"	"
3/7/08 (breeding – with chicks)	Aropuk Lake, Y-K Delta, ALASKA	

Only a handful of Vic-flagged Bar-tailed Godwits have been recorded on northward migration or during the breeding season in Alaska. It is interesting that the observers of the last bird listed flagged one of its chicks with an Alaskan flag OZ. One wonders what combination they would have used if they had caught the second chick!

The huge number (119) of sightings in South Korea (see Table) demonstrates the extreme importance of that area as a stopover site for northward migrating Bar-tailed Godwits from Eastern Australia (and New Zealand) in April/May. All sightings were between 5/4/08 and 21/5/08.

Whimbrel

17/5/08	Gumdong Bay, KOREA	8582 km. N
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This is the first overseas sighting of a Vic-flagged Whimbrel. Count data in the Flyway also suggests they take a fairly easterly route to/from their breeding grounds in north-east Siberia.

Eastern Curlew

28/3/08	Saga, JAPAN	8061 km. N
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Eastern Curlew is the first species to leave Victoria on northward migration each year. There have been a number of flagged birds seen in Japan in March in previous years.

Ruddy Turnstone

17/8/07	Minjiang Estuary, Fujian, CHINA	7596 km. NW
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We have few previous records of Vic-flagged Ruddy Turnstone on the Chinese mainland. Also reports from anywhere in the Flyway on southward migration is less common than on northward migration.

Great Knot

Ten sightings in South Korea, one on 11/9/07 and the others in the period 5-16/5/08 emphasise how important this region is as a migratory stopover for Great Knot. With the loss of Saemangeum due to reclamation it is predicted that there will be a noticeable decline in the Great Knot population in Australia, possibly more in Eastern Australia than in NW Australia.

Red Knot

An extremely good crop of sightings of orange-flagged Red Knot was reported during northward migration in April/May 2008. There were 23 sightings in China between 2nd and 28th May in the Hebei region of the north-west Yellow Sea. This seems to be the only "hot spot" for this species in the Asian part of the Flyway. By contrast there was only one sighting in Korea, in spite of the intensive fieldwork there. However two sightings of birds in early September on southward migration through Korea (probably involving just one individual) indicate that not all Red Knot make a direct flight back to Australia from the Sea of Okhotsk.

There were also six sightings in Taiwan, between 14th April and 17th May.

Sanderling

28/5/07	Chayvo Bay, Sakhalin, RUSSIA	10,059 km. N
30/5/07	"	"
2/6/07	"	"
19/8/07	"	"
16/8/07	Yubu Island, KOREA	8444 km. N
7/5/07 (2 birds)	Minjiang Estuary, Fujian, CHINA	7596 km. NW
17/8/07	"	"
6/5/08	Taiping Estuary, TAIWAN	7202 NW
12/5/08	"	"
3/5/08	Mai Po, HONG KONG	7245 NW

Another excellent year for Sanderling leg-flag sightings. As usual for this species quite a number are of birds on southward migration – often at the same locations as used on northward migration. Sakhalin is clearly a most important stopover region (see also Recoveries sections of this report and the South Australian Flag-sighting Report).

Red-necked Stint

27/7/07	Near Vladivostok, RUSSIA	9137 km. N
27/8/05	Buriram, THAILAND	7225 km. NW

The report from Thailand is unusual and particularly because the bird was seen at an inland location. Most sightings (13) during the year were from the Chinese mainland. Eight were on northward migration, between 2nd and 25th May, with the others being on southward migration in the period 10th to 18th August. Six sightings in Taiwan were all between 2nd and 24th May. The four sightings in Hong Kong were rather earlier, between 27th April and 3rd May.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper

Only two overseas sightings were reported in the past year. They were in different parts of Taiwan, in late April.

Curlew Sandpiper

5/5/07	Tianjin, CHINA	8979 km. N
5/5/08	Beipu, CHINA	9012 km. N
30/5/08	"	"

The above three sightings were at the northern end of the Yellow Sea which birds gradually drift northwards towards before setting off inland across China and Siberia to their Arctic breeding grounds. There were the usual widespread reports from around Australia with a particularly large collection from Roebuck Bay, Broome (33) and 80 Mile Beach (2) in NW Australia. These were mostly of birds on southward or northward migration but a few records relate to individuals which appear to have changed their non-breeding area.

Red-necked Avocet

7/1/07	Coorong, SA	756 km. NW
15/1/07	Shepparton	14 km. N
15/9/07	Kooragong Island, Newcastle, NSW	837 km. NE

These birds would all have been flagged at Werribee Treatment Plant or at Stockyard Point, Western Port. They amplify previous flag sightings which show that Red-necked Avocets move around quite widely in south-east Australia.

Double-banded Plover

7/9/07	Rangitata River, South Island, NEW ZEALAND	2259 km. SE
9/5/08	Narawntapu N.P., TAS	466 km. SE

The bird in New Zealand was in the heart of the breeding area of birds which move to Australia for the winter. The Tasmanian sighting probably refers to a bird which went there in a subsequent winter instead of returning to Victoria.

Banded Stilt

27/8/07	The Coorong, SA	441 km. W
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This bird would have been flagged at Werribee Treatment Plant on 28th December 2000. Much of the Banded Stilt population from the eastern half of Australia have gathered in The Coorong in the last two years.



Banded Stilt on the Coorong

Sightings of Waders Leg-flagged in South Australia

Report Number 8

Clive Minton, Roz Jessop, Maureen Christie, Iain Stewart and Heather Gibbs

A further 136 sightings of waders orange/yellow flagged in the south east of South Australia have been reported since the last VWSG Bulletin was published in October 2007. These are summarised in the table below and the most interesting are detailed subsequently under the relevant species.

Species	Australia	New Zealand	Korea	China (mainland)	Taiwan (China)	Hong Kong (China)	Russia	Indonesia	Total
Bar-tailed Godwit	1	17	1						19
Red Knot	1	4							5
Red-necked Stint	5			1	1	1			8
Sanderling	46		2	6	3	1	14	1	73
Great Knot									0
Curlew Sandpiper	13			1					14
Ruddy Turnstone	6				8				14
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	2								2
Banded Stilt	3								3
	77	21	3	8	12	2	14	1	138

Sanderling and Ruddy Turnstone are the main target species of wader-banding studies in South Australia and they therefore form a large component of the flag-sighting reports. However we are still continuing to receive a disproportionately large number of reports of some of the 11 Bar-tailed Godwits marked several years ago. It was exciting also to receive the first report of a Banded Stilt moving into Western Australia.

Bar-tailed Godwit

<i>Resighting Details</i>		
Date	Location	Movement
21/8/07	Incheon, KOREA	8498 km. N
13/10/07	Maryborough, Q	1834 km. NE

There have been an additional 17 sightings in New Zealand, all but one in South Island, between 1/10/07 and 7/3/08. All 11 Bar-tailed Godwits flagged in South Australia were juveniles, but as surviving birds will now be reaching maturity we may receive more sightings in the future from elsewhere in the Flyway. A flag sighting in South Korea on southward migration is unusual as *baueri* Bar-tailed Godwits, which evidence suggests these birds were, normally make a direct return to Australasia from Alaska across the Pacific. Maybe this bird was on its first northward migration and didn't make it all the way to Alaska? The sighting in Queensland is a further indication that this SA cohort of Bar-tailed Godwits has started making migratory movements.

Ruddy Turnstone

28/8/07	Fubou, TAIWAN	7198 km. N
2/5/08	Taitung, TAIWAN	7017 km. N
2/5/08	HanBou, TAIWAN	7198 km. N
13/5/08	"	"
17/5/08	"	"
17/9/07	Broome, WA	2808 km. NW
10/10/07	King Island, TAS	395 km. SE
8/3/08 (2 birds)	"	383 km. SE

These sightings further confirm the strong role of Taiwan as a stopover site, for Turnstones on both northward and southward migration. N.W. Australia seems to be regularly used as a gateway on southward migration. There is growing evidence of a link between the Ruddy Turnstones in two of their most important areas in Australia – the southeast of South Australia and King Island.

Red Knot

13/9/07	Broome	2799 km. NW
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There were also four sightings in New Zealand (two in North Island and 2 in South Island) in the period 7/1/07 to 22/3/08. Movements to New Zealand by Red Knot from the eastern half of Australia are normal, but the sighting in north-west Australia is much less common.

Sanderling

30/5/07 (5 birds)	Chayvo Bay, Sakhalin, RUSSIA	10,062 km. N
2/6/07	"	"
20/7/07	"	"
29/7/07 (2 birds)	"	"
19/8/07 (2 birds)	"	"
20/8/07 (2 birds)	"	"
24/8/07	"	"
16/8/07	Yubu Island, KOREA	8344 km. N
13/9/07	"	"
8/5/07 (2 birds)	Fujian, CHINA	7431 km. N
11/8/07	"	"
17/8/07	Fujian, CHINA	7431 km. N
7/9/07	Guangdong, CHINA	7228 km. NW
18/9/07	"	"
2/5/08 (2 birds)	Chin Men, TAIWAN	"
16/5/08	Hanbou, TAIWAN	7198 km. NW
6/5/08	Mai Po, HONG KONG	7068 km. N
2/5/08	Jogja, INDONESIA	4482 km. NW

This brilliant series of overseas flag sightings was also supplemented by 46 sightings elsewhere in Australia – WA, NT, NSW and VIC. The new data strongly reinforces previous patterns which indicate that

- Sakhalin Island is an extremely important stopover location for Sanderling on migration.
- Sightings of flagged Sanderling on southward migration are relatively more common than for other species
- Sanderlings tend to use the same stopover locations on both northward and southward migration.

The sighting in Indonesia is unusual. The lack of such reports previously has suggested that many Sanderling may make a direct non-stop flight from South Australia to the Asian mainland, Taiwan or Japan, on northward migration.

Red-necked Stint

There were three sightings in early May 2008 in Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China (Fujian) – the usual migratory stopover areas.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper

14/11/06	Griffith, NSW	688 km. NE
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This bird may have been returning to South Australia but equally could have gone 'walkabout'. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers do not have a strong tendency to return to the same location each year – an adaptation probably associated with their need to exploit ephemeral inland wetlands.

Curlew Sandpiper

There was only one overseas flag sighting of a South Australian-flagged Curlew Sandpiper – in Fujian, China, on 21st April 2007 – reported during the past year. Of the 13 sightings elsewhere in Australia 10 relate to sightings in north-west Australia (between 15/9/07 and 16/10/07, and between 1/3/08 and 25/3/08). These could all relate to passage birds but it is also possible that one or more bird has relocated its non-breeding area.

Banded Stilt

7/12/07	Laverton, VIC	420 km. E
8/2/08	Yalgorup, WA	2272 km. W
18/2/08	Avalon, VIC	438 km. E

This is the first movement ever recorded of an eastern Australian Banded Stilt into Western Australian Banded Stilt territory. It was originally thought that the Banded Stilt populations in the two areas were discreet. But there has been growing evidence in recent years that a small amount of mixing does take place. Movements of flagged birds between Victoria and South Australia are recorded more regularly.



SA flagged Banded Stilt at Avalon (Photo Danny Rogers)

Sightings of Waders Leg-flagged elsewhere and then seen in Victoria, South Australia or King Island (Tasmania)

Clive Minton, Roz Jessop and Heather Gibbs

Victoria

Species	Flagging Location	Resighting Details		
		Date	Location	Movement
Greenshank	Chongming Dao, Shanghai, CHINA	23/3/08 6/4/08	Altona "	8068 km. S
Red Knot	"	18/3/08 18/6/08	Corner Inlet "	8219 km. S
Red-necked Stint	"	29/1/08	Werribee TP	8080 km. S
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	"	20/12/07	Edithvale Wetlands	8093 km. S
		8/1/08	Avalon	8086 km. S
		19/1/08	Werribee TP	8080 km. S
Curlew Sandpiper	"	15/2/08	Stockyard Point, Western Port	8141 km. S

This list demonstrates the important contribution to knowledge of migratory movements now emanating from the major banding and flagging activities at Chongming Dao, near Shanghai, China. Five different species flagged there were reported in Victoria in the last year. Whilst the Greenshank and Red Knot records probably relate to a single individual of each species the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper records could well be of three different birds.

South Australia

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	S.W. Coast ALASKA (16-20 Sept 2006)	1/1/08	The Coorong, SA	11,869 km. SW
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	S.W. Coast ALASKA (16-20 Sept 2006)	7/2/08	Dry Creek Saltfields, St Kilda, SA	11,827 km. SW
Greenshank	Chongming Dao, Shanghai, CHINA	13/11/08	The Coorong, SA	7671 km. S
Ruddy Turnstone	"	1/2/07	Beachport, SA	7887 km. S
		27/1/08	"	
		19/3/08	Nora Creina, SA	
Red-necked Stint	"	9/4/08	Dry Creek Saltfields, St Kilda, SA	7571 km. S
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	"	6/2/08	Dry Creek Saltfields, St Kilda, SA	"
Grey Plover	"	13/10/07 31/12/07	Coffin Bay, SA "	7465 km. S
Ruddy Turnstone	TAIWAN	4/9/07	Port MacDonnell, SA	7230 km. S

This is a magnificent collection of sightings in South Australia of birds flagged elsewhere. The Sharp-tailed Sandpipers from Alaska are the first in Australia and probably relate to two different birds. The flag/colour band combination indicates they were from a group of 27 juvenile Sharp-tailed Sandpipers marked on the shores of SW Alaska in the period 16-20 September 2006. There has been a previous recovery of a bird from this group in Papua New Guinea.

It was also nice to have sightings of five different species flagged at Chongming Dao in China. The Ruddy Turnstone and Grey Plover records probably refer to just a single individual of each species. In the case of the Turnstone it had returned to the same location in successive years.

King Island (Tasmania)

Ruddy Turnstone	TAIWAN	24/10/06	Blowhole, Naracoopa	
"	"	30/10/06	Currie	Not
"	JAPAN	17/2/07	Porky Beach, (N of Manuka)	Yet
"	South-east of South Australia	19/3/07	Manuka	available
"	"	"	Surprise Bay	
"	North-west Australia	21/3/07	Currie	
"	South-east of South Australia	8/3/08 (4 birds)	Whistler Point	
"	North Island, NEW ZEALAND	12/3/08	Manuka	
Sanderling	Sandy Point, VIC	24/10/06	Blowhole, Naracoopa	
Sooty Oystercatcher	Flinders, VIC	08/03/08	Whistler Point	

This batch of flag sightings on King Island of Ruddy Turnstones marked elsewhere adds to the considerable information already generated from the March 2007 and March 2008 visits. The first three birds listed were seen by Sarah Lovibond who was resident on King Island for part of the 06/07 season whilst undertaking a Masters degree.



Pied Oystercatchers on King Island (Mavis & Nigel Burgess)

Tern Breeding and Banding Report 2007/08

Clive Minton, Roz Jessop and Susan Taylor

Each year we include in the VWSG Bulletin details of our long-term population monitoring of terns at various locations along the Victorian coast. This is intended as a permanent record of the annual breeding populations and to give some measure of their breeding success each year.

Caspian Tern

Location	Breeding pairs	Chicks banded
Mud Islands	20	12
Corner Inlet	63	37
Totals	83	49

Amazingly the estimated number of breeding pairs at both the Mud Island and the Corner Inlet colonies was the same as in the 06/07 season. The number of chicks banded was also similar. However the overall breeding success at Corner Inlet may have been rather lower than in the previous year. This year's results came from better cover, with separate visits spanning the full breeding season, whereas last year no visit was possible in the latter half of the season.

Overall the Caspian Tern population seems to be stable in Victoria, sustained by reasonable breeding success in most years. Apart from a colony on an island off Mallacoota, in East Gippsland, the Corner Inlet and Mud Islands colonies are the only known colonial breeding locations in Victoria. Scattered pairs do however occasionally breed elsewhere, including Rams Island and Observation Point in Western Port and along the coast of western Victoria. It is probable however that the total number of breeding pairs in the state does not exceed 120 in most years.

Crested Tern

Location	Breeding pairs	Chicks banded	Banded adults retrapped at nest	Sightings of colour-banded adults
Mud Islands	1050	693	244	277 (1295)
The Nobbies	2100	1863	45	--
Corner Inlet	--	--	--	--
Totals	3150	2556	289	277 (1295)

The 07/08 season was a poor one for breeding Crested Tern. This was thought to be due to the poor availability of small fish along the central coast regions during the spring. Many Crested Terns therefore did not attempt to breed. Little Penguins at the Phillip Island colony apparently also bred later than normal but produced close to the long term average of one chick per pair (R. Jessop pers. com.). Fortunately fish stocks improved by December and Crested Tern rearing success was good.

There was a marked reduction in the number of breeding pairs at all three of our regularly monitored sites. The total number of pairs was 3,150 compared with 5,060 the previous year. The reduction in colony size was 20% at Mud Islands and 33% at The Nobbies. But at Corner Inlet it is not thought that any Crested Terns nested, whereas 610 pairs had laid eggs, and mostly hatched young, on the east end of Dream Island in 06/07. When the whole area was surveyed on 21st December 2007 only about 100 Crested Terns were located in total, and no sign of breeding was present, or subsequently occurred. It is just possible that some Crested Terns had laid on the east end of Dream Island and been washed out by a storm tide prior to our visit. But one would have expected in these circumstances that more

birds would have remained in the area and that some of the later nesters would still be attempting to breed.

The 2556 chicks banded probably closely represent the number of chicks fledged in 07/08, because successive visits were made to each colony throughout the breeding season. This represents a fledging rate of over 80% since each Crested Tern pair only lays a single egg.

There was a reduction in the number of banded adults recaptured at the nest this year but a marked increase in the scanning for colour-banded birds. These two aspects of our study are aimed at determining the ages at which Crested Terns first join the breeding population.

Fairy Tern

A small colony (up to 20 pairs) of Fairy Terns was reported to have nested at Rams Island, off the south coast of French Island, in late November and some chicks were thought to have been hatched (information from Friends of French Island, per Mick Douglas). However a subsequent storm tide prevented any successful fledging. Discussions are now taking place with Parks Victoria about enhancing the breeding site at Rams Island to make nesting Fairy Terns safe from storm tides in the future.

Fairy Terns yet again failed to produce any offspring in Corner Inlet. In fact they may not have actually bred at all. When a visit was made on 21st December 2007 nearly 100 Fairy Terns were present on a new sandy delta area at the east end of Dream Island where a storm tide had washed over from the ocean. But monitoring this area over the next two months did not indicate any attempt to lay eggs. It may be that some had been nesting before the storm tide occurred, but most of the habitat they were seen in on 21st December was not present previously, only being created by the storm tide.

Other

Recceing of the Gippsland Lakes, especially the Loch Sport/ Paynesville/ Ocean Grange/ Point Wilson area, during December/ February did not indicate suitable numbers/ locations for catching Common Terns or Little Terns. Our intensive study of these two species there in the 1990's has virtually petered out through lack of opportunity in recent years.



*Common Noddy on a rope
at Michaelmas Cay (Photo
Digger Jackson)*

Tern Recovery Report 2007/08

Clive Minton and Roz Jessop

The lists below contain the most interesting recoveries received during the past year of Terns banded by the VWSG. Comments which put these recoveries in context are also included. Flag sightings of Terns are detailed in a separate report.

Caspian Tern

Band	Banding Details			Recovery Details		Km Moved
091-49353	Nestling	21/12/06	Clonmel Island, Corner Inlet	2/3/08 (Found injured)	Townsville, Qld.	2144 km. N.

This is the most distant recovery yet of a Caspian Tern banded in Victoria (or, indeed, anywhere else in Australia). Fraser Island was the previous most northerly location for a bird from Victoria.

The circumstances of recovery were unusual. The bird was seen alive and well during the morning and the orange flag was reported to us. However later that day the bird was found with a wing sheared off, presumably due to collision with overhead wires, and the band number (and photo) were sent to the ABBBS Office.

Little Tern

Band No.	Age	Banding Details		Recovery Details			Km Moved
041-92251	Adult	27/1/96	Ocean Grange, Lakes N.P.	Recognised by colour flags	5/3/08	Corner Inlet	109 km. SW
042-00445	Juv	13/3/99	"	"	10/1/07 (breeding) 31/12/07 (breeding)	Tuross Heads, NSW Lake Conjola, NSW	296 km. NE
042-00967	Juv	13/3/99	"	" (6 th record)	9/1/07 (breeding)	Tathra, NSW	237 km. NE
042-39717	Adult (at nest)	30/11/06	Murray Mouth, S.A.	Seen at nest Retrapped Recognised by colour flags	Jan 2007 6/3/07 26/12/07 (at nest)	Brown Bay, Port MacDonnell, SA " "	331 km. SE
042-91596	Adult	26/1/96	Ocean Grange, Lakes N.P.	Recognised by colour flags	1/9/07	Chi-Ku, Tainon, TAIWAN	7375 km. NNW

The recovery in Taiwan is the first for a Victorian-flagged Little Tern. Previous recoveries in the Northern Hemisphere have come from Japan and Korea. The bird was obviously from the Northern Hemisphere breeding population which spends its non-breeding season in Australia.

The recoveries at breeding locations in southern NSW add to a well-established pattern. It seems that Little Terns breeding in NSW, and their offspring, move southwards into Victoria in February/March after completion of the breeding season. They presumably then migrate north (to Queensland?) for the winter and return again to breed in NSW the following summer.

The South Australian recovery was partially covered in the "SA Team Report" in the 2007 VWSG Bulletin. Having bred unsuccessfully in The Coorong it moved 330 km. to near Port MacDonnell and re-nested in the same season (06/07). It nested at the latter location again in December 2007.

Crested Tern

Only recoveries where birds have moved more than 100 km. or lived more than 10 years are listed below. There have been an additional 22 recoveries during the past year which are not listed. All birds were banded as unfledged chicks.

Banded at Mud Island, Port Phillip Bay

Band No.	Date banded	Date recovered	Location recovered	Method of recovery	Km. Moved /Longevity
073-49458	10/10/07	1/6/08	Pelican Waters, Sunshine Coast, Qld	Sick, died	1491 km. NNE
073-08086	30/11/01	21/11/07	Stanley, Tas.	Found dead	282 km. S
073-44214	18/12/05	8/10/06	Botany Bay, NSW	Band read on live bird	751 km. NE
072-47378	18/12/94	9/11/07	10 km. E of Geelong	Band read on live bird	12 years 10 months
072-66061	17/12/95	14/11/07	10 km. E of Geelong	Band read on live bird	11 years 10 months
072-49664	17/12/95	10/12/07	Where banded	Freshly dead	11 years 11 months
072-04601	16/12/89	4/12/07	Phillip Island	Long dead	17 years 11 months
072-47061	18/12/94	2/11/07	Where banded	Freshly dead	12 years 10 months
071-95301	12/12/88	30/11/07	Frankston	Injured	18 years 11 months

Banded at The Nobbies, Phillip Island

Band No.	Date banded	Date recovered	Location recovered	Method of recovery	Km. Moved /Longevity
073-17478	24/12/01	6/4/08	Scamander, Tasmania	Found dead	424 km. SSE
072-27201	19/12/92	7/2/07	Flinders Beach	Found dead	14 years 1 month
072-49418	16/1/95	30/5/07	Woolgoola, NSW	Band read on live bird	1189 km. NE - 12 years 4 months
073-16731	7/12/01	25/5/07	Woolgoola, NSW	Band read on live bird	1189 km. NE
073-50777	18/12/07	24/2/08	Glenelg, SA	Band read on live bird	364 km. W
073-40902	20/12/04	26/9/07	Frenchmans Beach, NSW	Band read on live bird	747 km. NE

Banded at Corner Inlet

Band No.	Date banded	Date recovered	Location recovered	Method of recovery	Km. Moved /Longevity
072-41830	23/1/97	16/5/08	Batemans Bay, NSW	Found dead	446 km. NE

Data accumulated over the last 30 years has shown that most of the Crested Terns which breed on the Victorian coast move eastwards in Victoria and then northwards to spend their non-breeding season along the New South Wales coast and in the very south-east corner of Queensland. Birds generally return to breed at their natal colony when 3 to 5 years old. Some individuals have lived to over 20 years – the Australian record is close to 30 years for this species.

The selected list of recoveries detailed above gives information on the more interesting recovery reports which have been received during the last year. Most conform to the pattern indicated above, with a 1491 km. movement to the Sunshine Coast in south-east Queensland being the longest movement. Only one bird had made a significant movement westwards. The oldest bird reported in the past year lived for 18 years, 11 months.

Crested Terns at the Nobbies (Photo R. Jessop)



Sightings of Victorian-flagged Terns 2007/08

Clive Minton, Roz Jessop, Heather Gibbs and Susan Taylor

We continue to receive regular sightings of leg-flagged Caspian Terns throughout each year and a further 16 have accrued since the previous VWSG Bulletin. Common Tern flag sightings are now much less frequent than in the past (only 3 in the last year) because few have been caught since 2001. The same is true for Little Terns (none in the past year with generic orange flags were reported, though some with individual flag combinations were sent in – see Tern Recoveries).

The table below summarises the total number of flag sightings which have accrued so far for each species.

Total number of sightings of Victorian-flagged Terns to 30/6/07

<i>Species</i>	<i>Aust.</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>TAS</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>Philippines</i>	<i>Taiwan (China)</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Caspian Tern	167	29	111	24	1	1	1				167
Crested Tern	53	11	5	22	12	3					53
Common Tern	303	222	64	17				3	1		307
Little Tern	49	37	12					6		1	56
Fairy Tern	1	1									1
TOTAL	573	300	192	68	13	4	1	9	1	1	584

Caspian Tern

Banded at Mud Islands, Port Phillip Bay

<i>Resighting details</i>		<i>Movement</i>
<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	
27/10/07	Port Welshpool	155km. E
11/11/07	Hervey Bay, Qld	1635 km. NNE
9/12/07	Moreton Bay, Qld.	1445 km. NNE
6/7/08	Culburra, NSW	649 km. NE



Crested Tern nesting area at Mud Islands.

Banded at Clonmel Island, Corner Inlet

4/3/07	Bribie Island, Qld.	1420 km. NNE
31/3/07	"	"
23/6/07	Hervey Bay, Qld.	1587 km. NNE
4/8/07	"	"
27/8/07	Shoalhaven, NSW	550 km. NE
18/10/07	Hervey Bay, Qld.	1587 km. NNE
11/11/07	Moreton Bay, Qld.	1391 km. NNE
13/1/08	Bribie Island, Qld.	1421 km. NNE
27/1/08	Redcliffe, Qld	1389 km. NNE
2/3/08	Sydney, NSW	680 km. NE
2/3/08	Townsville, Qld.	2146 km. N
24/3/08	Bribie Island, Qld.	1420 km. NNE

This is another batch of excellent sightings of orange leg-flagged Caspian Terns banded as chicks at the Mud Islands and Clonmel Island colonies. It further illustrates that the coast of south-east Queensland, as far north as Hervey Bay, is the principal destination in the non-breeding period. The sighting in Townsville is the furthestest movement recorded so far (2146 km.). It was followed by a tragic injury to the same bird later the same day (see Tern Recoveries).

Common Tern

6/11/07	Cape Byron, NSW	1174 km. NNE
19/3/08	Brunswick Heads, NSW	1182 km. NNE
20/3/08	Mudbishops Point, NSW	805 km. NE

These would all have been flagged in the Gippsland Lakes, most likely between 1990 and 2001. They were probably on migration to/from their breeding grounds in the Northern Hemisphere.

Crested Tern

28/10/07	Port MacDonnell, SA	356 km. W
31/1/08	Port Adelaide River, SA	682 km. WNW
14/2/08	Toora	144 km. E

These birds carried coloured metal bands which indicated that they had been banded as chicks at Mud Islands. The westward movement into South Australia is unusual.



*Crested Terns at the Nobbies, Phillip Island
(Photo Roz Jessop)*

Results from Nobbies Crested Tern Parasite Reconnoitre December 2007

Maggie Watson

School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences
Charles Sturt University

As part of a reconnoitre for my PhD project on the effects of parasites on seabirds, I collected blood, faecal and vomit samples from Crested Terns (20 chicks, 10 adults) during 18-20 December, 2007 at the Nobbies colony on Phillip Island. The intention was to identify the parasite community present on the birds and compare it to the colony at Montague Island, NSW. The results from the Nobbies colony are as follows:

Lice:

Sample 073-50726 (chick)

Thalasseus bergii cristata Stephens, 1826

Austromenopon atrofulvum (Piaget, 1880) - 1 female.

Saemundssonina (*Saemundssonina*) *laticaudata* (Rudow, 1869) - 2 males, 2 females.

Sample 072-98860 (adult)

Thalasseus bergii cristata Stephens, 1826

Saemundssonina (*Saemundssonina*) *laticaudata* (Rudow, 1869) - 1 female.

These are the same species of lice found on the Crested Terns at Montague Island, NSW with the addition of *Quadraceps sellatus* (Burmeister, 1838).

Ticks:

Samples 073-50726 (chick), 073-50989 (chick), 073-50982 (chick)

Thalasseus bergii cristata Stephens, 1826

All larvae of *Ornithodoros capensis* (Neumann, 1901)

These are the same species of tick that was found on the Crested Terns at Montague Island, NSW. Montague Island birds also carried *Ixodes kohlsi* (Arthur, 1955).

Analysis of the samples so far indicate that there are no blood parasites present at either colony, and only one internal parasite (a cestode) was found in a dead chick at Montague Island. These results will assist me in designing a protocol for the 2008-2009 parasite collection field season.

Exploring the real cost of parasites: A meta-analysis of experimental studies

Maggie Watson

Abstract for the Australian Society for Parasitology Annual Conference in Adelaide (6-9 July 2008).

Knowledge of host-parasite interactions is important to the ecology and conservation of wild populations, yet determining the real impact of parasites on their free-ranging hosts has proven elusive. Laboratory experiments have quantified costs and identified life history trade-offs, but integrating these parameters with field studies is problematic. Previous reviews of the costs of parasitism in wild populations have combined data from both observational and experimental studies as well as host and parasite manipulations (Moller 1991, Thompson and Begon 1999, Irvine 2006). In an attempt to gain a better understanding of the cost of parasites, a meta-analysis was conducted on 86 datasets (birds $n=35$, mammals $n=10$, reptiles $n=2$, fish $n=1$) where the effects of parasites on free-living hosts were determined by manipulating parasite load (publication years 1942-2008). Forty-eight data sets had to be discarded due to lack of reporting of appropriate data. Both endo- and ecto-parasites were examined and hosts (in the analysed data sets) included birds ($n=32$) and mammals ($n=6$). Significant negative effects of parasites were found on morphological parameters (tarsus length, mass), but not on most life-history parameters (survival, breeding success, clutch size and hatching success) except number of young produced. The magnitude of these effects varied considerably between parasitic taxa. Widespread use of indirect measures of cost (especially immune response) call into question the theoretical underpinnings to study design. More and uniform work is required on mammal, reptile and fish hosts. More work is also required on non-passerine avian hosts. It is suggested that physiological (eg. metabolic rate) and not just morphological parameters should be measured in field studies.

Colour banded Little Tern in SA. (Photo Maureen Christie)



South Australian Team Report – August 2007 - July 2008

Maureen Christie

Friends of Shorebirds SE

Little Tern

Once again, the highlight of our year has been the successful fledging of Little Tern chicks. Little Tern only visit the coast of the Lower South East in small numbers. For the last four summers a small number of pairs have nested here. In the first season, the summer of 2004/5, the only nest was destroyed. In 2005/6 our group maintained a daily vigil but, despite two pairs hatching out young, no chicks survived to fledging. In 2006/7 two clutches of chicks hatched. The first clutch, at Piccaninnie Ponds was lost, most likely to the tide. The clutch of three at Danger Point all fledged. 2007/8 has been our best season. There were five nesting sites, each with one breeding pair, scattered along the 30 km between Port MacDonnell and the mouth of the Glenelg. Two pairs successfully raised young. Four chicks definitely fledged, and it is likely that the fifth chick also fledged. All five chicks were banded, but we continue to be thwarted in our attempts to colour flag them. The window of opportunity to flag them must be very short - both clutches were hatched within 24 hours of each other, yet, on 24th January the two juveniles at Port MacDonnell were flying whilst the three chicks at Danger Point were still runners with legs far too short and chubby to take two flags.

I am confident that temporary fencing erected around these two nests contributed to the successful outcome.

Only one of the four Little Terns colour flagged last year has been resighted this year. Once again it was the Little Tern originally banded by David Paton at the Murray Mouth, in the Coorong, in November 2006. It once again nested at Piccaninnie Ponds, this time making two unsuccessful attempts (both nests lost to tide).

Fairy Tern

Both Little Tern and Fairy Tern are listed as Endangered on the South Australian Threatened Species Schedule. This is the first time that we have found any Fairy Tern nests although last year Fairy Terns were observed exchanging fish at French Point. In late December, a group of Fairy Tern was discovered nesting on a mat of Sea Lavender (*Limonium sp*), on a cliff top at the Obelisk, Robe. Unfortunately all four nests were ultimately deserted. It is hoped that next season we will be able to spend more time in the Robe area looking for nests.



Fairy Tern nesting at the Obelisk near Robe SA (Photo Bryan Hayward)

Reports

Reports associated with the Limestone Coast Shorebird Disturbance Project have been completed. These reports were prepared by the Friends of Shorebirds SE for the Shorebird Conservation Project/WWF Australia.

Part A: Shorebird disturbance on the beaches of the Limestone Coast, 2006-2007. Jeff Campbell and Ross Anderson.

Part B. Shorebird sites of the Limestone Coast, South Australia. Maureen Christie and Rosalind Jessop.

Threat assessments made of each shorebird site have already proved useful in giving support to various 'Caring for our Country Community Coastcare' grant applications, including the Shorebirds 2020 application. Unfortunately the individual site figures are already outdated, and it is hoped that they can be brought up-to-date and published in Stilt.

Counting

We have worked with Shorebirds 2020 helping to resolve anomalies in historical data and to map count sites. Summer and winter population monitoring counts have been completed. We participated in the AWSG annual summer count of the Coorong and Coastal Lakes.

Lake Bonney SE is a large fresh water lake north of Carpenter Rocks that adjoins the Canunda National Park for much of its length. This year, for the first time, and with the help of the Department of Environment and Heritage, it was decided to undertake both summer and winter counts. The summer count of just over 4000 waders of which 2101 were Sharp-tailed Sandpiper establishes the lake as an important site. The winter count was timed to follow an extended period of bad weather. 600+ Double-banded Plover and 60+ Ruddy Turnstone made going out in the difficult conditions well worth while. It also adds weight to the suggestion that Lake Bonney SE is an important refuge area during winter storms.

Unfortunately logistic problems have meant that a complete count of all of the Coastal Lakes has not been possible this winter. The issue raised in last year's report, of which lakes should be counted, and at what intervals, remains unresolved.

Shorebirds 2020 is hoping to be able to support us next year with a workshop to train counters. It is to be hoped that they will be successful in obtaining funding for this initiative, and the program succeeds in attracting more counters to our ranks.

Painted Snipe

The mere mention of this hard to see species causes excitement not only amongst wader enthusiasts, but bird watchers in general. A flock of six – made up of two females, two males and two juveniles was discovered at a swamp on private property in Biscuit Flat on 18/10/2007. A second visit the next day increased the count to nine. I think it appropriate to include Mark de Jong's description of the site: *At the time the swamp held a small area of very shallow open water, surrounded by damp dense low herbland vegetation, Gahnia filum and M. halmaturorum. 30ish Red-kneed Dotterels were found also, but near the water, and I am told it is common for both to be seen in the same location. The snipe were seen in the herbland after flushing from a dense patch of paperbark.*

Over the years we have had several records of Painted Snipe in the lower SE. A few years ago Gwen Young had some in the Eight Mile Creek Area. A year or so earlier James Stewart found a recently dead one near a drain at Rendelsham. And, of course, there is Herman Bakker's 1980 record of 30 at Bool Lagoon. Interestingly, the 1980 photo shows the snipe in a dry looking paddock complete with thistles.

Banded Stilt

As a group, we have been deeply involved with recording Banded Stilt activity in the Coorong, and tracking them as they move around the continent.

With 230,000 to 250,000 Banded Stilt in the Coorong in February, 2008, and reports of flocks up to 10,000 elsewhere, the chances of seeing any of the 333 Banded Stilt chicks flagged with orange over yellow (OY/_) on the upper right leg in the Coorong in January 2006 would seem remote. But not so. On the 18th February, Danny Rogers saw one of 'our' chicks in 85% breeding plumage at the Avalon Saltworks. It was in a flock of 2000. This follows on from a series of sightings (Jan, March & Dec 2007) at Cheetham Saltworks, Laverton.

And then, on 8th February an OY/- Banded Stilt at Yalgorup National Park, WA. (about ½ way between Mandurah and Bunbury, on the coast). This is the first recorded movement of Banded Stilt from eastern Australia to Western Australia.

Other sightings of interest have been of a Victorian flagged Banded Stilt seen in the Coorong in August last year and two seen in February, 2005. 151 were banded at Werribee in 2000.

There have also been several movements west to east - several yellow flags were seen at Lake Eyre in 2000. And Iain Stewart saw one at Lake George in April 2001. These were flagged at Lake Ballard, WA after Cyclone Bobby in April 1995.

And so we are slowly building up a picture of Banded Stilt moving throughout Australia, rather than there being a WA flock and an Eastern Australia flock as was previously thought.

At last report the Banded Stilt were still in the Coorong – we now have records of a sizeable flock being present regularly since July 2005 (the main exception being when they all moved to Coorangamite, Vic, in August, 2006).

It is exciting to be so closely involved with extending our knowledge of this beautiful but enigmatic species.

Banding and Flagging

With turnstone having a poor breeding season 2006/07, there were very few overwintering in the winter of 2007. So, not surprisingly, little banding was completed by our team during the past year. We only set the net on six occasions, and banded a total of 103 individuals, of which 63 were our target species of turnstone. Once again the date of catching increased the value of the data collected. A catch in August included two retraps, both of which had been originally banded as adults. An analysis of moults should help us understand more about how long turnstones spend in the non-breeding grounds. Catches on two dates in April, together with expedition catches in February, help with understanding weight gain prior to departure on migration. In a catch on 24th April, adult weights were 150 plus grams, with the heaviest 184. Still short of the record 192 grams of 27.4.2004. Several of the retraps had been weighed earlier this year – with an individual going from 99 grams at Port MacDonnell on 29th February, to 178. Three individuals had been in our 8th April catch, the greatest weight gain in the 16 days was a staggering 55 grams! As expected, juvenile weights were much lighter, even though one individual had gone from 103 grams in February to 117 – perhaps rugging up for the SE winter!

Although we may have banded few waders for the period, we received a welcome number of flag reports. These are discussed in a separate article, but I would like to mention here several sightings that aroused considerable excitement in our group. First, the Banded Stilt flags seen from both sides of Australia. This year is the first time that we have seen internationally flagged turnstone. Chung-Yu Chiang regularly reports seeing our flags in Taiwan. So it was particularly pleasing to see the white/blue combination of Taiwan on a turnstone at Port MacDonnell on 4/9/2007. This was followed by two sightings of Chongming

Dao flagged turnstone, one at Beachport and the other at Nora Creina. Another highlight was the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper seen in the Coorong on 1/1/2008 that was one of only 29 mist-netted in western Alaska on the Yukon Delta National Wildlife between 16-20 September 2006. Closer to home, adult turnstone flagged on King Island called in here on northern migration, whilst at least one juvenile is over-wintering here. Going against the expected trend of migration, a Red Knot flagged at Lake George in June 2006 was seen in Broome on 13/9/2007.

Ruddy Turnstone Engraved Flags

This project continues, with 206 engraved flags being added this year, giving a total of 836 used in SA. However, this does not represent the total number of flags in the field. I estimate that 80 flags have been replaced on retraps, reducing the total number of flagged turnstone to 756. There are also many illegible flags remaining in the field. The last of the two digit codes were used this season, so we have now moved to three alphas, thereby increasing the difficulty of reading a complete combination.

This year a trial was commenced on a new type of flag. The material is bi-coloured red with white engraving. 18 turnstone have a red flag over metal on the right, and an engraved orange over yellow on the left. Obviously the individual can be recognized if either of the codes is read, but, to help assess the flags observers have been asked to try and read both flags, and make an evaluation of how they compare. Both engraved flags have three alphas.

This project commenced in November, 2004. Whenever possible, observations are made monthly across the study area, stretching from Piccaninnie Ponds in the east to Nora Creina in the west.

Pick Swamp Monitoring

Pick Swamp is a wetland that is fed by a permanent spring. Formerly farmland, it was purchased some time ago by the Department of Environment and Heritage and it will ultimately be joined to the Piccaninnie Ponds Conservation Park. DEH is preparing a nomination for the area to be considered as a Ramsar site. The main grounds for the application is the rising karst spring system. Friends of Shorebirds SE in partnership with Birds SE is into the second year of a long term bird monitoring program. Bryan Haywood is co-ordinating this project in his role as Chair of Birds SE, but he is also a member of our group.

Awards

Our Friends group won the 2007 SA Great Regional Award for Science & Sustainability sponsored by SA Water. Our President, Jeff Campbell accepted the award on our behalf at a dinner at the Barn Palais on 15 November 2007. Jeff remarked: *As a relatively small group I believe we can be very proud of this award and feel a good deal of satisfaction in receiving it. Other nominees included Friends of Naracoorte Caves and the Old Goal Community Garden.* We were presented with a framed certificate and an engraved glass pear.

At the Annual Friends of the Parks Forum in Port Lincoln in August, 2007, the group received an Award for their *Survey work at the lakes, coast and ephemeral wetlands*. I also received a personal award for *Outstanding Service to the Friends of the Parks Network*.

Grants

The Friends of Shorebirds SE received funding from Envirofund Round 10 for the erection of temporary fencing around nests on beaches. Fencing was effectively used around Little Tern, Hooded Plover and Pied Oystercatcher nests. Red-capped Plover also benefited. "Hooded Plovers use these beaches" signs have been designed and installed. Associated monitoring done by Jeff Campbell was funded by a small grant from the Department of Environment.

Funding from the Department of Environment was also received to purchase a Kowa spotting scope.

Public Relations Work

The group has provided input into various forums. Jeff Campbell is our representative on the Recreational Vehicles Working Group and on the Grant District Council Environment Committee. Marcia Lorenz represents us on the South East Environmental Working Group and makes wader presentations at schools. I am a member of the Lower South East Natural Resources Management Group. We have been given the opportunity to participate in community consultations in relation to the establishment of Marine Parks in South Australia. Press reports and radio interviews are conducted as the opportunity arises.

Beachport Museum Award

Marcia is Chair of the Beachport Museum. They recently won an ABC award for the Best Volunteer Museum in Australia. The museum specializes in local history, but it also houses the wader display that Marcia prepared for the Waders and Wetlands festival. Congratulations to Marcia and her team. The museum is open every day, so do visit it if you find yourself in Beachport!

Vale

Foundation member of Friends of Shorebirds SE, Stan Haywood, died after a long illness on 13/12/2007. Limited by ill-health, Stan enjoyed our annual meetings, and gave strong support to his wife Jean in her weekly outings with The Dollies. Stan also supported grandson Bryan who, with his family, is a keen member of our group. Our sympathies are extended to Jean, Bryan and their families.

Supporter and friend, John Eckert died on 21/6/2008, whilst going about his normal farm duties at his home on Lake Alexandrina. John had a long time interest in all aspects of natural history and my first dealings with him were when I was organiser of the Orange Bellied Parrot roster. I soon discovered his interest in waders. He willingly shared his knowledge with all. His ability to sustain observations over many years was illustrated in an article he wrote in 2001 on the Australian Pratincole. The article discussed his observations that commenced in 1956 and continued through to the date of writing. He was a practical person, managing the reserve at Tolderool in a volunteer capacity, controlling the water in such a way as to maximize wader habitat. John was a member of the VWSG and a foundation member of the AWSG. His dry wit and fund of knowledge will be missed by all who knew him. Our sympathies are extended to his fiancée Rosemary, his children and their families.

Conclusion

The South Australian Team has had a successful year. Modelled on the successful VWSG working bee cum social gathering cum formal meeting formula, our Annual General Meeting, held in February, was well attended.

Thank you to the members of the group who have worked hard to produce these results. Thank you too, to the members of both the Regional and District Offices of the Department of Environment and Heritage who have provided encouragement and practical help.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TEAM CATCHES 01.08.07 TO 31.07.2008.

DATE	PLACE	Sanderling	Ruddy Turnstone	Red-necked Stint	Curlew Sandpiper	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	Banded Stilt	Other		TOTALS
21.08.07	Port MacDonnell		5					2	Double banded Plover	7
28.08.07	Port MacDonnell			5	1					6
02.10.07	Stony Point									*
08.10.07	Stony Point									*
09.01.08	Port MacDonnell							**2	Little Tern	2
09.01.08	Danger Point							**3	Little Tern	3
08.04.08	Gerloff Bay		13	27						40
24.04.08	Gerloff Bay		45							45
Sub Totals			63	32	1			7		103
B/F	1.12.00 – 30.7.07	26	313	336	17	107	334	66		1199
	TOTALS TO DATE	26	376	368	18	107	334	73		1302

*net set, no catch made. ** chicks/runners'

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TEAM CATCHES - Month Waders Caught in 1/12/2000 TO 31.07.2008

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTALS
Ruddy Turnstone	5		1	168	38	16	46	61	39	1	1		376
Red Knot				1		12							13
Sanderling		17	2	2				5					26
Red-necked Stint		34	34	66	4	20	49	67	27	43	1	23	368
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper									6	101			107
Curlew Sandpiper						2	7	6		3			18
Pied Oystercatcher	1			1							2	8	12
Sooty Oystercatcher				3									3
Banded Stilt	185	149											334
Red-capped Plover	1	4	1	4				5		1		1	17
Double-banded Plover			4	1		4		2					11
Black-fronted Dotterel			3										3
Hooded Plover				1								3	4
Little Tern	10												10
TOTALS	202	204	45	247	42	54	102	146	72	149	4	35	1302

Flag Fever & Coloured Band Craze!!

Graham Beal

I realized that I had an obsession for spotting leg flags on waders early last summer when holidaying at Indented Head on the Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria. When in this area I always like to visit Salt Lagoon State Nature Reserve, between Indented Head and St. Leonards. After parking my car and a short walk, I soon spotted some Red-necked Stints. A quick scan for leg flags, none. A small flock of medium sized grey waders was visible in the distance so I set off to investigate. About 10 Marsh Sandpipers, again no flags. A pair of Pied Oystercatchers were also here both resting on one leg. I managed to finally see what they had, one was unbanded, the other with incomplete colour bands (lost). A large flock of Black-winged Stilts were busily feeding in the shallows nearby. I didn't expect to see any flags on these but checked anyway. I thought how precarious they were with their extremely long legs and wondered how would one manage if they ever lost one? My thoughts were soon answered when I spotted one minus a leg, hopping of course!

Back on the road that runs adjacent to the shore line, before Portarlington was a small group of Crested Terns and Little Pied Cormorants roosting at high tide on some small rocks just off the beach. One Tern had a blue coloured metal band, one with orange and three plain metal. These were banded as chicks at Mud Island over the years, a different colour each year so they can be aged when they return to the breeding colony. I realized that the orange banded bird must be getting on in age as we used this colour to band the chicks on my first visit to the magical Mud Islands, Port Phillip Bay, over 12 years ago (17 December 1995). The blue one would have been banded on 21 December 1996. A small flock of seven Ruddy Turnstone were also here two with single orange leg flags, upper right leg.

Back to Indented Head and I spotted another pair of Oystercatchers. One had colour bands which I couldn't quite make out so to get closer to read them I repositioned myself on top of a small vegetated cliff with my scope. While looking down at them a Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater flew into my field of vision. I refocused and marvelled at its beautiful markings and plumage.

I must start bird WATCHING again!!!

The next day on the ocean beach at Point Lonsdale I saw another small flock of Ruddy Turnstone, three with flags. Interestingly, these and the previous ones were probably caught and banded at Flinders, Mornington Peninsula. All the Pied Oystercatchers were banded at nearby Queenscliff.

Does anyone else share this "Mania for Marked Birds" or "Desire for Sighting Darvic" ???!



Releasing an alpha-numeric colour flagged Sooty Oystercatcher at Charles Hall Road (Photo Roz Jessop)

Shorebirds 2020 Update

Rob Clemens, Jo Oldland and Angie Haslem

Shorebirds 2020 programme is going well with over 500 counters surveying 70 sites last year. If you would like to participate please contact us.

Updating of shorebirds website and the counting toolkit

Website guru, waderologist and former BBO warden Ricki Couglan has reformatted the <http://www.shorebirds.org.au/> website with help from Birds Australia Communications Officer Jen Sutfin. Lots of new material has been included. Under "Learning Tools" you will find two excellent training modules put together by Ricki on how to count shorebirds, and how to ID shorebirds, as well as the Shorebird ID sheets for download. Under "Counting Tools" you will find a new version of the shorebird count forms, general information and instructions about the Shorebirds 2020 National Monitoring Program, and instructions on using the count form thanks to Luke Shelley.

Under "Site Maps", maps of all the shorebird areas in Australia that we have data on are also available. These maps are available for viewing on Google Earth (not for those of you with dial up – or you have great patience!), or in individual PDF's. Some of the PDF maps may be slightly older versions and will be updated as new ones become available. If you have any comments regarding the maps please contact Rob Clemens on r.clemens@birdsaustralia.com.au

"Blueprint" for future bird count activities.

One of the main recommendations of the analysis work we have done to date is the recommendation that 150 sites are surveyed each count. With 150 sites we will be able to detect population trends at a national level over a meaningful time scale of five years. The analysis also found that areas with more shorebirds assist in the detection of these trends. We will be working over the next year to try and ensure that all these sites are counted.

The analysis also found that for the detection of trends within any shorebird area, the most important thing to do is to reduce how much counts vary from year to year. We've briefly tried a few things to quantify how we might be able to reduce annual count variation, but with no results so far.

Identifying important shorebird areas

Maps of shorebird areas and habitats are also being mapped. Historic data has also been added. The results of this mapping can also be seen on the shorebirds web page.



*Juvenile Hooded Plover –
Summerland Beach –
Phillip Island (Photo
Graeme Burgan).*

Ruddy Turnstones *Arenaria interpres* on King Island, Tasmania, Australia

Clive Minton, Penny Johns and Maureen Christie

(REPRINTED FROM STILT 53: 24-29)

Background

Visits to King Island, Tasmania were initiated in March 2007 in order to increase the annual sample of Ruddy Turnstones available to the VWSG for its studies of migration, reproductive rates and survival rates.

King Island has proved to be an ideal location with Ruddy Turnstones being the dominant wader, occurring at numerous accessible places along the shore of the western coast of the island (60 km). Accumulations of seaweed, mainly kelp, are washed up and form nutritious feeding grounds for them, with vast numbers of maggots and insects present in the rotting weed.

The first visit, between 18th and 25th March 2007, resulted in 241 Ruddy Turnstones being caught plus 60 Red-necked Stint and five Double-banded Plover. That visit, and subsequent sightings of marked birds elsewhere in the Flyway, gave an immediate boost to knowledge of the migration of Ruddy Turnstones, a species only banded in relatively small quantities throughout the Flyway. The pool of data on which annual reproductive rates are measured was also more than doubled. And the use of engraved leg flags, where each bird is individually identifiable in the field, via a telescope, laid the foundation for a long-term study of annual survival rates.

The visit from 7th to 15th March 2008 was the second of what it is hoped will now become annual counting, catching, banding and leg-flagging visits. Consideration is now also being given to interim visits during each year specifically targeting detailed visual inspection of the Ruddy Turnstone population to determine, from engraved leg flags identified, which birds are still surviving.

This report details the results obtained during the March 2008 visit and gives some of the results which have emerged, so far, from the first two seasons (just over one year) of this study.

March 2008 Visit

A team of 13 people, 12 from Victoria and 1 from South Australia, flew to King Island p.m. Friday 7th March and departed a.m. Saturday 15th March. Five of the team were based in a rented house in Currie and the other eight at a house about 10 km. to the south. Transport was covered by Clive Minton's Land Cruiser, again kindly transported by ship from Melbourne free of charge by Penny Johns' nephew (ship captain), a locally hired 4WD and a pick-up kindly loaned by Nigel and Mavis Burgess (Nigel is Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Ranger). All costs were met by the participants themselves (c\$1,000 each, including \$300 airfare).

The visit was blessed by exceptionally calm, warm and almost windless weather, making fieldwork much easier and more pleasant than might normally be expected on a Bass Strait island at latitude 40° south. We will obviously have to pay for this good fortune (the weather during the March 2007 visit was almost as good) at some time in the future!

The first day (8th) was spent undertaking an almost complete survey of the western coast of the Island with the group divided into three teams. On each subsequent day cannon-netting was the main menu with seven different venues being visited. Days when two catches were

attempted, at different locations, were pretty full but on other days some time was available to see and explore (mostly ornithologically) other parts of the island.

The Count

Fourteen different defined areas from the southernmost tip of King Island (Stokes Point) to Quarantine Bay (in the north-west of the island) were surveyed on 8th March. A total of 875 Ruddy Turnstones were counted (Table 1). The largest numbers were at Manuka (220), Surprise Bay (187) and Currie (114) – all sites visited and used for catching and banding in March 2007 - and at Whistler Point (180), in the north-west of KI, a site not visited previously.

The table also contains data from two much less productive areas counted later in our visit – around Cape Wickham Lighthouse (0) at the north end of the Island and Lavinia Beach (9) in the north-east.

The south and east coasts of King Island have not yet been inspected by us for Ruddy Turnstones but local advice suggests that relatively few will be found in these parts because the prevailing winds do not permit the same accumulations of rotting seaweed on the beaches. Making allowance for some birds missed and birds present on the east and south coasts, it is probable that the Ruddy Turnstone population of King Island is between 1200 and 1500 birds. This confirms the guestimates made after the 2007 visit and also confirms that the Ruddy Turnstone population on King Island is probably greater than at any other location in the East Asian/Australasian Flyway, being larger than that on the south-eastern shoreline of South Australia.

Table 1. *Ruddy Turnstone count – western coast of King Island, Tasmania, 8 March 2008.*

Location (listed south to north)	Number of birds
N.E. Seal Bay	20
Stokes Point to Surprise Bay	70
Surprise Bay	187
Seal Rocks	0
Pearson's Lane, Cataraqui	0
Dripping Wells	40
Ettrich Beach	14
Millers Bay	0
Quarantine Bay (south end)	0
Currie (Golf Course and Harbour)	114
Manuka (north, central and south)	220
Bungaree Creek	30
Bungaree Lagoon (shore)	0
Whistler Point	180
Cape Wickham Lighthouse	0
Lavinia Beach	9
TOTAL	884

Catching and Banding

a) Catches

Details of the 8 cannon-net catches, made in 5 different areas (7 sites), are given in Table 2. They were remarkably consistent in size ranging from 34 to 81 Ruddy Turnstones, with an average of just over 50 and a total of 419. This is probably the third largest number of Ruddy Turnstones ever caught anywhere in the world in a limited period. Only at Delaware Bay (USA), during the last 12 years, and on the Pribiloff Islands off S.W. Alaska, in the mid 1960s, have larger catch totals been achieved in a week of fieldwork.

Seven Double-banded Plover (cf. 5 in 2007) but no Red-necked Stint (60 in 2007) were also caught. It is not clear why so few Red-necked Stints were present this year given that data

from mainland data (Victoria) indicates relatively normal population levels and at least some breeding success. 7 Pied Oystercatchers and 1 Sooty Oystercatcher were also caught (none in 2007), but as bands had not been brought to KI with us for these species only the two controls (both banded in Victoria) are included in the totals.

Cannon-netting was mainly carried out with a large, 4-cannon, large-mesh net (30 m. x 13 m.), because Turnstones are usually well spread out at their feeding/high tide roosting locations on the shore. However at two sites where space was restricted a half size, 2-cannon, version of this old style net was used. The now frequently used small-mesh cannon-nets, which will not fire effectively into even a moderate wind, were not taken to King Island because of the expected (but not realised) windy conditions.

b) Controls and Retraps

65 banded Ruddy Turnstones were caught. 4 of these were “controls”, i.e. birds originally banded elsewhere. Amazingly the first catch contained a bird from Japan (banded in August 1999) and another from Taiwan (banded in August 2004) (Table 3). 2 birds marked by VWSG in South Australia were also recaptured, one of these having been also recaptured at the same location on King Island in March 2007.

49 Ruddy Turnstone banded in March 2007 – 22 at Surprise Bay, 15 at Currie and 12 at Manuka – were also recaptured (Table 4). All but four of these were at exactly the same location as they had originally been banded, suggesting a high degree of site faithfulness for Ruddy Turnstones in their non-breeding season.

12 Ruddy Turnstones originally banded during the first part of the week were also again captured later in the week, all but one at exactly the same location.

The two Pied Oystercatchers which were recaptured carrying bands put on in Victoria had originally been marked as adults in 2001 and 2002 in Western Port. Both these birds has been identified by their colour-band combinations in the days preceding their recapture. It has already been well established through sightings of colour-marked birds made by Nigel and Mavis Burgess over the years that many Pied (and Sooty) Oystercatchers which breed on King Island spend their immature years and non-breeding seasons on the Victorian coast. Only a minority of adults remain on King Island throughout the year.

Table 2. Shorebird catches on King Island, Tasmania (7-15 March 2008) by location.

Date	Location	Species	New	Retrap	TOTAL	Juveniles	Nets fired
9	Whistler Point (south) (*1 from Japan and 1 from Taiwan)	Ruddy Turnstone	77	4*	81	17=21.0%	1
10	Whistler Point (*1 from South Australia, 6 from previous day)	Ruddy Turnstone	55	7*	62	14=22.6%	1
11	Stokes Point	Ruddy Turnstone	47	1	48	10=20.8%	½
11	Surprise Bay	Ruddy Turnstone	58	21	79	11=13.9%	1
12	Manuka (North)	Ruddy Turnstone	35	0	35	7= 20.0%	½
		Double-banded Plover	4	0	4		
		TOTAL	39	0	39		
13	Manuka (Central)	Ruddy Turnstone	33	5	38	5=13.1%	1
13	Currie (Golf Course)	Ruddy Turnstone	28	14	42	5=11.9%	1
		Double-banded Plover	3	0	3		
		TOTAL	31	14	45		
14	Manuka (North)	Ruddy Turnstone	21	13	34	6=17.6%)	1
	not banded (no bands)	Pied Oystercatcher	5	2**	7		
	**both from Victoria	Sooty Oystercatcher	1*	0	1		
		TOTAL	27	15	42		

Table 3. Total shorebirds by species caught at King Island, Tasmania (7-15 March 2008)

	New	Retrap	Total	Juveniles
Ruddy Turnstone	354	65	419	75=17.9%
Double-banded Plover	7		7	0
Pied Oystercatcher	0	2	2	0
TOTAL	361	67	428	

Note: Unbanded Pied & Sooty Oystercatcher excluded. 8 cannon net catches (6 with large net, 2 with small net). Three catches at Manuka, two at Whistler Point and one at each of Surprise Bay, Stokes Point & Currie Golf Course. Ruddy Turnstone – sexes of adults – 181 male, 163 female.

Table 4. *Shorebirds banded at other locations and caught at King Island, Tasmania (7- 15 March 2008)*

Species	Band Number	Age at banding	Banded	Location and date of recapture
Ruddy Turnstone	JAPAN 5A-28657	2+	10 Aug 99 Nemuro, Hokkaido, JAPAN	9 Mar.08 Whistler Point (South)
Ruddy Turnstone	TAIWAN D-30008	2+	28 Aug 04 Chang Wha, TAIWAN	9 Mar 08 Whistler Point (South)
Ruddy Turnstone	052-29956	2+	13 April 06 Brown Bay, South Australia	10 Mar 08 Whistler Point
Ruddy Turnstone	052-03817	1	11 Dec 06 Brown Bay, South Australia	21 Mar 07 Currie (Golf Course) 13 Mar 08 Currie (Golf Course)
Pied Oystercatcher	101-07493*	3+	4 Aug 01 Rhyll, Phillip Island, Victoria	14 Mar 08 Manuka (North)
Pied Oystercatcher	101-21174*	3+	14 April 02 Stockyard Point, Western Port, Victoria	14 Mar 08 Manuka (North)

*Both of these birds were sighted at the same location on previous days

c) % Juveniles

Juvenile/first year Ruddy Turnstones were separable from adults in several ways. Firstly they either had a complete set of slightly worn unmoulted juvenile primaries (obtained when they first fledged in July 2007) or they were in active wing moult (changing all, or just some, of their primaries). In contrast all adult birds had a complete set of fresh, newly moulted, primaries. Some unmoulted wing coverts were also present in juveniles but this was not a useful asset to ageing as such coverts were not particularly distinct. The lack of breeding plumage on juvenile birds (a few had just a trace) was also helpful in ageing birds. In the austral winter most immature turnstones gain a little breeding plumage, but never approach the breeding plumage level of adults.

The average percentage of juvenile/first year Ruddy Turnstones in catches was 17.9%. This was fairly consistent between catches, ranging from 11.9% to 22.6% (Table 2). This is well above the average level of juveniles in Victorian/South Australian catch samples where the long-term average is 9.3%. It is also much better than the almost complete breeding failure in 2007 (1.3% in Victoria/South Australia and 0% in King Island birds). However this year's King Island rate of 17.9% is rather lower than the 22.8% for Victoria/South Australia in 07/08, though in the latter the total sample size (180) was much smaller than that of King Island (419).

One consequence of the much better breeding season for Ruddy Turnstones in the 2007 arctic summer is that there should now be a small population of 1 year old birds overwintering on King Island this year. Last year there were none.

d) Turnstone Sexes

All the 344 adult Turnstones caught in March 2008 had reached a sufficient level of breeding plumage for their sex to be determined. Males have very white heads and a patch of almost

pure ginger/chestnut on their wing coverts and back. Females have much browner heads and much less colour on their wing coverts and back, being relatively more like birds in non-breeding plumage.

The March 2008 Ruddy Turnstone sample consisted of 181 male and 163 female birds (Table 5). The percentage of male birds (52.6%) was marginally above the level in March 2007 (51.9%).

There was a wide distribution of the proportion of sexes in the catches made at the different locations, ranging from 34.2% males at Stokes Point to 63.6% males at Manuka (Central). Table 5 shows the proportions of each sex at each location and, for comparison, data from catches made in March 2007. At three of the four sites the proportion of males was above 50% in both years. However this was not the case at the fourth site where there were 63.6% males in March 2008 and only 44.0% in March 2007. It will need several more years of data before it will be possible to say with confidence whether some sites have a proportion of males and females which differs consistently from the 50:50 level.

Table 5. *Retraps of Ruddy Turnstone on King Island, Tasmania (7-15 March 2008)*

Location banded	Location re-caught (March 2008)					
	Whistler Point	Manuka	Currie	Surprise Bay	Stokes Point	Total retraps 2007-2008
Manuka	1	11	0	0	0	12
Currie	1	1	13	0	0	15
Surprise Bay	0	0	0	21	1	22
TOTAL	2	12	13	21	1	49

In addition a South Australian banded bird originally retrapped at Currie in March 2007 was caught there again in March 2008. Also 12 birds banded in March 2008 were retrapped within days. 11 were originally banded at the same location (6 Whistler, 5 Manuka) but one bird had moved, from Whistler to Manuka in 4 days.

Flag Sightings and Resightings

a) Flag Sightings

During the visit several birds which had been colour marked at other locations were seen at King Island, mostly during the recce day on 8th March (Table 6). A total of five Ruddy Turnstones carrying the orange over yellow flag combination from South Australia were seen in the area of Whistler Point on 8th March. One was seen well enough for the engraved inscription to be read. It had been banded as a second year bird at Port MacDonnell on 6th August 2006.

Table 6. *Sexes of adult Ruddy Turnstone at different locations on King Island, Tasmania (March 2007 & 2008)*

Location (listed from south to north)	Date	Male	Female	% Male in March 2008	% Male in March 2007
Stokes Point	11 Mar 08	13	25	34.2	
Surprise Bay	11 Mar 08	45	23	66.2	51.2
Currie (Golf Course)	13 Mar 08	22	15	59.5	53.6
Manuka (Central)	13 Mar 08	21	12	63.6	44.0
Manuka (North)	12 Mar 08	15	13	57.1	70.0
Manuka (North)	14 Mar 08	17	11	-	-
Whistler Point (South)	9 Mar 08	31	33	48.4	-
Whistler Point	10 Mar 08	17	31	35.4	
TOTAL		181	163	52.6% Male	51.9% Male

Even better was the sighting of a Turnstone with a white flag (on the tibia) on 12th March at Manuka. It had been originally flagged in North Island, New Zealand. This adds to the growing evidence that there is not only quite a marked movement of Turnstones through

south-eastern Australia to New Zealand but that there is also some interchange of non-breeding area.

The other marked birds – one with an engraved white flag, which it was not possible to read, and the other with a unique colour band combination - were Sooty Oystercatchers. The first would have been marked at Flinders in Victoria and the other had been banded on 13th June 2002 in Corner Inlet. This bird had also previously been reported on King Island in January 2007. These two sightings further confirm the strong connection between oystercatchers on King Island and oystercatchers on the coast and bays of Victoria.

b) Flag Resightings

A wonderful collection of sightings, mainly overseas, have already accrued from birds marked on King Island (Table 7).

Table 7. *Flag sightings of colour marked shorebirds from other locations on King Island, Tasmania (March 2008).*

Species	Flag colours	Resighting date & location	Location banded
Ruddy Turnstone	(5 birds) Orange/Yellow	08 Mar 08 Whistler Point (south)	South Australia
Ruddy Turnstone	(one Orange JN/Yellow) = 052-22243	08 Mar 08 Whistler Point (south)	06 Mar 08 Port MacDonnell (Age 2) South Australia
Ruddy Turnstone	White (on tibia)	12 Mar 08 Manuka (north)	New Zealand
Sooty Oystercatcher	Colour Bands Green.metal/red.green.light green	08 Mar 08 Quarantine Bay (also previously reported nearby on 18 Jan 07)	13 June 02 Roussac Point, Corner Inlet, Victoria
Sooty Oystercatcher	White flag (number not read)	08 Mar 08 Whistler Point (south)	Flinders, Victoria

There were also sightings of two Pied Oystercatchers colour marked in Victoria. As these birds were later caught they are listed under 'controls'

In 2007 two Ruddy Turnstones were reported, one in Taiwan, on both northward and southward migration, and the other in northern Japan, on southward migration. Already in 2008 four King Island flagged Ruddy Turnstones have been seen in Asia on northward migration. One was the same bird (XO) seen there twice in 2007. So this is the third consecutive migration season in which it has been seen making a stopover in Taiwan. Of the other three birds in Taiwan in April 2008 two had been banded on the visit in March this year and one in March 2007.

An unusual Ruddy Turnstone movement was a bird banded on 13th March this year and seen only 12 days later at Nene Valley, near Carpenter Rocks, in South Australia. This bird had a weight at the low end of the range of adult birds when caught. It would therefore appear likely that it was not a bird which has come down prematurely on migration (due to bad weather) but one which was deliberately moving a little closer to its end destination in the Northern Hemisphere before carrying out the fat deposition necessary for the very long first leg (probably to the Taiwan area direct) of its northward migration.

Subsequently two more of this year's King Island flagged Ruddy Turnstones were seen at Nene Valley in South Australia. One (1Y/B) had been banded at Surprise Bay on 11th March. Its weight was also relatively low (129 g.) compared with other birds caught on that day. The other (5B) had been banded as a **juvenile** on 9th March at Whistler Point. Some first year waders, of several species, make partial northward movements for their first austral winter. It will be interesting to see if this bird remains in the Nene Valley area.

A Red-necked Stint appeared to make a similar (to the first two Turnstones) movement in 2007, being seen on 20th April at Nene Valley in South Australia, less than a month after it had been banded on King Island.

There is no doubt that leg flagging, especially with engraved flags, is greatly increasing the amount of data generated on migratory movements. Let us hope that the especially keen group of wader re-sighters in the Taiwan Wader Study Group find some more of our marked birds from King Island during future migration seasons.

Table 8 *Movements of birds flagged on King Island*

Species	Band & Flag Number /combination	Flagged	Resighted
Ruddy Turnstone	052-52378 Orange 93/B	13 Mar 08 Manuka (North)	25 Mar 08, Carpenter Rocks, South Australia
Ruddy Turnstone	052-51886 Orange XO/B	24 Mar 07 Currie	4 & 8 May 07 Hanbou, TAIWAN 3 Aug 07 Hanbou, TAIWAN 17 April 08 Hanbou, TAIWAN
Ruddy Turnstone	052-51862 Orange S8/B	22 Mar 07 Surprise Bay	8 Aug 07, Hokkaido, JAPAN
Ruddy Turnstone	052-52039 Orange 4H/B	9 Mar 08, Whistler Point	5 April 08, Han Pao, TAIWAN
Ruddy Turnstone	052-52405 Orange 2M/B	10 Mar 08, Whistler Point	12 & 13 April 08, Tao Yuan, TAIWAN
Ruddy Turnstone	052-51724 Orange E1/B	20 Mar 07, Manuka (North)	17 April 08, Han Pao, TAIWAN
Ruddy Turnstone	052-52277 Orange 1Y/B	11 Mar 08, Surprise Bay	20 April 08 Nene Valley, South Australia
Ruddy Turnstone	052-52203 Orange 5B/B	9 Mar 08, Whistler Point (south)	20 April 08 Nene Valley, South Australia
Red-necked Stint	O/B	March 07 Manuka or Currie	20 April 07 Nene Valley, South Australia

Reports up to 20 April 2008

Other Bird Sightings.

A full list of species observed - including the numerous Wild Turkeys, Peacocks/Pea Hens and Ring-necked Pheasants! – was kept and will be submitted to the Birds Australia Atlas Project. A search was made for Orange-bellied Parrots but none was found.

The most exciting sighting was 146 Banded Lapwing on a newly ploughed field and an adjacent heavily grazed pasture at Egg Lagoon on 12th March. Banded Lapwings breed on King Island but are usually only seen in small numbers. Nigel Burgess (the Tasmanian Parks Ranger) and Max McGarvie (who wrote *The Birds of King Island* in 1972) have both said they have never seen more than about 20 Banded Lapwings together at any one location at any time in the past – and both have lived on King Island for more than 50 years.

HANZAB lists a small number of occasions – in inland New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Queensland, plus one flock of 200 in Tasmania – where large flocks of Banded Lapwings have been recorded. But it is obviously an uncommon occurrence and this particular sighting is unique for King Island. It certainly suggests that a large part of the exceptional number of Banded Lapwings seen at Egg Lagoon were immigrants from elsewhere. This might have been more expected if the severe drought had still been continuing, but it has now ameliorated somewhat in many of the areas of the Banded Lapwings' range.

The Future.

As mentioned earlier it is planned to continue this study for a number of years if possible so that the best possible quality of data for survival rate calculations on Ruddy Turnstones can be generated. This will entail a major banding visit each year and one, or more, separate

visits to search for surviving birds carrying engraved leg flags. It is also hoped that local King Island ornithologists will gradually take an interest in this aspect of the study and themselves make regular searches for flagged birds.

Acknowledgements

These visits to King Island could not have taken place at all, never mind the scientific success and enjoyment they've achieved, without the huge help and support of Mavis and Nigel Burgess. They most kindly lent us a 4WD vehicle and a trailer for the duration of the visit and kindly brought these to the airport to meet us. They also collected our vehicle from the docks at Grassie and returned it to there at the end of our visit. In addition they assisted us to find accommodation. And – most important of all for some – they provided vast quantities of the most delicious King Island cheeses!

A number of other King Island residents also took part in the banding activities, in both years, and their help has been greatly appreciated. It was also a great pleasure to meet up with Max McGarvie, now aged 86, who had been a prominent member of the RAOU (now Birds Australia) in the 1960s, taking part in major exploratory ornithological expeditions to remote parts of Australia (including Broome, where he saw huge numbers of waders but didn't specifically identify Great Knot, and Anna Plains, where they did not venture on to 80 Mile Beach!). Penny Johns is writing an article about Max for an issue of Wingspan in late 2008.

Critical also to the financial viability was Angus Roberts, who arranged for the transportation of, free of charge by sea, all our cannon-netting and banding equipment in Clive Minton's Land Cruiser from/to Melbourne.

Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service are also thanked for the provision of the necessary Banding Permits for King Island.

Finally a Thank You to the whole of the team, especially to Penny Johns who did most of the logistical planning, for their huge contribution before, during and after the visit.

The March 2008 Team.

Clive Minton, Penny Johns, Maureen Christie, Roger and Annabel Richards, Rodney McFarlane and Helen Vaughan, Rosemary Davidson, Meg Macmillan, Robyn Atkinson, Prue Wright, Susan Taylor and Vivien Holyoake.

Local Participants.

Nigel and Mavis Burgess, Don and Greta Robertson, Graeme and Margaret Batey, and others.

*Sooty Oystercatcher on King Island
(Photo Mavis & Nigel Burgess)*



What to do with your colour bands/colour flags sightings

Heather Gibbs

The Australasian Wader Studies Group - AWSG – are funded by the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme – ABBBS – to process any colour flag sightings in Australia. Flags may either be plain which identifies location or have a combination of numerals and letters which identifies individuals. In practise most flag sightings and sightings of colour bands from throughout the flyway are processed by AWSG.

Most of the colour banded Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers seen in Tasmania have been banded by the Victorian Wader Study Group – VWSG - apart from the ones that were colour banded by the Shorebird Study Group – Bird Observers Association, Tasmania (BOAT) via Mike Newman and Bill Wakefield some years ago.

There are three ways of reporting your sightings:

- A) Send them yourself to AWSG/VWSG, to Clive Minton
Email address: mintons@ozemail.com.au
- B) Report them via the AWSG web page www.awsg.org.au

All sightings will be processed and sent to ABBBS. If the flag sighting is from overseas a formal letter will be sent from the ABBBS to the person who put the flags on as well as to yourself. If oystercatcher band combinations are incomplete they are still valuable if the banding location of the birds can be determined. Since 2003 oystercatchers have been given alpha-numeric flags rather than colour band combinations. The colour of the flag denotes location, so if you can't read the numbers the sighting is still useful.

It sounds complicated but: -.

Don't forget the following details

Date

Location – names which can be found in an atlas are best

Species

Colour of bands / flag. Which leg

Metal band which leg

Be careful to record the position of the band /flag on the leg. Some have numbers/alphabet scored on the flag.

Eg. Lower leg/tarsus. Upper leg/tibia.

Site.

Was the bird alone or in a flock? Approx number

For Example

1. 13 September 2007.

Curlew Sandpiper.

Left Lower leg. Metal. Right Upper leg orange flag over yellow flag.

Tasmania, Pipeclay Lagoon. Near Bicheno Street. In flock of approximately 20 other Curlew Sandpipers and 80 Red-necked Stint.

2. 16-March 2006.

Pied Oystercatcher.

Left Lower leg. Bands. Red/White/Blue. Right Lower leg. Blue/Blue/Metal.

Tasmania, King Island. Sea Elephant Bay. Feeding in kelp with 4 other Pied Oystercatchers.

You will be notified by AWSG or VWSG of where/when the bird was banded/flagged and the age of the bird when caught.

Charts with flyway colours can be viewed at the AWSG web page <http://www.awsg.org.au/>

2007 Breeding Success, based on juvenile ratios of Northern Hemisphere waders which spend the non-breeding season in Australia

Clive Minton, Rosalind Jessop, and Chris Hassell

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Introduction

Demographics are becoming of increasing importance given that nearly half the world populations of waders on which count data is available have shown marked declines over the last 20 years (IWSG 2003): Data on the reproductive success of waders, especially those breeding in the Arctic or remote parts of Siberia and Asia, is difficult to obtain, particularly on a long-term basis and on a wide variety of species. Collection of data on the proportion of juvenile/first year birds in catches of waders on the non-breeding grounds is at present the main method used for obtaining an annual breeding success index for wader populations which use the East Asian/Australasian Flyway.

Such information has been systematically collected from cannon-net catches of waders in Victoria and adjacent areas of south-east Australia back to the 1978/79 non-breeding season. On Red-necked Stint and Curlew Sandpiper the data set now covers 30 years, while on another five species it is more intermittent in the early years but almost continuous since the early 1990s.

In north-west Australia annual monitoring in the core of the non-breeding season, when wader populations are relatively sedentary, was only commenced in the 1998/99 season. Some data exists from earlier years but much of the cannon-net catching was in the March/April and August/October migration seasons in the early years after catching was commenced there in August 1981. Eight species are now monitored annually, and several other species less frequently (because catching these species in adequate quantities cannot be achieved every year).

Data from previous years has been published annually in *Arctic Birds* since Issue 2 in 2000 (Minton *et al.* 2000, Minton *et al.* 2005, Minton *et al.* 2007). In interpreting the results it needs to be borne in mind that the figures are only a proxy/index of annual reproductive success. This is partly because of the non-homogeneous distribution of the age groups of some species on the non-breeding grounds (especially Red Knot and Bar-tailed Godwit in south-east Australia). It is also because the data is collected on average six months after young birds fledge, and therefore after completion of their first migration during which significant mortality may occur. There are also potential errors and biases associated with this assessment method, especially the vagaries of cannon-net catches at high tide roosts, and these have been detailed in earlier papers. Maximising the number of samples collected for each species each year is one method of trying to even out the effects, and also of quantifying the confidence limits of the estimated breeding success figures.

This paper presents the data on the proportion of juveniles in catches made in the November 2007 to March 2008 period in both south-east Australia and north-west Australia. Results are compared with earlier years and an assessment made of the relative outcome of the 2007 breeding season for each species/population.

Methods

As usual, catching conditions were standardized as far as possible in order to maximize comparability of data between years. Only birds caught in cannon-net catches are included in the main tables (Tables 1-4), because catching method has been shown to have an effect on juvenile proportions, with mist-netting catches generally having a higher percentage of young birds (Pienkowski & Dick 1976, Goss-Custard *et al.* 1981).

Birds caught between 1st November and 20th March are incorporated into the north-west Australia data. A slightly shorter period (16th November to 20th March – but February 28th for Curlew Sandpiper and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper) was used for south-east Australia because juvenile birds take rather longer to reach their non-breeding destination and adults of some species set off on northward migration rather earlier.

Data from the south-east coast of South Australia and from King Island is included with data from various locations along the Victorian coast in the information presented for south-east Australia. In north-west Australia the data is from Roebuck Bay, Broome, and 80 Mile Beach (combined).

Some mist-netting data from north-west Australia is also included, for the record. This is for species which are not normally cannon-netted and is a much smaller volume (one mist-net catch only in 07/08).

Results

The data for south-east Australia for the 2007/08 season is given in Table 1. Also included are the median percentage juvenile figures for each species, derived from all years except the present one.

Good catch samples were obtained for all species except Red Knot. The Ruddy Turnstone sample size (599) was the highest ever, mainly because of an extremely successful visit to King Island during which 419 were caught over a six day period.

Attempts to catch Red Knot at both of their main locations in Victoria were unsuccessful, with only one bird being caught in the monitoring period. In lieu a detailed scan of the main flock of 600 Red Knots present at the main high tide roost in Corner Inlet was made in early March when adult birds were quite well advanced in their transition into breeding plumage and before any northward migration departures had occurred. Approximately 150 Red Knot were in partial breeding plumage. The remainder were still in non-breeding plumage. Catch data from previous years suggests that all of these would have been first-year birds, because even second-year birds which are going to remain on their non-breeding grounds assume at least a partial breeding plumage. Based on this scan therefore it is estimated that around 75% of the Red Knot population were juvenile/first year birds. This figure is used therefore for an estimate of 2007 breeding success.

The north-west Australia results are given in Table 2. This includes only those species where at least 30 birds were cannon-netted. The highlight of this year's catching was achieving a total of 569 Curlew Sandpipers, a species which we have struggled to obtain in satisfactory quantities in many recent years. One catch was of 332, the highest single catch total for Curlew Sandpiper for nearly 20 years.

Percentage first-year figures for the last ten years of catches in south-east Australia and north-west Australia are given in Tables 3 and 4. These tables also give the **average** figure for each species over this ten-year period, with the figures from 07/08 also included.

Data from the single mist-net catch made in north-west Australia is given in Table 5. Although information for five species is given, to compare with similar data from the previous year, only three of these species were caught in sufficient quantity for the percentage juvenile figure to be meaningful.

Discussion

South-east Australia (SEA)

It appears that the 2007 breeding season was generally a good one for wader populations which spend their non-breeding season in south-east Australia. This is in contrast to the overall poor breeding season the previous year.

The highlight was undoubtedly the extremely high proportion of young birds (33.1%) in Curlew Sandpiper samples. This is the second highest ever in 29 years of monitoring. Only the phenomenal 1991 breeding season was better, with 45.3% juveniles in the 91/92 sampling season. It was most noticeable that Curlew Sandpipers were more numerous than in other recent years at most locations.

Bar-tailed Godwits, which are from the Alaskan population, also appear to have had a very good breeding season though some caution needs to be taken with the actual figures since only two catches were involved. In one of these the catch was only made after significant “twinkling”. Previous experience has shown that such attempts to get birds to move into the catching area of a cannon-net quite often result in the departure of many of the older, wiser, adults resulting in a juvenile-biased catch sample. Note also that Bar-tailed Godwit figures are always exaggerated because a proportion of the young of the New Zealand Bar-tailed Godwit population spend their first year (or two) in Australia. Breeding success fluctuations are thus magnified. Scanning data on Bar-tailed Godwits in New Zealand has only shown one count in the October/November 2007 period when the proportion of juveniles was above 5.5% (Adrian Riegen, *pers. comm.*).

Ruddy Turnstone (19.4%) and Sanderling (14.4%) breeding success improved greatly over the abysmal outcome the previous season (1.3% and 0.5% respectively).

Sharp-tailed Sandpipers had yet another good breeding year. In five of the last six years the proportion of juvenile birds has been well above the long-term (16-year) median. This phenomenal run of good breeding success has now well and truly restored populations to levels prevalent 20 or more years ago before the serious decline of the 1990s and early 2000s occurred. Not only are Sharp-tailed Sandpipers seen in larger numbers at many places they are also now occurring at sites where they have rarely been present in many recent years.

Once again the Red-necked Stint is an enigma. It was the only species with a poor outcome from the 2007 breeding season. It is amazing how the breeding success fortunes of this species have varied over the last ten years. In four of the six seasons between 98/99 and 03/04 breeding success was well above the long-term median, and in the other two years it was close to the median. In the four seasons 04/05 to 07/08 the result in three has been below this median and in the fourth was only at the median level. As previously mentioned for Curlew Sandpiper and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper marked variations in breeding success are reflected in population levels as determined by counts (and by general impressions). There was a huge peak in Red-necked Stint numbers coinciding with the period of high breeding success in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Now Red-necked Stint numbers have dropped right back to former, more normal, levels. This is apparent by reduced numbers in their core habitat areas and by a marked diminution of Red-necked Stint numbers in fringe habitats.

A key unknown is why some species have breeding outcomes in some years which are markedly different from most other species and why some species may have quite long runs of “good” or “bad” breeding seasons. Correlations between breeding success and key factors such as June/July temperatures on the breeding grounds, predator levels and date of snow melt need further investigation. But until it is possible to pinpoint breeding areas of each sub-population more exactly and until much more detailed meteorological and predator level data is available it will remain difficult to fully explain annual differences in breeding success between species.

North-west Australia

The breeding outcome for the wader populations which spend the non-breeding season in north-west Australia was also much better in 2007 than the very poor performance recorded for the 2006 breeding season.

As in Victoria the highlight was Curlew Sandpiper (28.8% juveniles). This suggests that it was an exceptionally good year for this species widely across the breeding range (though the exact breeding area of NWA Curlew Sandpipers is not known as there have been no recoveries or flag-sighting reports of birds from NWA on or near the breeding areas). It was most noticeable, particularly at 80 Mile Beach, that Curlew Sandpipers were far more numerous and widely distributed than for many years.

Great Knot and Bar-tailed Godwit had average, or slightly above average, breeding success. There is no indication yet that the Saemangeum Reclamation Project in South Korea has had any major adverse effect on reproductive rate for these two key potentially affected species.

Several other species had good breeding outcomes, including Grey-tailed Tattler for the second consecutive year. However, as in the 06/07 season, no juvenile Greenshank were captured in spite of reasonable samples being caught (39 in 07/08 and 70 in 06/07). It is possible that juvenile birds of this species may largely go elsewhere (eg. to freshwater habitats), though catches of this species are too intermittent to be sure about this.

Little Curlew always seem to have an exceptionally high proportion of young birds. For a bird of comparable size (eg. Bar-tailed Godwit) the average percentage of young birds in the population over the last ten years has been 8.8% whereas it is 40.6% for the five years in which adequate samples of Little Curlew have been obtained. Whether this species has an unusual reproduction rate/survival rate balance or whether the high juvenile proportions are a result of some differential migration of the sexes or other segregation in the non-breeding area is unclear.

It is interesting that the Red-necked Stint population in north-west Australia seems to have had a much better level of breeding success in recent years than the Red-necked Stint population which visits south-east Australia. In the last six years the proportion of young Red-necked Stints in south-east Australia has only once been above that of north-west Australia, and in each of the last three years it has been well below.

The mist-netting samples, all from a single catch in north-west Australia, again show a high proportion of juvenile birds, as in the 06/07 season. It may be that those species which prefer freshwater habitats have a high annual production of young, but it is not possible at this stage to determine how much of the result may also be caused by the fact that the mist-netting technique tends to catch an unusually high proportion of juvenile birds.

The Future

Monitoring of annual reproduction rates of wader populations which spend the non-breeding season in Australia will continue to be a high priority of fieldwork catching and banding programs in the November to March period each year. The quite marked variations in recent years between overall annual breeding success, together with individual species being markedly different from the main trend, should hopefully improve the chances of future analyses determining the relative importance of the various possible causes of these variations. The improved wader monitoring count programs in Australia (Shorebirds 2020 Project) and the additional data emerging from censusing at key stopover locations in Asia should also permit better examination of the relative importance of reproductive rate in governing wader population levels. Parallel studies estimating survival rates from capture/recapture, engraved leg flag and colour-band resighting data – now under way – will be complementary to these reproductive rate studies in helping build up a fuller understanding of wader demographics in the East Asian/Australasian Flyway.

Acknowledgements

The principal credit for the collection of this huge mass of data on the ages of waders in the non-breeding populations in Australia goes to the very large number of people who have put in countless hours of time, much physical effort and at significant financial cost to

themselves, to catch waders in south-east Australia (Victorian Wader Study Group) and north-west Australia (Australasian Wader Studies Group annual NWA Wader Expeditions and North West Wader Study Group). Their preparedness to so strongly support fieldwork, even at short notice and often under arduous climatic conditions, has been absolutely vital.

Table 1. Percentage of juvenile/first year waders in cannon-net catches in South-east Australia in 2007/2008

Species	No. of catches		Total caught	Juv./1st year		Long term median** % juvenile (years)	Assessment of 2007 breeding success
	Large (>50)	Small (<50)		(#)	%		
Red-necked Stint <i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	7	11	2502	259	10.3	13.8 (29)	Poor
Curlew Sandpiper <i>C. ferruginea</i>	1	7	299	99	33.1	9.8 (28)	Very good
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	2	0	124	70	56.5	15.4 (18)	Very good
Red Knot <i>C. canutus</i>	0	1	1	1	(c.75)*	47.0 (16)	(Good)
Ruddy Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	4	10	599	116	19.4	9.3 (17)	Good
Sanderling <i>C. alba</i>	2	3	391	56	14.4	12.4 (16)	Average
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper <i>C. acuminata</i>	1	8	201	40	19.9	11.1 (26)	Good

All birds cannon-netted in period 15 Nov to 28 Feb except for Red-necked Stint, Ruddy Turnstone, and Sanderling, for which catches up to 21 Mar are included.

*Obtained by scanning roosting flocks (see text)

**Does not include 07/08 figures

Table 2. Percentage of juvenile/first year waders in cannon-net catches in North-west Australia in 2007/2008

Species	No. of catches		Total caught	Juv./1st year		Assessment of 2007 breeding success
	Large (>50)	Small (<50)		(#)	(%)	
Great Knot <i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>	12	4	1506	188	12.5	Good
Bar-tailed Godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	5	8	552	43	7.8	Average
Red-necked Stint <i>C. ruficollis</i>	3	1	264	54	20.5	Average
Red Knot <i>C. canutus</i>	0	11	138	32	23.2	Good
Curlew Sandpiper <i>C. ferruginea</i>	3	12	569	164	28.8	Very good
Ruddy Turnstone <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	1	1	70	8	11.4	Poor
Non-Arctic northern migrants						
Greater Sand Plover <i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>	2	8	269	73	27.1	Good
Terek Sandpiper <i>Xenus cinereus</i>	2	6	173	22	12.7	Average
Grey-tailed Tattler <i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>	3	4	231	57	24.7	Good
Common Greenshank <i>Tringa nebularia</i>	0	3	39	0	0	Very poor
Little Curlew <i>Numerius minutus</i>	0	1	38	18	47.4	Good

All birds cannon netted in period 1 Nov to mid-March

Table 3. Percentage of first year birds in wader catches in South-east Australia 1998/1999 to 2007/2008

Species	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	Average (10 yrs)
Ruddy Turnstone - <i>Arenaria interpres</i>	6.2	29	10	9.3	17	6.7	12	28	1.3	19	13.9
Red-necked Stint - <i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	32	23	13	35	13	23	10	7.4	14	10	17.9
Curlew Sandpiper - <i>C. ferruginea</i>	4.1	20	6.8	27	15	15	22	27	4.9	33	17.5
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper - <i>C. acuminata</i>	11	10	16	7.9	20	39	42	27	12	20	20.4
Sanderling - <i>C. alba</i>	10	13	2.9	10	43	2.7	16	62	0.5	14	17.4
Red Knot - <i>C. canutus</i>	(2.8)	38	52	69	(92)	(86)	29	73	58	(75)	53.1
Bar-tailed Godwit - <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	41	19	3.6	1.4	16	2.3	38	40	26	56	24.2

All birds cannon-netted between mid Nov and third week in Mar (except Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Curlew Sandpiper to end Feb only). Averages (for last ten years) exclude figures in brackets (small samples) but **do** include 07/08 figures

Table 4. Percentage of first year birds in wader catches in North-west Australia 1998/1999 to 2007/2008

Species	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	Average (10 yrs)
Red-necked Stint - <i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	26	46	15	17	41	10	13	20	21	20	22.9
Curlew Sandpiper - <i>C. ferruginea</i>	9.3	22	11	19	15	7.4	21	37	11	29	18.2
Great Knot - <i>C. tenuirostris</i>	2.4	4.8	18	5.2	17	16	3.2	12	9.2	12	10.0
Red Knot - <i>C. canutus</i>	3.3	14	9.6	5.4	32	3.2	(12)	57	11	23	17.5
Bar-tailed Godwit - <i>Limosa lapponica</i>	2.0	10	4.8	15	13	9.0	6.7	11	8.5	8	8.8

Non-Arctic northern migrants

Greater Sand Plover - <i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>	25	33	22	13	32	24	21	9.5	21	27	22.8
Terek Sandpiper - <i>Xenus cinereus</i>	12	(0)	8.5	12	11	19	14	13	11	13	12.7
Grey-tailed Tattler - <i>Heteroscelus brevipes</i>	26	(44)	17	17	9.0	14	11	15	28	25	18.0
Little Curlew - <i>Numenius minutus</i>	57	33	-	36	30	-	(40)	-	-	47	40.6

All birds cannon-netted in the period 1 Nov to mid-March. Averages (for last ten years) exclude figures in brackets (small samples) but **include** 07/08 figures

Table 5. Percentage of juvenile/first year waders in mist-net catches in North-west Australia in 2007/2008

Species	No. of catches	Total caught	Juv./1st year	% Juv./1st year
	Small (<50)			
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper <i>Calidris acuminata</i>	1	102	9	8.8
Marsh Sandpiper – <i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	1	4	0	(0)
Wood Sandpiper – <i>T. glareola</i>	1	19	7	36.8
Long-toed Stint – <i>C. subminuta</i>	1	17	14	82.3
Common Greenshank – <i>T. nebularia</i>	1	3	1	33.3

All birds mist-netted on Roebuck Plains near Broome on 26 Nov 2007

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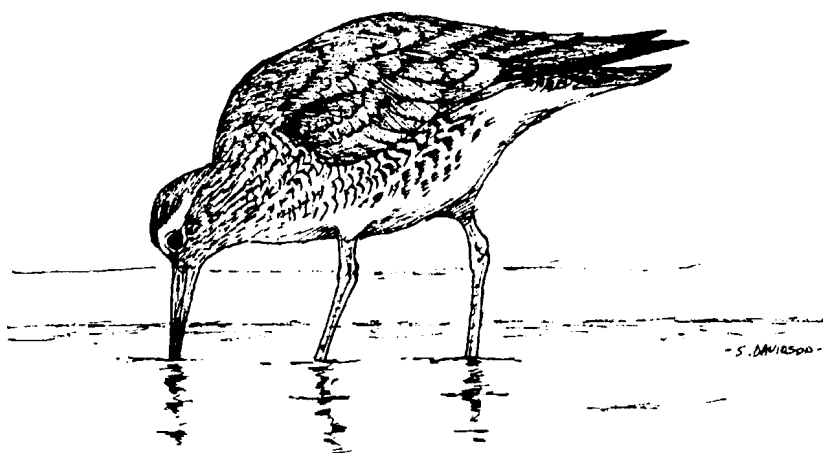
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The International Wader Study Group Annual Conference
28th September to 1st October 2007
La Rochelle, France

Birgita Hanson

I attended the annual shorebird conference in La Rochelle, on the central-west coast of France, on behalf of the AWSG and VWSG. As part of the conference proceedings, two special workshops were organised – one on Black-tailed Godwit and the other on oystercatchers. I presented AWSG and VWSG data on Sooty and Pied Oystercatchers at the oystercatcher workshop. The focus of my presentations was data from our banding activities both in Victoria and North-west Australia. This included an enormous amount of data on movements and recoveries of banded oystercatchers, information collected from catches on biometrics, moult and sexing criteria, and information collected from the breeding censuses of Pied Oystercatchers in Corner Inlet. Two other speakers from Australia attended the conference: Annette Harrison from the University of New England in Armidale, who is working on both oystercatcher species for her PhD, and Dr Iain Taylor from Charles Sturt University, who has undertaken his own projects on Pied Oystercatchers in Tasmania.

The oystercatcher workshop was overwhelming in the vastness of topics covered and data presented, and most oystercatcher species were covered. Bruno Ens and Les Underhill, the workshop organisers, gave the introduction. Humphrey Sitters kicked off the talks with a boisterous account of his involvement in work on the Magellanic Oystercatcher of southern America. Allan Baker gave an extremely interesting talk about the phylogeny and taxonomic groupings of oystercatchers based upon a wealth of genetic analysis performed in his research group. Simon Delany of Wetlands International "Waterbirds Population Estimates" fame gave us an overview of this publication with respect to oystercatchers. We also heard about the North-American's efforts on the conservation and research of the two oystercatcher "species" there, and the vast amount of work that is being done by researchers and volunteers alike. The current conservation status of the African Black Oystercatcher and the Eurasian Oystercatcher (which is interestingly the only oystercatcher species to have suffered large population declines in recent times - surprising given that it is also the most numerous) was discussed. David Melville gave us a talk on each of the three New Zealand species.

After the workshop ended, many of the attendees travelled to Schiermonnikoog in the Netherlands for a continuation of the oystercatcher theme with more talks and discussions about current research. It was clear from the oystercatcher presentations and discussions (both in La Rochelle and at Schiermonnikoog) that, although most oystercatchers are not particularly threatened, they still face a variety of threatening processes, many of which are the result of direct and indirect human and vehicle disturbance on beaches. Disturbance frequently affected breeding birds and chicks and may result in increased competition for food resources. Introduced predators like foxes and stoats cause losses of eggs and young. Wind and tidal nest loss is common for species (especially Australasian species).

The main outcome of the workshop is a special edition of the WSG Bulletin, devoted to oystercatcher conservation and threats. A Conservation Assessment and Management Plan (CAMP) is being prepared for every oystercatcher species, including the potentially threatened subspecies of the Eurasian Oystercatcher, which occurs in the Yellow Sea. At present, in collaboration with Iain Taylor and Annette Harrison, myself, Clive and Ros are drafting the Pied Oystercatcher CAMP, which will be ready to go to the editor at the end of August. I am currently compiling all current information on Sooty Oystercatchers for the sooty CAMP. Most other CAMPs are nearly complete, and we hope to see the WSG bulletin issue detailing the conservation status of all oystercatcher species in the new year. These documents will be extremely important reference points for management of oystercatchers, and will be an invaluable resource for government land managers, researchers, conservation groups and environmental consultants working with industry.

The whole experience was very rewarding and I would like to thank the VWSG, AWSG, IWSG, the University of La Rochelle and the LPO (Birdlife International, France) for their very generous financial support, allowing me to make it to France.

For a list of the talks check the following website: <http://iwsq2007.univ-lr.fr/>

Where have all the Red-necked Stint gone?

Anthea and Jim Whitelaw

(REPRINTED FROM STILT 53: 30)

Anderson's Inlet 38° 38' S, 145° 47' E is located on the southern coast of Victoria, Australia near the township of Inverloch. It achieved International Bird Area Status in 2007 and has four species of shorebird in numbers of International Significance the Double-banded Plover *Charadrius bicinctus*, Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*, Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *C. acuminata* and an additional two species of National Significance Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* and Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* (Watkins 1993). Counts have been conducted at this site for over 20 years (AWSG unpublished data, Campbell 1992, South Gippsland Conservation Society 1987, Whitelaw & Whitelaw 2002, Wilson 2001).

The introduced intertidal weed *Spartina* now dominates 95% of the shoreline leading to a change in roosting areas (Whitelaw & Whitelaw 2002) and diminished numbers of some species in particular Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. Red-necked Stints are the most common species seen in the inlet with counts of over 5,000 in the austral summer (Whitelaw and Whitelaw 2002).

The current series of regular boat based bi-monthly summer and winter counts commenced in January 2000 and are continuing as part of the AWSG's 2020 Shorebird monitoring project. There have now been 40 counts. 31 were 'wader season' counts between September and March inclusive. The surveys have covered waders and all other waterbirds/waterfowl/gulls and terns and total survey time is about 2.5 hours.

Roost sites not visible from land-based counts include extensive spreads of mangrove (*Avicennia marina*) - *Spartina* islands, and mangroves themselves (Minton & Whitelaw 2000). In recent years a sand island has built up near the inlet entrance and has provided an extra roost site for the Red-necked Stint (and some other waders and seabirds), notably on the morning high tide.

The average Red-necked Stint numbers observed across those 31 'wader season' counts was 3230 with the highest total of 6390 on 7 March 2005; the lowest of 16 on 6 September 2007. 15 counts were between November and February inclusive when the population is considered stable as all juveniles have arrived and birds on passage departed. The average Red-necked Stint at this time was 4082 with the highest count of 6107 on 17 January 2004 and the lowest, 2575, on 20 November 2000.

The shorebird survey of Andersons Inlet on the 18 February 2008 produced a mystifying result for the inlet's wader counters. The Red-necked Stint count was zero.

The previous survey on 2 November 2007 produced 3475 Red-necked Stint. Since that date the large flock hasn't been seen at any of the roost sites that can be checked on foot, or with binoculars or telescopes. Small groups numbering mere low hundreds at most were seen from November through to mid-January.

During the 2 November 2007 count two small groups of Red-necked Stint were observed roosting at their usual sites (390, 85) but the main flock (3000) was roosting on a man-made land-fill extension to a property functioning as a small-scale private boat charter/marina.

One possible explanation for the lack of stints during the February 2008 count is that the birds were roosting in an area that the boat cannot reach. One such area is inside the spread of mangrove-spartina islands east of Fisherman's Jetty. However their usual roosting and high-tide feeding preferences for the past eight years have been on the mangroves (on a

very high tide) or on the muddy island edges, often with Curlew Sandpiper, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Pacific Golden Plover, Common Greenshank. Perhaps they have found another roost site along creek or riverbanks not accessible or surveyed?

A search of the low-tide feeding grounds was suggested. The boat was unavailable, but three searches covered everything possible around and from the inlet's shores, with binoculars/telescope. The ocean beach at Venus Bay was also checked. No Red-necked Stint were found.

We believe this February 2008 Red-necked Stint zero count should be put on the record, in case the flock's absence proves to be a pointer to a conservation problem or the start of an unwelcome trend.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Brian Martin and Parks Victoria for providing boat transport to roost sites.

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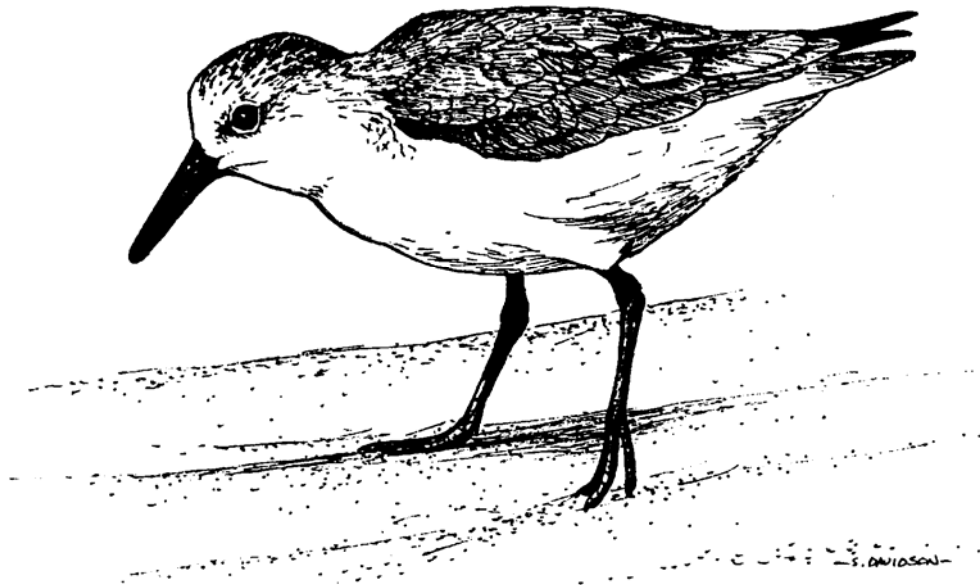
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VWSG Conservation Report 2007/08

Doris Graham

In last year's Bulletin I set the scene for my conservation report (pages 76-79) before giving you details of the main projects that were addressed. Since all VWSG members are well aware of the needs of our waders - habitats that provide productive mud i.e. contains and sustains a plentiful food supply of high concentrations of invertebrates, safety from predators and lack of disturbance, I am presenting here a brief outline of the proposals which we addressed and the main problems they posed for waders and terns. Each of these are potentially destructive of one at least one of the above criteria.

International

South Korea. Saemangeum Estuary

Despite huge national and international protests over at least the last decade the closure of the Saemangeum – Estuary of the Mangyeong and the Dongjin Rivers - in April 2006 has not been rescinded. Numbers of shorebirds using the area declined markedly even by the 2007 count and further by the 2008 count. The species most affected numerically is the Great Knot with 88,000 counted in 2006 and 3,000 in 2008. N.B. There has been a 20% decrease in Great Knot in North-west Australia over the same time. The closure of the estuary will hasten the extinction of the critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper which has dropped from 26 seen at Saemangeum in 2007 to only four this year. The endangered Nordmann's Greenshank has also reduced in number.

Relocation to other sites has not occurred despite the next Estuary to the south, that of the Geum River, hosting many thousands of migratory birds on northward migration. The use to be made of the 43,000ha- 400 sq km reclaimed land –has not been decided. It remains dried and desolate-covered with rubbish of broken boats, decaying fishing nets some several hundreds metres long, and every type of human discards, plus small bushes and low shrubs some seeded there to prevent the dust blowing over the surroundings—industrial structures, rice paddies and residential areas -- truly heart-rending sights.

The Birds Korea website has all the information and gives detailed accounts of the history of this tragic project, <http://www.birdskorea.org>

The next Ramsar Conference of the parties COP10 will be held in Seoul, South Korea, October this year. This provides an excellent opportunity for the international community to add their voice to that of the many domestic protestors increasing pressure on all governments to review commitments to conservation of wetlands and the birds they support.

The best way to do this is to write a respectful letter or email to the Korean Ambassador in Canberra asking that the most important staging site in our flyway be reopened, and to send a copy to our embassy in South Korea. The address for letters is:

The Ambassador,
The Embassy of the Republic of Korea,
113 Empire Circuit,
Yarralumla. ACT. 2600.
Australia.

A sample letter can be found at <http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au/> under Conservation – our projects – shorebirds 2020.

Korea: The Grand Canal proposal

A huge canal from the west to the east coast of Korea is being proposed. This will further damage the habitats of migratory shorebirds and we ask that we all write to the Korean Ambassador to ask that this be abandoned or modified to preserve as many habitats as

possible for our beleaguered birds. The Birds Korea website has all information, <http://www.birdskorea.org> Address your politely written letters to the Korean ambassador at the address above.

Victoria

Port of Melbourne Channel Deepening

I attended several sessions of the hearings of the second Environmental Effects Statement and was horrified at the potential damage this project may have on the habitats for waders and terns in Port Phillip Bay (PPB).

This is based on the likely effects of silt from dredging in the southern channel on seagrasses in PPB especially in Swan Bay where up to 20,000 waders spend their non-breeding season. Silt smothers seagrass vital to the life cycles of fish and invertebrates, damaging or destroying the food chain. The widening of the opening to PPB will increase the volume and speed of the tides, thereby changing water/tide levels and hydrological aspects particularly of the Great Sands which will affect the food bowl of the terns and the profile of Mud Islands and Swan Bay.

Tooradin/Lyall Inlet Western Port Mangrove Pruning

The proponent of this project called for submissions to allow a 2m pruning on each side of the mangroves lining Lyall Inlet, (behind Harewood House) to allow a hovercraft, being manufactured on the Tooradin airfield, to be taken to Western Port for seaworthy trials. We objected to this on the grounds that mangroves are a protected species in Victoria, being designated as of State significance, and their destruction damages the continuity /barrier of the sea/land junction (Shapiro 1975), as well as the roles they carry out as above.

Furthermore, Western Port is a Ramsar site designated a Wetland of International Importance. Also that because of the route taken by this Inlet, and the size of the vessel, this could not be done physically unless the "pruning" were much greater than applied for. The proposal has not been acted on as yet.

Toora, Corner Inlet, Maintenance Dredging Boat Channel

We were asked by the scientific advisor to the South Gippsland Shire Council to comment on the preliminary plans for this project. We expressed serious concerns about several aspects of this proposal.

This channel runs from the open waters of Corner Inlet to the boat ramp deep inside a small inlet, near the bird hide from which we catch Oystercatchers and Eastern Curlew.

We pointed out that this area is part of the Corner Inlet Ramsar site and that strict attention should be paid to the international restrictions applicable to this area, particularly to the alteration of the habitat of the flora and fauna of the area.

Disposal of dredge material could impact on adjacent saltmarsh. Salt marsh is important to the overall biological system providing a source of nutrients and for nutrient filtering and is particularly valuable to species - listed under the EPBC Act such as the endangered Orange-bellied Parrot and the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper.

Disturbance of wader and waterbird high tide roost sites would be extensive as unfortunately this will be the time of maximum use of the boat ramp facility. Increased visitors will not only bring increased activity at the site but potentially increase the numbers of dogs in the area. Seagrass beds nearby, are important nurseries of some fish and invertebrates species and are sensitive to silt put up by dredging or passing boats.

Increased wave action may also result from increased boat activity which may be detrimental to the seagrass beds and reduce bird feeding time by washing over their feeding grounds

making it too deep for them to feed. We also requested that launching of personal watercraft such as Jet Ski, be prohibited due to the known high level of disturbance caused by these craft to shorebirds and impacts on marine life.

Port Fairy- Subdivision of Powling Street Wetland

With the help of the Birds Australia - Victoria Conservation Committee and Birds Australia, we commented on the proposed sub-division development for housing of the Powling Street Wetland and adjacent bird habitat. This was designed to occupy half of this very bird-friendly wetland which is especially important for Latham's Snipe, Ballion's Crake and Great Egret. These three species are listed under the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, and Latham's Snipe which also uses the adjacent land included in the proposal, is protected under the Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement and EPBC Act.

This development will decrease roosting and feeding areas and increase markedly disturbance by human activities and pets, with the nature of the wetlands also being changed by alteration to the drainage pattern and pollution from run-off. We thank Mark Anderson chair of the Birds Australia –Victoria Conservation sub-committee and Chris Tzaros, Conservation Manager Birds Australia, for their support.

Tasmania

Proposed Lauderdale Quay Development by Walker Corporation Pty Ltd.

[500+ houses, a main marina with some houses having their own marinas. The Walker foot print will occupy approximately 58% of the Lauderdale Conservation Area which is the shorebird habitat].

Latest news from Priscilla Park, VWSG/Birds Tasmania. Ralph's Bay some 30 km south of Hobart is prime habitat for several hundred Pied Oystercatchers, Red-capped and Double-banded Plovers plus Red-necked Stints, Curlew Sandpipers and other migratory shorebirds.

Since the above proposal initiated by Walker Corporation was submitted for public comment in 2004 massive community opposition has been fighting against it.

Recently the proponents have been testing the substrate of the bay, in the shallower areas with an All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and a barge in the deeper areas.

Results of these tests will be incorporated into their final Integrated Impact Statement (IIS) which will be submitted to the Resource, Planning Development Commission, Tasmania.

Save Ralph's Bay Inc. now awaits the final proposal being open for public comment and will continue until the end their fight to save this beautiful and environmentally important bay. Save Ralph's Bay web site <http://www.saveralphsbay.org/> indicates how we can all assist in the lengthy battle to save vital habitat for these residential and migratory shorebirds. Each letter no matter how short can strengthen this fight.

Further details of the proposal can be found at http://www.rpd.tas.gov.au/poss/lauderdale_quay - Go to Project Description.

Acknowledgements

My thanks for invaluable assistance in preparation of these submissions to Roz Jessop, Clive Minton, Pat MacWhirter, members of the Blue Wedges and Western Port and Peninsula Protection Council Inc and also to Nial Moores, Birds Korea, and to Ken Gosbell AWSG.

I would be very grateful if anyone able to assist with these submission could contact me grahamd@melbpc.org.au

Publications and Presentations using VWSG data

Compiled by Roz Jessop

NEWSLETTERS

- “**The Tattler**”, Newsletter for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. Copies can be downloaded from the AWSG web page <http://www.awsg.org.au/>
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PAPERS USING VWSG DATA

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SELECTED ABSTRACTS from the Shorebird Symposium held as part of the Australasian Ornithological Congress in Perth, December 2007

Copies of all abstracts can be downloaded from the Birds Australia web site www.birdsaustralia.com.au

Assessing the impact of large-scale reclamation on migratory shorebirds: the case of Saemangeum, South Korea

Phil F. Battley, Danny. Rogers, Nial Moores

Habitat loss is one of the greatest threats to migratory birds globally, particularly for species with specialised rather than generalised habitat choices. One such group is shorebirds, which are often restricted to intertidal flats that may be subject to reclamation for industrial and other purposes. Here

we report on surveys undertaken by the Australasian Wader Studies Group and Birds Korea (the Saemangeum Shorebird Monitoring Program) at Saemangeum, South Korea. Formerly one of the most important stopover sites in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, Saemangeum's 40,000 ha of mudflat and shallow water are currently being reclaimed. Surveys were conducted through the northward migration period in 2006 (when a 33-km seawall enclosing Saemangeum was completed) and in 2007 (one year after closure); the surveys will continue in 2008. In 2006 shorebirds seemed to cope with the reduction in tidal range from 7 m to 1 m, in part through ready access to millions of dying bivalves on the mud surface. In 2007, the tidal range of around 20 cm and the depauperate fauna were insufficient to enable successful refuelling by many species. The bivalve-dependent great knot was affected disproportionately. While numbers in mid-April 2007 were similar to the same time in 2006, by mid-May Saemangeum was virtually devoid of great knots: only 3600 were counted in 2007 compared with 86,000 in 2006. Overall, over 100,000 fewer birds were counted at Saemangeum in 2007 than 2006, and the total for Saemangeum and neighbouring estuaries had dropped from 244,000 in 2006 to 149,000 in 2007.

Survival of shorebirds in north Western Australia

Alice Ewing

Many species of migratory arctic-breeding shorebirds are experiencing a concerning population decline, worldwide. This study focuses on several species that use stopover and non-breeding sites within the East Asian- Australasian Flyway, in particular, Roebuck Bay, near Broome, north-western Australia. As many of the shorebird species in this study face increased obstacles to survival during migration, with destruction or loss of prime resources and habitat at stopover sites for rest and refuelling, it is vital to monitor their survival.

With data collected, using the relatively new method of using individually-identifiable engraved leg-flags on various species of shorebirds in NW Australia, a mark-resighting analysis will be carried out to determine year-to-year survival rates. Comparisons across and within a range of species, including age cohorts, non-breeding and breeding birds, and males and females, will give an insight of variation in survival between these groups with different morphology, foraging behaviour, and even choice of non-breeding staging sites. This data will then coupled with mark-recapture data from long-term banding and recapture studies in various locations in NW Australia. It is expected that the greater return rate of recoveries via resightings, as opposed to recaptures alone, will create a clearer picture of survival rates.

With unexpected high resighting rates of all the main study species in the past two years, results to date and preliminary analyses will be presented, with discussion of planned further analyses, particularly a comparison of survival between tropical and temperate staging sites in Australia.

Visible departures of migratory shorebirds from Broome, Western Australia.

Rosalind Jessop and Clive Minton

Roebuck Bay together with 80 Mile Beach near Broome in north-west Australia is the most important area for shorebirds in Australia holding over 500,000 birds in the austral summer. Allowing for migration of individuals to other areas of Australia the total number approaches 850,000 (Lane 1987). Numerically Roebuck Bay is the fourth most important site in Australia holding about 170,000 waders (Lane 1987).

The northern departure of 15 species of shorebird was studied at Roebuck Bay in the autumn of 1994 to 2007. Shorebirds generally left the area in the late afternoon between 1600 and 1800 hours. The most common species observed were Bar-tailed Godwit, Great Knot, Greater Sand Plover, Common Greenshank and Eastern Curlew. Asiatic Dowitcher, Black-tailed Godwit, Curlew Sandpiper, Grey Plover, Grey-tailed Tattler, Red Knot, Red-necked Stint, Terek Sandpiper and Whimbrel departures were also observed.

Some species such as Bar-tailed Godwit mainly departed over a two week period where as other species such as Eastern Curlew departed over a longer period up to seven weeks. Eastern Curlew were the earliest to depart with departures commencing in the first week of March, Great Knot and Greater Sand Plover from mid-March, Bar-tailed Godwit and Grey Plover in early April, Asiatic Dowitcher, Black-tailed Godwit, Common Greenshank, Curlew Sandpiper, Grey-tailed Tattler, Red

Knot, Red-necked Stint, Terek Sandpiper and Whimbrel from mid April. Flock size varied from a few birds to nearly 2000. Larger flocks were more common after extreme weather events such as cyclones prevented migration for several days.

Migration routes and destinations of a wide range of migratory waders in the East Asian/Australasian flyway

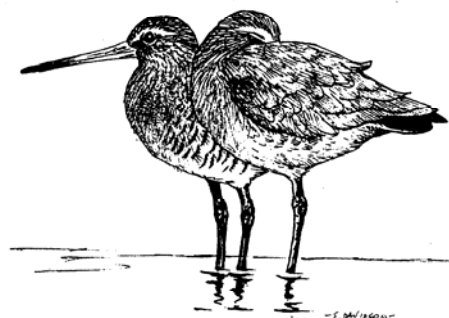
Clive Minton, Johannes Wah, Rosalind Jessop, Chris Hassell, Pete Collins & Heather Gibbs

Determination of migration routes, migration strategies, stop-over locations and breeding areas of wader populations that spend the non-breeding season in Australia is important for conservation purposes, for understanding potential for carriage of avian-borne diseases, and for predicting possible effects of climate change. We analysed recoveries and flag sightings of migratory waders originally marked or subsequently found in Australia. There have now been overseas reports of 26 species, with the largest amount of information being available on Red-necked Stint, Curlew Sandpiper, Bar-tailed Godwit, Great Knot, Red Knot and Double-banded Plover. Most species use the coasts of China, particularly around the Yellow Sea, as their principal stopover location, particularly on northward migration. Many species have different migration routes and stopover locations on northward (late March-May) and southward (mid-July to October) migration. Curlew Sandpipers, for example, have a more westerly route on southward migration (with reports of Australian marked birds in south-east India and Sri Lanka). Bar-tailed Godwits from eastern Australia and New Zealand migrate northwards to Alaska, via the Yellow Sea, but make a direct return flight southwards over the western Pacific (11,000km). The most distant breeding grounds of waders from southeast Australia are over 13,000km, but from northern Australian nonbreeding areas the migration distances are rather less (10,000km). Most species seem to make 1-3 major stopovers on their migration. This use of long non-stop flights as the principal migration strategy may help reduce the chance of migratory waders carrying acute avian-borne diseases, such as the H5N1 strain of avian influenza, into Australia. Movements within Australia and New Zealand are also widespread and sometimes complex, especially in the Red Knot.

Growing up slowly by the sea-side: age of first northwards migration of shorebirds from Australian non-breeding grounds

Danny I. Rogers, Clive D.T. Minton, Adrian N. Boyle, Chris J. Hassell & Andrew Silcocks

The age of maturity is a fundamental life-table variable. It can have profound effects on the population dynamics of a species, as delaying the age of first breeding will lower lifetime reproductive output unless compensated for by increased fecundity or survival. Ultimate causes of delayed maturity are however imperfectly known in birds. This study examines delayed maturity in a group (migratory shorebirds, Charadriiformes) in which fecundity is capped by a physiological constraint. We document the age of first northwards migration of shorebirds from non-breeding grounds in Australia, drawing together data from summer and winter counts, retraps and a colour banding study. Some species were found to first migrate north when a year old, but others delayed their first northwards migration for one to four years, hence missing at least their first potential breeding opportunity. The age of first northwards migration was weakly phylogenetically autocorrelated, and analyses both before and after correcting for this effect showed a strong relationship to habitat used in the non-breeding season, with coastal birds delaying maturity longest. This finding reinforces other studies identifying fundamental differences in life histories of shorebirds in coastal and inland environments. It suggests that environmental constraints cause delayed maturity in shorebirds, and that they may therefore be particularly vulnerable to declines in adult survival.



VWSG Members “Behind the Scenes”

Clive Minton

Every member of the VWSG contributes something, even if it is only a membership fee! Many take part in the most critical activity – fieldwork, often an arduous task and sometimes in inclement weather conditions. Many members also carry out a range of other activities on behalf of the Group – entering data into computers, making leg flags, recceing, washing bird bags, etc. Whilst people are hopefully appropriately thanked at the time for these efforts it seems worth setting out some of the specific contributors/contributions made by members rather than just making the usual broad acknowledgement. The list below is a “top of the head” first attempt to recognise individuals’ contributions. Would people please let me know of significant errors or omissions?

Thanks everyone.

Alice Ewing	Maintaining and processing Corner Inlet Count Data
Birgita Hansen	Representing VWSG at International Oystercatcher Symposium
Brian Martin	Boat transport
Colin Gibbs	Recceing
Dave Cropley	Recceing. Buying useful pieces of equipment. Being prepared always to be the long-distance twinkler
Doris Graham	Flag making co-ordination. Helping editing the Bulletin. Conservation submissions.
Geoff & Joan McDonald	Recces and use of their house at Port Albert
Graeme Rowe	Electrical repairs and flag-making
Heather Gibbs	Operating the Leg Flagging Database. Developing the Banding Database
Helen Vaughan	Cartridge loading and preparing tables for Bulletin
Hugo Philipps	Recceing. Preparing reference lists for VWSG Bulletin etc.
Iain & Sandy Stewart & Family	Welcoming us to be based on their farm during our South Australian visits. Recceing.
Inka Veltheim	Data entry
Irma Kluger	Making bird bags
Janet Limb	A most generous \$500 donation.
Jenny Skewes	Data entry
Jill Dening	Data entry
Jim and Anthea Whitelaw	Recceing
John Stoney	Wine for the AGM and for Yanakie visits
Jon Fallaw	Driving the PINP boat
Joy Knight	Celebratory alcohol at Werribee!
Julie Deleyev	Data entry
Ken Gosbell	Coordinating all the data entry activities and sending the collated banding data to the Bird Banding Scheme in Canberra
Ken Rogers	Survival Rate calculations and advice
Lorraine Moore	Supporting Maureen Christie in the 2 - person SA cannon-netting team!
Malcolm Brown	Making leg flags and blanks for leg flag making
Marg Reni	Painting decoys
Margaret Rowe	Data entry and flag-making
Maureen Christie	Organising such enthusiastic and wide ranging activities in the south-east of South Australia. Data entry
Maureen Fitzgerald	Meeting all Clive’s typing needs! Data entry
Mike Dawkins	Boat transport and recceing for Terns on the Gippsland Lakes
Moiria Longden	Washing bird bags
Naoko Takeuchi	Hard work and no complaints!
Neville and Nancy Roussac	Recceing and access to their farm for catching Oystercatchers
Neville Hatten & Robin Borland	Use of their house at Yanakie as our ‘overflow’ base
Pat McWhirter	Use of her house, Harewood, near Tooradin as a base for Western Port fieldwork
Pat Minton	Hosting the VWSG AGM.
Patrick-Jean Guy	DNA Sexing
Paul Buckhorn	Everything to do with equipment manufacture and maintenance, from the trailer and cannons down to cardboard wads for cartridges
Penny Johns	Flinders recces and accommodation.
Pete Collins	Data entry
Peter Anton	Boat transport in Corner Inlet and recceing
Prue Wright	Obtaining net sacks and making bird bags
Robyn Atkinson	Data entry (huge amounts)
Rod McFarlane	Equipment maintenance and packing trailer for fieldwork.

Roger Standen	Creation and management of the VWSG Website
Rosemary Davidson	The provision of her wonderful house at Yanakie as a base for our Corner Inlet activities. Keeping track of our financial position.
Roz Jessop	Circulating news to everyone. Managing the Oystercatcher Database. Providing the venue for flag-making. Editing the Bulletin, Use of her home at Phillip Island.
Susan Taylor	DSE financial support. Corner Inlet activities co-ordination. Data entry
Vivien Holyoake	Data Entry
Will Steele	Managing water levels at the Western Treatment Plant to suit waders (and hopefully wader banders!)
Xenia Dennett	Finding scientific references

VWSG Financial Report

Rosemary Davidson and Clive Minton

The VWSG financial situation continues to be satisfactory. This is again mainly because of the generous grants and donations, and contracts, received during the year.

Income and expenditure in the 2007/08 financial year were both about \$3000 higher than in the previous year. There was again a small surplus - \$4797 - but \$1297 if allowance is made for obligated expenditure not having yet taken place on one of the contracts.

The Group's equipment is now in excellent condition and fieldwork operations continue to benefit from the efficiency which this creates. Significant annual costs will however continue in maintaining this situation as well as in the ongoing costs associated with the growing leg flagging program, especially the use of engraved leg flags. In future the Group will also have to pay for black powder (\$120/kg) as the 100 kg which was provided free of charge by the Department of Defence some 15 years ago is now exhausted.

The major expenditure item each year continues to be the Annual Bulletin. However \$1000 was spent in the 07/08 year in assisting one of our members, Birgita Hansen, to attend the International Wader Study Group Conference in France, where she presented VWSG (and AWSG) data at a special Oystercatcher Workshop.

The Victorian Wader Study Group had a satisfactory year financially. Details of income and expenditure are given in the table.

Victorian Wader Study Group Inc.

ABN 12 724 794 488

Income & Expenditure Statement for the year ended 30 June 2008

INCOME

Subscriptions	2,855.00
Bank Interest	1,721.01
Surplus from AGM Food	71
Beanie Auction	87
Surplus from SA trip	68.45

Donations: J.Deleyev, P.Jenkins, D. Thomas, T. Ireton, A. Gutowski, P. Park, H. Phillipps, B. Clifford, J. Newman, T. Gale, M.Anderson, B & G Abbott, I. Marks, J Wyatt, B. Dickson, P Hermans, J. Limb

965

Sub-total 5,767.46

Sale of Equipment

Pied OYC flags (V. Clancy)	61.6
Crested Tern bands (PINP)	246
Refund of tax from net sale	230
Sub-total	\$537.60

Grant & Contracts

DSE Fieldwork Services -	3,500.00
Funding for students in NWA	
Port Phillip & WPPWCMA - Grants for support & promotion	800
Coast Action/Coast Care -	3,000.00
Equipment grant	
DPI -Influenza sampling	800

TOTAL INCOME \$14,405.06

Cash Balance 1/07/2007	
Petty Cash	11.45
Westpac Account	766.67
Macquarie Account	28,621.29
Total	\$29,399.41
Unpresented cheques:	15.15
	896.2
	21.3

NET TOTAL \$28,466.76

EXPENDITURE

Printing Bulletin	1,655.50
Postage, photocopying, stationary & phone calls	310.75
Incorporation Fee	38.6
Miscellaneous expenses	35

Conference Grant - B. Hansen 1,000.00

Sub-total \$3,039.85

Equipment	
Batteries & multimeters	475.64
Boat repairs	380
Darvic, colour bands & engraved flags	744.4
Cannon repairs & tube brushes	272.5
Glue,grease,rulers etc.	263.31
Stool repairs	57
Black powder	60
Banding pliers (5 pairs)	360.85
New net	3,846.00

Sub-total \$6,567.68

TOTAL EXPENDITURE 9,607.53

Cash Balance 12/06/2008	
Petty Cash	24.1
Westpac Account	1,452.91
Macquarie Account	32,171.63
Total	\$33,648.64
Unpresented cheques	40.5
	23.61
	359.74

NET TOTAL \$33,224.79

WWSG MEMBERSHIP LIST

July 2008

Bev & Geoff Abbott
 Charles & Jocelyn Allen
 Malcolm Allen
 Terri Allen
 Mark Anderson
 Peter Anton
 Allen Archbold
 Steve & Robyn Atkinson
 David Ball
 Mark & Terry Barter
 Graham & Jenny Beal
 Lauren Beasley & Digger Jackson
 Rob & Gail Berry
 Malcolm & Judy Brown
 Paul & Anna Buchhorn
 Bill Bygott
 Margaret Cameron
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 Jeff & Sarah Campbell
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 Smathie Chong
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 Dave Gerard
 Colin Gibbs
 Heather Gibbs
 Peter & Melanie Gibbs
 Ken & Carlene Gosbell
 Andrew & Kath Gosden
 Kathryn Goyen
 Doris Graham
 Nicole Grenfell
 Patrick-Jean Guay
 Angie Gutowski
 Birgita Hansen
 Neville Hatten & Robin Borland
 Peter Haward
 Peter Hermans
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 Irma Kluger
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 Janet Limb
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 Moira Longden

Sue & Andy Longmore
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 Ila Marks & Eric Miller & Heidi
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 Lorraine Moore
 Melanie Mumford
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