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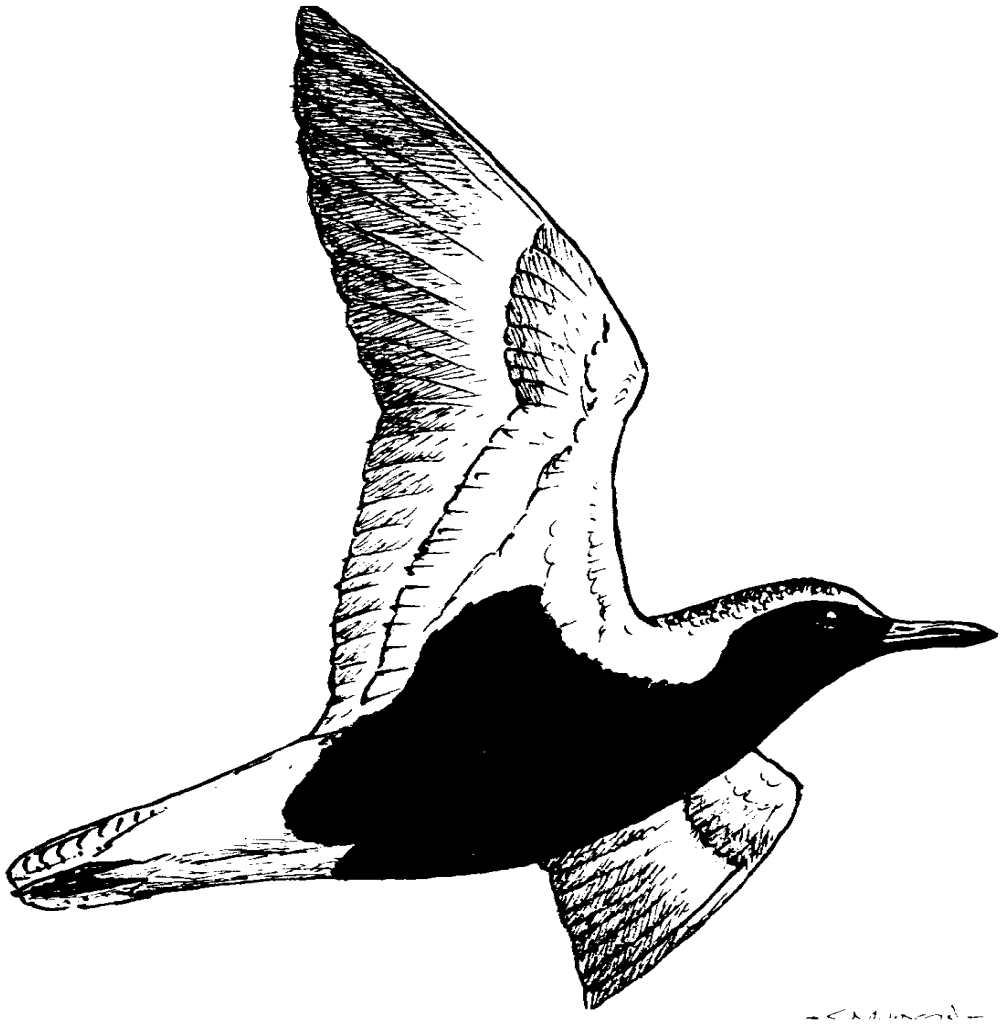

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VICTORIAN WADER STUDY GROUP INC.

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 the East-Asian Australasian 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.

VICTORIAN WADER STUDY GROUP INC.

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Subscriptions for 2015/16 (payable in advance on 1 July 2015)

Full Member	$20.00
Student	$10.00

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 (VWSG) with articles, field notes and other material. Contributions are welcome. Please consult the editor or assistant editor on questions of format. Line illustrations are reproduced from the Australasian Wader Studies Group journal "Stilt" with permission of the editor unless otherwise indicated.

VWSG WEB SITE http://www.vwsg.org.au/

Our web site is maintained by Roger Standen

Summary of VWSG Activities in 2014/15

Clive Minton

Introduction

Each year we prepare an Annual VWSG Bulletin summarising our fieldwork activities and resulting scientific information we have gathered during the preceding year. This is primarily intended to inform members, especially those who have not been able to actively participate in fieldwork during the year. It also serves as a vehicle to pass on some of our results to all those who have helped the group in a variety of ways over the preceding year. And finally it acts as a permanent record of VWSG's main achievements.

Each Bulletin usually commences with a brief summary of the year's highlights. This recognises that some people may not time, or level of interest, to delve into the detail provided on the full spectrum of our activities. Hopefully, however, this introduction will not discourage the keener and more active members of the group from reading the Bulletin's contents in detail! I particularly encourage people to read the footnotes to the tables near the beginning of the report and to read the text in the banding, recoveries and flag sightings sections (including the South Australian section provided by Maureen Christie).

Wader Fieldwork

Cannon netting was again undertaken throughout the year at a range of locations along the Victorian coast, in three areas of South Australia and on King Island, Tasmania.

The arrangement whereby Rob Patrick and Penny Johns circulate potential participants with details before each fieldwork activity, and then coordinate the teams, has worked very well. Rob (and other senior members of the group) has increasingly taken charge of the fieldwork activities themselves and in recognition of his role he has now been appointed to the new position of Fieldwork Manager. It is a great relief to me that he has taken on this role, thus relieving me of considerable effort and helping to ensure continuity of VWSG activities for the future.

As usual there were many memorable catching events during the year. Of course it is only the good news/successes that one tends to remember and repeat! But top of my list would probably be the 202 Red-necked Avocets caught at Stockyard Point on 11.9.14. An amazing 31 of these were retraps, indicating that we have now made good inroads into the study of this species with our successes over the last five years (following good breeding, in-land, of Avocets in 2009 and subsequent years). One of the retraps had been caught in our first ever significant catch of this species on 21.8.93, also at Stockyard Point. This bird is now a minimum of 22.5 years old. Five other birds in the catch were also a minimum of 11.5 years old.

Maureen Christie had a particularly successful annual visit to the Yanerbie area, near Ceduna, in early December, catching a total of 320 birds, including a Broad-billed Sandpiper.

A 'low-light' was catching only 238 waders at the Western Treatment Plant, Werribee Sewage Farm, during the usual three-day visit in late December. It was unfortunate there that were almost no locations at that time this year when the water levels of the main lagoons we use for catching were at the right level. Fortunately this deficiency in our annual data collection was successfully filled with a further visit only three weeks later when 3176 waders were caught in just two catches (on successive days)!

We had good catches of a number of species overall in the 4358 total of waders caught in 2014. 292 Curlew Sandpipers caught at Barrallier Island on 27.8.14 contributed significantly to the 446 total for the year. 659 Ruddy Turnstone was a record, with major contributions

from King Island and three different locations in South Australia. 178 Bar-tailed Godwit was also a more than respectable total and included good summer catches in both Corner Inlet and at Rhyll. And we virtually achieved our annual targets for Oystercatcher with 155 Pied (target 150 minimum) and 40 Sooty (target 50 minimum).

Tern Fieldwork

A total of 4712 Terns were caught during the year – a total slightly higher than that for waders! As usual, most of these were chicks at the large colonies at The Nobbies (west end of Phillip Island), Mud Islands and Corner Inlet. The principal visit to The Nobbies on 22 December resulted in 1570 chicks being banded in one afternoon. And 857 chicks were banded on the main visit to Mud Islands. It is interesting that the large number of Crested Terns (1500-2000 pairs) which moved (mainly from The Nobbies) into Corner Inlet to breed in the two preceding summers had moved away again for the 2014/15 breeding season. The distribution of the food supply along the Victorian coast had presumably returned to a more normal pattern and level.

Although it occurred in 2015 it is worth mentioning a 'special' catch of Little Terns (75) and Fairy Terns (12) which was made on Barry Beach on 18 March. Most of the Little Terns were migrants from the Northern Hemisphere in non-breeding plumage. Not surprisingly, one was recovered on its breeding grounds in Tokyo Bay this May.

Last but not least! To assist the Deakin University studies of avian-borne diseases intensive studies are continuing on King Island. Whilst Ruddy Turnstones are the principal study species, there has been a requirement to catch Gulls also for disease sampling as they may play a role in the annual cycle of avian diseases. The group excelled itself in November 2014 by catching 165 Silver Gulls and 15 Pacific Gulls in just three catches.

Recoveries and Flag Sightings

These are the principal 'dividends' of the effort put into catching and banding and flagging birds. It is always exciting to hear of our birds' whereabouts sometime after the original encounter. One sometimes wishes one could also migrate northwards for the winter!

It is difficult to single out the most exciting records given the range of locations and variety of species involved, and in the case of flag sightings the very large number of reports. So please read the relevant specialist reports later in this Bulletin.

Of the waders perhaps the highlight is the Red Knot originally banded as a first-year bird in Corner Inlet in 2007. This has now been recorded on its breeding grounds in the far north-east of Siberia in three successive summers and it has now moved to Auckland, New Zealand, as its main location in the non-breeding season.

A less dramatic movement was a juvenile Ruddy Turnstone from King Island which went 'fly-about' to Western Australia in its first winter. One year old Turnstones do not migrate back to the breeding grounds and most usually stay close to where they have spent their first austral summer.

Oystercatchers have again produced a good number of movements, particularly to the southern half of New South Wales and out to King Island and the coast of Tasmania.

There have been a vast number (1704) of sightings of Victorian waders overseas or at other locations within Australia. Red Knot tops the list (783 records) mainly because of the intensive sightings by Chris Hassell and Adrian Boyle of The Global Flyway Network at Bohai Bay on the west coast of the Yellow Sea as the birds migrate northwards in April and May. There has also been a huge number of Bar-tailed Godwit (689) with 304 of these coming from New Zealand and an amazing 180 from South Korea. There were even 55 Red-necked Avocet sightings, all within the south-eastern third of Australia. Many of these were to the Hunter Estuary in New South Wales including some repeat movements in successive years.

There was also an excellent crop of Tern recoveries this year, especially birds from the Crested Tern colony at Mud Islands. One was an amazing 26 years old. A paper analysing Caspian Tern movements is currently in preparation (by Xenia Dennett) and this should be published within the next year. A full reanalysis of Crested Tern movements is also overdue.

Percentage Juveniles (Breeding Success)
The most important element of the VWSG fieldwork program in the November to March period each year is the collection of age data to obtain an index of the breeding success of each species during the preceding Arctic summer. This is obtained from a measurement of the proportion of juvenile (first year) birds in cannon net catches from a variety of locations along the Victorian coast. We now have 37 years of data on several species and this is a most valuable contribution to understanding the reasons for changes in population levels determined from the annual population counts.

The breeding success of birds in the Arctic varies quite markedly from year to year, mainly depending on weather conditions and predation levels. The breeding success of most of our monitored species in the Arctic summer of 2014 appears to have been pretty average, with only Ruddy Turnstone being above this and with Curlew Sandpiper having a particularly poor breeding season. The preceding year was, however, a good breeding season for most species and so it was a welcome relief that a very poor breeding season, which often follows a good breeding year, did not eventuate.

Geolocators
An intensive program of deployment of new geolocators, and retrieval of units previously put on birds, continued in the past year. This was mainly concentrated on Ruddy Turnstones on King Island, but a sample was also put on Ruddy Turnstones in the south-east of South Australia. Our catching techniques have been well honed over the years and we now retrieve around 30% of geolocators deployed. The leg flag attachment method, originally developed in March 2009, continues to work well. And the technical performance of the Migrate Technology W65 Intergeo units is excellent. Quite a number of the units which have not been retrieved until two years after deployment have lasted well enough to provide 1 ½ or two complete migration cycles.

The group also deployed three Microwave Telemetry 5g satellite transmitters on Grey Plover at Thompson's Beach, 60 km north of Adelaide, in March 2015. These had been generously provided by Tony Flaherty, head of the local Catchment Management Authority. Two of these units gave excellent information for several weeks on the local movements of birds. In particular they revealed that most birds adjourned to the inland adjacent saltmarshes for part of most days, particularly at high tide and at night.

Unfortunately transmissions ceased on the first bird soon after it set off on migration. It ran into an unusually late incipient cyclone over the Indian Ocean off north-west Australia in late April. At the same time the other units ceased transmitting. Similar abrupt cessation of transmission occurred on five similar satellite transmitters deployed on Little Curlew in north-west Australia. It is considered that the failure of the harness attachments was the most likely cause and alternative methods currently being evaluated for use on transmitters to be deployed further Grey Plover in the 2015/16 non-breeding season.

Equipment

The group's equipment continues to perform well. Thanks are especially due to Paul Buckhorn and Rod McFarlane who put so much effort into maintaining our equipment. The annual net-mending marathon which takes place at the AGM is also vital to the maintenance of our portfolio of cannon nets.

Rod McFarlane and Eric Miller are also particularly thanked for doing most of the packing/unpacking of the trailer and my Landcruiser for each fieldwork session.

Financial
The VWSG annual accounts are again presented in this Bulletin. As usual, the cost of printing the Bulletin ($2051) exceeds our subscription income ($1905). Our other operating costs are partially covered by other income, including generous donations from members, various sales and a generous grant from Coast Care ($2500). Nevertheless our expenditure exceeded income by $5648 in 2014/15. Fortunately the group still has a good cash balance to accommodate this loss. It does emphasise, however, how important all items of income are to the financial viability of the group.

Thanks
Thanks are expressed in many parts of the Bulletin (including in the Financial Report) to the many people and organisations who have assisted the VWSG during the past year. Additional thanks are particularly due to the landowners who have allowed the VWSG onto their property to make catches on the adjacent shorelines. Park Victoria are again thanked enormously for their generous assistance with boat transport, for both banding and counting activities, in Corner Inlet, on Port Phillip Bay and on Western Port. Without their assistance (and permission) many key elements of our fieldwork program could not be carried out.

We also thank Rosemary Davidson for again so kindly allowing us to use her lovely house at Yanakie as our base for visits to Corner Inlet during the autumn and winter months. In the summer we are most grateful for the use of the Village Hall at Mann's Beach.

And finally and most importantly thanks to all VWSG members for their huge levels of input into our activities. Much of this is in the form of active participation in fieldwork teams. But many individuals do a great deal of other work to assist the group at home and behind the scenes. They are all thanked enormously.

And an additional thankyou to VWSG members for the wonderful 80th Birthday celebration they provided for me in October 2014, with a party at Penny and Murray Johns' house at Flinders and the marvellous 'This is Your Life' book which Roger Standen had prepared and presented to me. Little did I realise that this would be the outcome from his many sessions/inquisitions about my life and involvement in wader banding over many, many years!

The Future
Our fieldwork program will continue along similar lines in the future. In particular the determination of breeding success by monitoring the proportion of juveniles in summer catches will remain the most important element. However we will be reviewing, over the next year or two, our Pied and Sooty Oystercatcher and our Crested Tern programs. We will need first of all to carry out sufficient analysis to determine what we have learned so far. We can then assess whether there are needs/benefits of continuing an identical program in the future or whether changes/termination are appropriate. A key objective will also be to get all the data from these two major components of our fieldwork over the years carried through to complete analysis and publication.

The key element in the VWSG's success over the past 37 years has been the ability to have experienced fieldwork teams committed to an ongoing comprehensive, planned, fieldwork program. Sometimes we now struggle to obtain a satisfactory team and occasionally we have had to cancel scheduled activities. Members are getting older, some members 'retire'

or move away and insufficient new, younger people are becoming regular participants in fieldwork activities. So please do put yourself out to continue to strongly support fieldwork activities when you receive the regular circulars of information about these. Please put your hand up to Rob Patrick or Penny Johns (or whoever else may be coordinating a particular activity) or get in touch with Roz Jessop or me.

Thanks again, everyone.

Double-banded Plover – (photo Roger Standen)

Inaugural VWSG Life Membership Awarded to Clive Minton

At the 2013 VWSG Annual General Meeting, Ken Gosbell proposed that Clive become the inaugural Life Member. In his introduction, Ken referred to Clive's monumental impact on the study of waders and terns over the life of the VWSG which he helped set up in 1979. "He is the father of wader studies," said Ken, then with a self-correction, "Maybe that should be grandfather now." He went on to explain how "Everyone involved with the VWSG has been hounded from time to time, like any father hounds their kids," at which point Maureen Christie interjected that members have also been known to "spit the dummy sometimes," to which Ken agreed. But Ken reinforced that Clive has been a mainstay and observed that the presentations made that evening demonstrated that the science the VWSG has produced over that time was now "having an enormous impact in terms of conservation and flyway research."

The reaction to Ken's proposal was a strong "Here here" from around the room, followed immediately by broad spontaneous applause from all members, who clearly concurred with Ken's proposal.

Clive responded with, "Thank you Ken, and seeing as I have just paid my subscription…" to which Ken's quick comeback was, "You can have it back." Clive continued that he might be "lucky to last much into the next year so it won't cost the group too much", to more rapturous laughter, but "… it is a very, very nice gesture. Thank you very much indeed."

He went on to say "…the greatest enjoyment of all, over and above the birds and the science and conservation and everything, is having all of you as friends who we share doing things together. It is the people aspect and I am not just saying that as hollow words. I think you know that it is the people aspect of what we do that are the most enjoyable aspect of…everything." Charles Allen then interjected with "Clive he didn't say an Honorary Life Member," upon which the whole group broke into laughter once again. Clive then asked, "So I do have to pay my subscription?"

Excerpt from "The Father of Wader Studies – Tales of C.D.T. Minton", compiled by Rog Standen, 2014

Clive and Mike Preeston at work (photo Prue Wright)

Total Number of Waders Caught by Species - VWSG 2014

SPECIES	New	Retrap	Total
Bar-tailed Godwit	153	25	178
Eastern Curlew	4	0	4
Common Greenshank	4	0	4
Ruddy Turnstone	383	276	659
Great Knot	2	0	2
Red Knot	21	0	21
Sanderling	181	30	211
Red-necked Stint	1905	531	2436
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	107	1	108
Curlew Sandpiper	395	51	446
Broad-billed Sandpiper	1	0	1
Pied Oystercatcher	123	43	166
Sooty Oystercatcher	32	9	41
Banded Stilt	53	0	53
Red-necked Avocet	171	31	202
Grey Plover	10	0	10
Red-capped Plover	21	1	22
Double-banded Plover	122	8	130
Hooded Plover	12	2	14
Masked Lapwing	4	0	4
20 Species	**3704**	**1008**	**4712**

Table prepared by Helen Vaughan and Clive Minton

The total number of birds caught (4712) was rather fewer than in the previous year (5488), but the number of species involved increased from 15 to 20. Red-necked Stint were again the principal species (2436 - 52%). The Ruddy Turnstone total (659) was a record and was a combination of bird caught in King Island, South Australia and Victoria. Other good totals were achieved for Curlew Sandpiper (446), Red-necked Avocet (202 – another record), Bar-tailed Godwit (178) and Double-banded Plover (130). The small total of Red Knot (21) was still better than the 4 in 2013. All but one of the 10 Grey Plover was caught at Thompson's Beach, 50 kilometres north of Adelaide. The Broad-billed Sandpiper was only the 6th ever banded by VWSG.

Retraps (1008) comprised 21.4% of the total catch – slightly above the norm for recent years. The retrap rate for Ruddy Turnstone was 42%, due to the high intensity of our banding in their main areas on King Island and in the south-east of South Australia. They are also a relatively site-faithful species, returning to the same location each year.

Total Waders Caught by Species

1975 to 31 December 2014 – VWSG

Species	New	Retrap	Total
Latham's Snipe	347	14	361
Australian Painted Snipe	1	0	1
Black-tailed Godwit	4	0	4
Bar-tailed Godwit	5536	753	6289
Short-billed Dowitcher	1	0	1
Whimbrel	49	6	55
Eastern Curlew	873	89	962
Marsh Sandpiper	2	0	2
Common Greenshank	539	64	603
Terek Sandpiper	37	1	38
Grey-tailed Tattler	38	3	41
Ruddy Turnstone	5669	2812	8481
Great Knot	700	89	789
Red Knot	5191	743	5934
Sanderling	5653	2121	7774
Little Stint	9	0	9
Red-necked Stint	124004	33258	157262
Long-toed Stint	1	0	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	2	0	2
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	10113	448	10561
Curlew Sandpiper	26759	5092	31851
Cox's Sandpiper	1	0	1
Broad-billed Sandpiper	6	0	6
Pied Oystercatcher	3287	1656	4943
Sooty Oystercatcher	1075	378	1453
Black-winged Stilt	51	0	51
Banded Stilt	2038	3	2041
Red-necked Avocet	802	57	859
Pacific Golden Plover	267	26	293
Grey Plover	187	30	217
Red-capped Plover	744	187	931
Double-banded Plover	3945	1015	4960
Lesser Sand Plover	115	11	126
Greater Sand Plover	31	3	34
Black-fronted Plover	57	4	61
Hooded Plover	56	4	60
Red-kneed Dotterel	136	11	147
Masked Lapwing	193	5	198
38 Species	**198519**	**48883**	**247402**

Table prepared by Helen Vaughan and Clive Minton

The total for the 40 years of banding by the VWSG (this includes the first 4 years when only mist-netting was used to capture birds) is now approaching a quarter of a million birds (247,402). There have been 48,883 retraps- 19.7% of the catch total.

The only species total to change significantly as a result of the 2014 catching was Red-necked Avocet. The 2014 catch of 202 birds added 30% to the previous catch total (657).

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
2008	4611	1317	5928
2009	3965	831	4796
2010	3006	759	3765
2011	4291	830	5121
2012	3598	869	4467
2013	4404	1084	5488
2014	3704	1008	4712
Totals to end 2013	**198519**	**48883**	**247402**

Average annual total for 1979 – 2013 = 6863 (* excluded)

Table prepared by Helen Vaughan and Clive Minton

The average annual total for the 36 years in which cannon-netting has been the principal capture method is 6804. In five separate years the total has been over 10,000, with the record being 12,944 in 2000. The last of these large totals was in 2003.Since then there has been a marked reduction in catch totals as the Group selectively targets specific species/locations and, to a lesser extent, deliberately reduces the number of large Red-necked Stint catches. The average annual catch total over the last 10 years is 5787, and this reduces to 4727 for the most recent five year period. Thus the 2014 total (4712) was very close to the average for the last five years.

Total Waders Caught Each Six Months

1979-2014 – 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
2008	3812	2116	5928
2009	2726	2070	4796
2010	2136	1629	3765
2011	1967	3154	5121
2012	3199	1268	4467
2013	3270	2218	5488
2014	2768	1944	4712
Totals to end 2013	**126123**	**118818**	**247402**

Table prepared by Helen Vaughan and Clive Minton Note: Six month data are not available for years 1975 - 1978.

During the last 10 years the number of birds caught in the first-half of a calendar year has exceeded that of the second-half in all but one year. This is partly because the VWSG mainly waits until virtually all migrants have returned (early November) before commencing its main annual ‘summer’ fieldwork program. In November, also, the priority in fieldwork is often selectively oriented towards the retrieval of geolocators- a time consuming process which usually involves only small catches. Nowadays fewer waders are usually caught during the annual late December 3-day visit to the Western Treatment Plant at Werribee. This was especially so in 2014 when only 238 waders were caught at Werribee in the late December period. Fortunately we were able to more than successfully remedy this situation with a total of 3176 waders caught at Werribee, in just 2 catches, during a return visit on 16-17 January 2015!

Location of Waders Caught in Victoria, South Australia & Tasmania

Victoria	To Dec 2013	2014	Total
Werribee	67638	238	67876
Western Port/Flinders	62860	2622	65482
Queenscliff/Swan Bay	31975	0	31975
Corner Inlet	31440	448	31888
Anderson Inlet (Inverloch)	22306	0	22306
Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet	2788	0	2788
Laverton	956	0	956
Mud Islands	757	0	757
Killarney Beach	512	0	512
Barwon Heads	845	0	845
Other	628	0	628
South Australia	17850	1073	18923
Tasmania	2225	331	2256
Total	**242780**	**4712**	**247492**

Other includes Geelong (Point Henry/Belmont), Bendigo Sewage Farm, Seaford Swamp, Braeside/Croyden, Gippsland Lakes and Toowong

Table prepared by Helen Vaughan and Clive Minton

Catches at Western Port and Corner Inlet continue to dominate the annual catch totals in Victoria. Currently no waders are caught at previously productive sites at Queenscliff/Swan Bay, Anderson's Inlet and, to a lesser extent, Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet. Waders no longer roost in the accessible catching sites on Sand Island near Queenscliff because of a change in the dredging/sand deposition regime. Fewer Stints now visit Anderson's Inlet, Inverloch, each year and current roost sites are mostly impractical. Catching at Sandy Point has not been attempted recently because our success rate there was generally low and we needed to relieve pressure on an over-full fieldwork program.

Catches in South Australia and on King Island, Tasmania, continue at the usual level. Catching in the south-east of South Australia has been undertaken each year since 1993 and on King Island each year since 2007.

Numbers of waders processed by the VWSG each month to December 2014.

	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
Australian Painted Snipe	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
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	889	1414	777	99	24	807	127	286	77	335	294	566	5695
Whimbrel	3	2	41	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	3	0	55
Eastern Curlew	23	181	24	0	24	18	21	76	175	149	180	100	971
Common Greenshank	69	135	122	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	176	60	603
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	440	594	2897	1786	39	23	77	103	114	216	1320	661	8270
Great Knot	197	87	26	0	0	30	21	6	16	118	78	130	709
Red Knot	928	417	302	203	47	430	469	139	96	1000	546	285	4862
Sanderling	376	1654	2060	685	0	0	1	5	0	265	893	725	6664
Little Stint	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	9
Red-necked Stint	2843	1821	7051	2791	546	749	1032	968	997	2140	3684	4032	28654
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	1832	943	240	3	0	0	0	16	635	564	743	2977	7953
Curlew Sandpiper	1627	1709	1727	289	223	128	266	528	348	1140	943	1631	10559
Broad-billed Sandpiper	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6
Pied Oystercatcher	122	254	408	626	817	1006	828	418	235	41	27	61	4843
Sooty Oystercatcher	13	108	86	211	226	376	299	135	0	1	3	3	1461
Black-winged Stilt	6	9	0	0	0	0	1	12	0	4	2	17	51
Banded Stilt	28	50	12	41	59	0	0	0	15	0	0	162	367
Red-necked Avocet	281	0	0	0	14	0	11	67	279	65	47	89	853
Pacific Golden Plover	40	27	62	2	0	0	0	0	0	28	63	65	287
Grey Plover	38	14	4	6	0	9	0	0	2	102	42	1	218
Red-capped Plover	44	89	65	124	210	110	77	29	12	23	36	37	856
Double-banded Plover	0	4	229	375	757	956	1053	1014	1	0	0	0	4389
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	5	3	1	4	2	15	0	0	0	2	5	1	38
Red-kneed Dotterel	0	10	0	20	0	44	11	17	12	8	23	1	146
Masked Lapwing	5	11	93	14	5	13	4	1	1	5	21	19	192
Cox's Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	9987	9603	16249	7291	3009	4740	4309	3830	3124	6354	9189	11726	89411

Table prepared by Helen Vaughan and Clive Minton

"Processed" means that two or more of the following were recorded for a bird; bill length, total head length, wing length, weight, primary moult.

This table principally serves as an indicator to data analysers of the amount of biometric data available on each species for each different month of the year. Originally the table was extensively used when preparing the fieldwork program with effort being deployed into filling remaining gaps in the table. However this has now mostly been successfully carried out within the limits of when birds are present in our study area and available to be sampled (you can't catch birds if they aren't there i.e. if they have all migrated away from the area to, for instance, breed in the Northern Hemisphere!).

The 89,411 birds processed indicate that approximately 35% of the waders caught by the VWSG had biometric data collected from them. An additional number (large) also had their primary moult recorded.

Number of Waders Leg-flagged by VWSG each year

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Latham's Snipe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	278
Australian Painted Snipe	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Black-tailed Godwit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Bar-tailed Godwit	186	268	351	308	243	207	10	153	4083
Whimbrel	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	46
Eastern Curlew	0	0	8	0	38	9	0	4	603
Marsh Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Common Greenshank	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	4	460
Terek Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Grey-tailed Tattler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Ruddy Turnstone	328	497	238	348	455	170	317	375	4338
Great Knot	36	1	7	0	4	5	0	2	396
Red Knot	248	5	136	17	50	75	4	20	3984
Sanderling	506	261	89	277	439	280	159	179	3986
Little Stint	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	7
Red-necked Stint	1727	2754	2055	1496	2043	497	1943	1856	67803
Pectoral Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	285	276	496	11	110	99	135	106	5940
Curlew Sandpiper	94	308	122	382	47	235	381	120	11669
Cox's Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Broad-billed Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Black-winged Stilt	0	6	0	0	2	0	5	0	33
Banded Stilt	0	0	0	54	332	15	1097	53	1703
Red-necked Avocet	0	0	0	0	0	199	63	169	571
Pacific Golden Plover	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	67
Grey Plover	5	0	16	0	1	0	0	10	118
Red-capped Plover	1	6	3	5	7	21	4	19	164
Double-banded Plover	10	45	2	11	37	72	17	121	682
Lesser Sand Plover	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55
Greater Sand Plover	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Hooded Plover	1	0	1	1	7	0	3	8	21
Black-fronted Dotterel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Red-kneed Dotterel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Masked Lapwing	1	5	0	0	1	2	0	1	41
Total	3428	4433	3549	2910	3820	1889	4138	3201	107100

Table prepared by Helen Vaughan and Clive Minton

This table has now grown too large to give details for every year back to when flagging was commenced by the VWSG in December 1989. Details for earlier years can be obtained from past VWSG bulletins (comprehensive up to that in the 2009 Bulletin).
Table includes Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderling flagged with orange (only) in the south east of South Australia between 1993 and 1998.

3201 waders were given leg flags in 2014 out of a total of 3704 newly banded waders. Most of the birds not flagged were Red-necked Stint.

107,100 waders have now been leg-flagged by the VWSG since flagging was commenced in late 1990. In most species all birds caught are flagged. However on some big catches of Red-necked Stint, or on other occasions when time/weather conditions dictated, some birds were released with only the traditional metal band. Increasingly, in recent years, engraved leg flags rather than plain flags have been introduced into VWSG banding, with a consequent increase in the detail of the migration and return data generated.

Species which are normally given an engraved leg flag by VWSG are Bar-tailed Godwit, Eastern Curlew, Ruddy Turnstone, Great Knot, Red Knot, Sanderling, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Banded Stilt, Red-necked Avocet, Grey Plover, Pied and Sooty Oystercatcher. The only species which is never given an engraved flag is Red-necked Stint.

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

Species	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Latham's Snipe	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Grey-tailed Tattler	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Bar-tailed Godwit	0	0	0	3	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	6	0	29
Common Greenshank	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
Ruddy Turnstone	234	226	73	193	76	141	74	258	84	141	96	109	268	45	117	322	2457
Great Knot	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	6
Red Knot	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	14
Sanderling	63	420	2	315	328	76	220	250	506	244	87	261	439	268	159	211	3849
Red-necked Stint	126	383	22	319	163	93	174	465	54	90	179	208	356	92	369	390	3483
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	0	2	0	27	7	73	27	21	0	15	0	0	74	40	1	23	310
Curlew Sandpiper	24	11	0	190	13	2	103	8	21	33	1	4	15	0	7	8	440
Broad-billed Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Banded Stilt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	334	0	0	0	54	332	12	998	53	1783
Pacific Golden Plover	0	2	0	0	1	0	16	13	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	35
Grey Plover	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10
Red-capped Plover	0	0	1	7	5	0	7	4	1	0	0	2	3	8	0	18	56
Double-banded Plover	0	0	4	5	1	0	0	27	2	0	1	5	29	12	0	3	89
Black-fronted Plover	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Hooded Plover	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	5	0	3	14	26
Masked Lapwing	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	4	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	14
Total	**447**	**1045**	**106**	**1062**	**599**	**396**	**623**	**1395**	**670**	**523**	**365**	**644**	**1524**	**495**	**1660**	**1060**	**12614**

Table prepared by Helen Vaughan and Clive Minton

All of the Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderling caught in South Australia in the last 3 years have been given engraved leg flags. However, only plain leg flags have been used on Red-necked Stint.

The Banded Stilt have also been given engraved leg flags in recent years. Most have been chicks (Lake Torrens in 2013) but there have also been a small number of adults, most of which have also been given satellite transmitters (by Reece Peddler).

VWSG FIELDWORK PROGRAMME 2015

DATE	*PLACE AND OBJECTIVES*	TIDE TIME AND HEIGHT (M)	
Fri 2 Jan	**Yallock Creek** Red-necked Stint or Red-necked Avocet	1100	2.49
Sat 10 Jan to Sun 11 Jan	**Yallock Creek/Stockyard Point** Red-necked Stint and Curlew Sandpiper	1517 0547	2.59 2.91
Sat 24 Jan	**Barrallier Island** Curlew Sandpiper and Red-necked Stint	1645	2.84
Mon 26 Jan	**Rhyll -** Bar-tailed Godwit	1832	2.94
Wed 28 Jan to Sat 31 Jan (4 days)	**Corner Inlet** Bar-tailed Godwit, Red Knot, and Oystercatchers (Accommodation at Village Hall, Manns Beach. Count of Nooramunga section of Corner Inlet on 27 Jan.)	0803 to 0947	2.73 to 2.50
Fri 6 Feb to Sat 28 Feb	**AWSG NWA 2015 Wader and Tern Expedition to Broome and 80 Mile Beach**		
Sat 7 Feb to Mon 16 Feb	**King Island -** Ruddy Turnstone	1521 to 0842	1.38 to 1.29
Sun 22 Feb	**Stockyard Point or Yallock Creek** Curlew Sandpiper and Red-necked Stint	1636	2.97
Sat 14 Mar to Sun 15 Mar	**Barry Beach** All waders	0724 to 0758	2.53 to 2.55
Sun 22 Mar	**Flinders** Sooty Oystercatchers	1427	1.61
Fri 3 Apr (Easter) to Mon 13 Apr (8 days)	**South Australia** Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderling	1346 to 1732	1.01 to 1.01
Sun 19 Apr	**Fairhaven, French Island -** Pied Oystercatcher	1305	2.90
Mon 20 Apr	**Stockyard Point -** Pied Oystercatcher	1410	3.08
Tue 5 May	**Rhyll -** Pied Oystercatcher	1407	2.89
Tue 19 May to Thur 21 May (3 days)	**Roussac Point, Charles Hall Rd. & Barry Beach** Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers	1404 to 1606	2.59 to 2.78
Mon 15 Jun to Thur 18 Jun (4 days)	**Corner Inlet** Bar-tailed Godwit, Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers (Count of Nooramunga section of Corner Inlet on Sunday 14 June.)	1011 to 1442	2.45 to 2.64
Thurs 2 July	**Yallock Creek -** Double-banded Plover (for Deakin University)	12.58	2.89
Fri 17 July	**Stockyard Point** Pied Oystercatcher and Double-banded Plover	13.59	2.99
Sat 1 Aug to Mon 3 Aug	**Roussac Point, Charles Hall Rd. & Barry Beach** Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers	13.15 to 15.20	2.43 to 2.64
Sat 29 Aug	**A.G.M.** At Clive's house, 165 Dalgetty Rd, Beaumaris 10am net mending, 4pm AGM, 6.00pm barbecue, 7–10pm Talks/Pictures		
Wed 30 Sept	**Stockyard Point** Pied Oystercatcher and newly arrived migrants	14.11	2.90
Thurs 5 Nov	**Mud Islands** Crested Tern adults & Caspian Tern chicks	12.40 low tide	0.55
Sat 7 Nov to Fri 13 Nov	**South Australia** Ruddy Turnstone – geolocator retrieval	1048 to 1411	0.78 to 0.78
Sat 14 Nov to Fri 20 Nov	**South Australia** Thompson Beach SA (Provisional) Deploy satellite transmitters on Bar-tailed Godwit/Grey Plover	1850 to 0924	1.99 to 1.82
Thurs 26 Nov to Thurs 3 Dec	**King Island** Ruddy Turnstone – geolocator retrieval	12.15 to 06.00	1.40 to 1.58
Wed 9 Dec	**Mud Islands** Crested Tern & Caspian Tern chicks	10.23	1.24
Fri 18 Dec	**Corner Inlet – Clonmel Island** Caspian & Crested Tern chicks	13.04 low tide	0.68
Mon 21 Dec	**The Nobbies** Crested Tern chicks	13.33 low tide	0.35
Mon 28 Dec to Wed 30 Dec	**Werribee S F** Small waders Stay at WTP Headquarters, Werribee Meet pm. 27 Dec	06.09 to 07.26	0.94 to 0.94

Recoveries of Waders 2014/15

Clive Minton, Roz Jessop and Maureen Christie

Each year a small proportion of the waders we have banded are reported at locations away from the banding area. Most of these reports are generated by other banders catching our birds (or vice-versa) or are derived from sightings of birds marked individually (usually with engraved leg flags). Occasionally the metal band number itself is read in the field by a persevering observer and this was the case this year with a 20 year old Eastern Curlew seen in Japan!

In addition to the data given below, much information on wader movements was derived through the (plain) flag-sightings program. This is detailed in a separate report, by Roger Standen, in this Bulletin.

In the lists below the banding details are given first followed by the recovery information and the distance/direction moved.

Ruddy Turnstone

052-78228	1st Year	10.2.15	King Island, Tas.	5.7.15	Windy Harbour, WA	Resighted	2506 km W

This movement of a King Island bird to Western Australia is an extreme example of 'winter fly-about' which first-year birds of many wader species carry out during the austral winter. In most species birds do not migrate northwards back to the breeding grounds until they are two or more years old. This is the longest winter movement so far recorded for a Ruddy Turnstone from south-east Australia.

Eastern Curlew

091-26470	Adult	10.12.94	The Gurdies, Western Port	19.3.15	Fukuyama, Japan	Alive	8192 km N

It was fantastic to get this record from Japan over 20 years after this bird was banded at The Gurdies. On the 19 March it would probably have just have arrived in Japan on northward migration after a non-stop flight from Western Port.

Red-necked Avocet

082-90276	Adult	21.8.93	Stockyard Point, Western Point	12.9.14	Stockyard Point	Recaptured	-

It was an absolute delight to recapture a Red-necked Avocet at Stockyard Point which had been originally banded in our first ever catch there 21 years previously.
The longest movement recorded so far was a bird which went to Broome in North West Australia (3000+ kilometres). A dozen or more different birds banded in Victoria have now been seen in the flock at the Hunter Estuary at Newcastle, New South Wales.

Bar-tailed Godwit

072-82262	2nd Year	25.2.03	Corner Inlet	28.12.14	Miranda, New Zealand	Recaptured	2493 km E
073-59553	1st Year	26.6.10	Corner Inlet	28.12.14	Miranda, New Zealand	Recaptured	2493 km E

These are two more examples of the well-established movement of immature Bar-tailed Godwits to New Zealand after they have spent the first one or two years in south-east Australia.

Red Knot

052-50051	1st Year	22.2.07	Corner Inlet	25.5.12	Meinypilgyno, Chukotka, Russia	Breeding	11,575 km NNE
"	"	"	"	27.5.13	Meinypilgyno, Chukotka, Russia	Breeding	11,575 km NNE
"	"	"	"	15.7.14	Meinypilgyno, Chukotka, Russia	Breeding	11,575 km NNE
"	"	"	"	1.3.15	Kaipara Harbour, Auckland, New Zealand.	Seen in field	2422 km E (Of Corner Inlet)

This wonderful bird has now been seen breeding in the far north-east of Siberia in three successive years. It is obviously now moved to be part of the New Zealand population in the non-breeding season, a practice followed by most Red Knot which spend their first year in south-east Australia.

Let us hope it is seen again in Chukotka in the 2015 Northern Hemisphere breeding season.

Red-necked Stint

China C289098	Adult	6.5.10	Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China	17.1.15	Werribee Sewage Farm	Recaptured	8078 km S
China C491912	Adult	9.5.11	Chongming Dao, Shanghai, China	17.1.15	Werribee Sewage Farm	Recaptured	8078 km S

These two Chinese-banded Red-necked Stint were caught together in the same catch at Werribee Sewage Farm in mid-January, 2015. They had both been originally banded on northward migration in early May (but in different years) in Chongming Dao near Shanghai.

Sooty Oystercatcher

101-26682	Adult	21.6.08	Corner Inlet	18.11.04	Flinder's Island, Tas.	Resighted	151 km SE
"	Also resighted 7.1.10 on Flinders Island						
100-96855	Adult	8.7.89	Barry Beach	29.1.15	Barry Beach	Recaptured	-
"	Also previously recaptured 6.8.89 (Barry Beach) and 6.5.00 (Roussacs)						

Movements out to the Bass Strait islands to breed are normal for Sooty Oystercatchers. The bird recaptured at Barry Beach 25 ½ years after it had originally been banded there creates a new Australian longevity record for this species (by a margin of 6 years!).

Pied Oystercatcher

101-23575	3rd Year	18.9.05	Stockyard Point, Western Point	27.7.07 3.11.04	Narooma, NSW Bermagui, NSW	Resighted Resighted	476 km NE 458 km NE
101-31176	2nd Year	18.8.11	Roussacs, Foster	5.2.12	Barry Beach	Recaptured	17 km NE
"	"	"	"	4.11.14	Ulladulla, NSW	Resighted	535 km NE
101-23671	Adult	26.6.06	Corner Inlet	10.1.15	Wollumboola, NSW	Resighted	544 km NE
101-24245	2nd Year	18.4.10	Barry Beach	12.4.11	Lakes Entrance	Resighted	165 km E
"	"	"	"	1.6.13	Tuross Heads, NSW	Resighted	449 km NE
"	"	"	"	21.3.15	Congo, NSW	Resighted	452 km NE
101-31058	Adult	14.8.10	Barry Beach	15.2.15	Ulladulla, NSW	Resighted	517 km NE
101-24106	4th Year	13.8.06	Barry Beach	20.2.09	Lauderdale, Tas.	Resighted	476 km S
"	"	"	"	27.9.14	Lauderdale, Tas.	Resighted	476 km S
"	"	"	"	2.12.14	Lauderdale, Tas.	Resighted	476 km S
"	"	"	"	11.5.15	Lauderdale, Tas.	Resighted	476 km S
101-32473	Adult	6.7.12	Barry Beach	1.11.13	Brandy Beach, NSW	Resighted	355 km NE
"	"	"	"	19.7.15	Merimbula, NSW	Resighted	370 km NE

Only interstate movements are listed. There are six examples of the increasingly frequent movement of Oystercatchers from the Corner Inlet wintering flocks to the southern half of the New South Wales coast to breed. Movements to mainland Tasmania from the Victorian coast are less frequent.

The above list only contains birds which were reported through the Bird Banding Office and for which therefore formal recovery reports were prepared and sent to us. In addition there were 31 other reports of Pied Oystercatchers with individually identifiable engraved flags which moved interstate from Victoria. The full details of these birds are not listed but they are summarised below.

There were 17 records from the southern half of New South Wales (Sydney area and southwards), 10 from King Island (involving 9 individuals) and 4 from mainland Tasmania (3 individuals). For the second consecutive year there were no westward movements from Victoria along the coast into South Australia.

Several of the birds have now accumulated multiple resightings during their lifetime. Most of these indicate that once birds have moved out of the non-breeding flocks in Victoria to take up breeding territories at some distance away then they remain in that area throughout the year and usually breed in the same place annually. There are quite a number of records however of birds continuing to return in autumn/winter to the non-breeding flocks in Victoria, with birds from King Island particularly favouring a return to the Corner Inlet complex each autumn/winter.

There are, however, some exceptions. A young bird originally banded at Roussac's Farm in Corner Inlet in 2005 was then recorded in the non-breeding season at various locations in Western Port between 2008 and 2013 (in 4 different years). It was not until October 2014 that it was eventually seen in the breeding season, at Southport, in Tasmania. Another individual, banded at Barry Beach in the winter of 2007, was recorded at three locations near Queenscliff in 2010 and 2011 before being seen on its breeding grounds on King Island in December 2014.

A detailed re-analysis of Pied (and Sooty) Oystercatcher movements is planned for 2015/16.

Net setting for oystercatchers at Rhyll, Phillip Island (photo Prue Wright)

Sightings of Waders Leg-flagged in Victoria, South Australia and King Island, Tasmania.

Roger Standen, Clive Minton, Roz Jessop, Maureen Christie and Margaret Bennett

Introduction

This year's report shows a comprehensive set of flag sightings from all known sources. Flag sightings come in from a range of regular reporters, plus individuals who just 'come across' a flagged bird. A huge thank you goes out to all those who send in the sighting reports as clearly that is the only way we can build the record of sightings that we have.

The tables have all of the sightings reported of birds that were flagged from the three states that were seen between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015. Getting the Banded Stilt data organised has eluded me again so unfortunately won't be reported this year.

Because sightings come into the database at various times, the tables cannot be used as a complete set of sightings, more a good reflection of where the sightings are made and the relative sightings for each species. Note that many of the sightings are of the same birds many times over, wherever there are dedicated wader watchers.

Generally there have been less flag sightings reported this year than the last.

Sightings within Australia that are included are either, interstate, inland or clearly several hundred kilometres from the banding location.

Condition of flags

Whenever you see a flagged bird, there are many things to watch out for including colour and position (upper/lower and which leg) the flag/s is on. There is another aspect to flag sightings that can help eliminate false sightings; and that is the condition of the flag.

If the condition of the flag appears poor, is very faded or has some other notable wear, please note that down.

One example of this illustrates the point. Grace Maglio, who reports hundreds of flagged birds at Broome, saw an orange engraved flagged Curlew Sandpiper 'DC', in April 2015 and she noted it had a "worn flag". This enabled us to identify this bird, not as a Victorian flagged bird, but a locally flagged yellow engraved bird banded in 2009 (thus the worn flag). The Victorian flagged 'DC' was only flagged in January 2015 so its flag would not have been worn, but bright orange.

Victoria

All sightings of birds flagged in Victoria from both within Australia and overseas, are included in the following table. The Australian sightings are split into the states in the second table.

Sightings of Victorian flagged waders seen away from the banding site overseas and across Australia.

Species	Australia	China (mainland)	Hong Kong (China)	Indonesia	Japan	Malaysia	Alaska	New Zealand	Russia	South Korea	Taiwan (China)	Total Overseas	Total Sightings
Bar-tailed Godwit	146	50		1	6		1	304		180	1	543	689
Eastern Curlew	2											0	2
Ruddy Turnstone	4	3		1				2			1	7	11
Great Knot	5	1									2	3	8
Red Knot	87	441						254			1	696	783
Sanderling	0	7										7	7
Red-necked Stint	30	18		1					3		6	28	58
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	2											0	2
Curlew Sandpiper	42	34	7	1							5	47	89
Red-necked Avocet	55											0	55
Total	373	554	7	4	6	0	1	560	3	180	16	1331	1704

Notable individual sightings include:

a) A Curlew Sandpiper flagged with an orange (Victoria) flag on the right tibia and blue/yellow (Bohai Bay) on the left tibia has been seen at Lake Victoria on the Bellarine Peninsula in January 2013 and 2014. It was subsequently seen a few times at Kidney Bean Claypan in NWA in August 2014. It is assumed to be the same bird as there should not be a bird carrying two region's colours and we assume it was accidentally flagged in China when caught there carrying our orange flag.

Sightings of Victorian flagged waders seen away from the banding site within Australia.

Species	New South Wales	Queensland	Western Australia	South Australia	Tasmania	Total Australia
Bar-tailed Godwit	48	88	7	3		146
Eastern Curlew	2					2
Ruddy Turnstone			4			4
Great Knot		4	1			5
Red Knot	29	35	23			87
Sanderling						0
Red-necked Stint	8		16	4	2	30
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	2					2
Curlew Sandpiper			42			42
Red-necked Avocet #	55					55
Total	144	127	93	7	2	373

 # All seen at Hunter Estuary NSW.

b) Last year's Bulletin reported on the great story of Bar-tailed Godwit 'T0'. Banded aged 1 at Corner Inlet on 23/6/09, it has become a NZ bird that had been seen on every one of its migrations as it passed through South Korea.

Well, Andreas Kim has reported that it came through again this year continuing the great record of the site faithfulness of this bird. Thanks to the building body of records from Andreas, we can see that there have also been others seen at every migration between 2011 and 2015, including orange engraved godwits '3V', '8R' and '51'.

A further note from Andreas shows how difficult it is to keep track of the birds: “Aphae Island has a northern and a southern tidal flat - most of the records are from the southern - this is because you get close enough to the birds (on really high tides as close as 10m), but on the northern one which is a very big and very flat, the birds have some banks on which they stay and these are closest at about 300m away. On the occasional really high tides the tidal flat "runs full" within 20 minutes and the birds take off to some other (up to now unknown) location on some other island around or might even stay in the air for some time.

“The point is that I think that many of the ELFs like for example orange ‘JW’ seen some years apart might well came to the site every year but just were never spotted because they never came over to the southern tidal flat. On the southern tidal flat the high tide forces all birds into one corner and at a certain tide level … birds come from the northern one - which has no roosting areas; the water runs up to the walls. Very often I have seen that flocks of birds just fly over the southern one heading further south.

“But what you also can see from that little data already and which I also find interesting is that the NZ-wintering birds are about 10 to 14 days earlier than the Aussies.”

South Korea is a valuable refuelling spot as demonstrated by godwit ‘W1’ being there for at least 39 days to mid-May 2015.

c) Another Bar-tailed Godwit, ‘AMS’ was banded at Rhyll on 11/2/12 aged 2+ that was seen there in November 2012, but then was seen at Broome in April and June 2013, so hadn’t migrated that year. It was seen at Broome between September and October in 2014, presumably after it migrated that year.

When Clive checked on this bird, he found that all the other females aged 2+ on the day AMS was caught were heavier, so he thinks this may have been aged 2 or possibly 3, but not a full adult. It was very unusual for a Victorian bird to visit NWA and particularly to relocate to there.

d) A different movement was registered by godwit ‘CHH” that was banded aged 1 on 11/2/14 at Corner Inlet, but it then moved to Queensland where it was seen a year later on 14/2/15. This movement by first year birds is not as uncommon, with many moving across to NZ after their first year. Some of these birds may use Queensland as a stop-off location on migration rather than coming through Victoria.

e) Godwit ‘ABU’ has also been seen in Queensland, but most likely on its return migration to Victoria. It was banded as an adult at Corner inlet on 20/1/12 and was seen on northward migration in April 2012 at South Korea. Then it was seen between the 27/9 and 11/10/14 in southern Queensland. It was seen again at South Korea on northern migration in May 2015.

f) Adrian Riegen pointed out some great movement details of another Bar-tailed Godwit, white engraved ‘BNM’. This makes it a New Zealand bird, but it was first banded on 27/2/1999 aged 1 (so is one of the many Victorian birds to become NZ birds).

What he realised was that it was seen at Miranda (NZ) on 11/3//12 and then South Korea 16 days later on 27/3/12. In 2014 it was seen at Miranda on 15/3/14 and then 13 days later at South Korea. This year it was seen at Miranda on 10/3/15 and then 14 days later in South Korea. Having the local sightings of this bird to compare with overseas records made a much more valuable story. Thanks to Andreas Kim, for the South Korean sightings and to Adrian for compiling these notes.

g) The first overseas sighting of one of the engraved flagged Curlew Sandpipers (first applied in Dec 2013 at Werribee) was’E1’ that was seen in Hong Kong on 11/4/15.

h) The Red Knots seen in Bohai Bay by the GFN team allow the races to be determined as the birds are in breeding plumage. Results from this year showed that of 102 Victorian engraved flagged Red Knot, 72, or 81% (of the 88 race identifiable birds) were *C. c. rogersi* (breed in Chukotka) and 16 were *C.c.piersmai* (breed on New Siberian Islands). Of the 336 plain flagged birds, 74% were *C.c.rogersi*. This reinforces that the majority of the south-east Australian birds are *C.c.rogersi* .

Of the 174 Red Knot carrying engraved flags (first put on in Nov 2010), the GFN team saw 33 different individuals this year, which shows the importance of Bohai Bay to the Red Knots of the flyway.

i) A novel return from banding showed up this year - a band from a Red-necked Stint banded at Corner Inlet in 1992 was found with a metal detector at Mt Crawford in SA.

j) The only broad-billed sandpiper seen was at Werribee on 18 March 2015. This bird is most likely the juvenile that was flagged at Werribee on 16/1/15 - the first one to be banded in Victoria since 2001 (and one of only six banded in Victoria since 1988).

k) To illustrate the scale of work some people do and the value of engraved flags from having regular observers at critical locations, Tony Habraken in NZ reported 39 individual Red Knot among 224 sightings of knot carrying Victorian flags (plain and engraved) over the last non-breeding season and the GFN team at Bohai Bay reported 34 individual birds out of 480 Vic flagged Red Knot in the northern migration of 2015. Twelve of these birds were the same showing how life movement patterns can be built fairly quickly, also shows how many birds need to be scanned to find flagged birds and how many (or few) readable ELFs come from that.

l) Ruddy Turnstone 'YRZ' uncovered an interesting story behind it. Clive's research revealed that it was banded as a 2+ bird at Killarney on 20 October 2013. VWSG made an ad hoc visit to this western Victorian site after reports of a good flock of Turnstones there at an early stage in the season. It seems as if they were a good mixed collection of birds which had just touched down after crossing the continent on migration as two were known to have come from non-breeding areas in south Australia (one actually carrying a geolocator) and four others have subsequently been seen at Flinders (150km away). Two of these are now regular Flinders birds but the other two have only been seen at times of migration. At least one (YRZ) was obviously on its way to New Zealand where it has been seen by regular NZ observer Tony Habraken many times across 2013/14/15.

m) Just before this went to print a sighting was received of Bar-tailed Godwit 'AJU' that was banded at Rhyll in December 2008 and re-caught in February 2012 (indicating that it had likely remained in that area) and had the engraved flag applied then. It then migrated and was seen in Japan in March 2012, but went to New Zealand for the non-breeding season of 2013. It has since been seen on northward migration again in Japan in 2014 and 2015.

n) Without dedicated observers in the Hunter Estuary, Liz Crawford and Chris Hunter, we would not have the understanding of the movement made there by the Victorian banded avocets. Five of the individuals banded at Yallock creek on 2 January 2012 were seen again in the Hunter (see below). Where else are they going that we don't see?

ELF code	Visit one	Visit two	Visit three
ABU	3/9/12 - 28/11/12	12/7/14 – 16/10/14	
ADD	28/8/13 – 18/9/13	23/4/14 – 5/9/15	
ADS	29/8/12	11/9/13 - -6/11/13	30/4/14 - -5/10/14
AHT	28/5/14 – 2/9/14		
AKB	17/4/14		

South Australia
There were 107 sightings of migratory waders flagged in South Australia seen away from the banding site between 1/7/14 and 30/6/ 15. These are shown in the following table.

Sightings of South Australian flagged waders seen away from the banding site overseas and across Australia.

Species	Australia	China (mainland)	Hong Kong (China)	Indonesia	Japan	New Zealand	Taiwan (China)	Total Overseas	Total Sightings
Bar-tailed Godwit		6				9		15	15
Ruddy Turnstone	13		1	1	1		4	7	20
Red Knot		2				4		3	6
Sanderling	8	21			2		3	26	34
Red-necked Stint	11	7						7	18
Curlew Sandpiper	13	1	1					2	15
Pacific Golden Plover					2			2	2
Total	**45**	**37**	**2**	**1**	**5**	**10**	**10**	**65**	**110**

Notable individual sightings include:

a) Curlew Sandpiper ‘A0’ was banded at Yanerbie on 17/11/13 aged 1. This bird then moved to NWA where it was seen at Broome on 19/5/14 and regularly from then to 26/11/14. It was seen again in April this year and was likely to be migrating for the first time from there.

b) A plain flagged (orange/yellow) Bar-tailed Godwit was seen in the south Island of NZ in February this year so it has relocated to NZ from SA like many of the Victorian birds do.

c) Unusually for waders in general (because the vast majority of our sightings are made on northward migration), but not so for Sanderling, orange engraved ‘6J’/yellow was seen on southward migration in Japan in August in both 2013 and 2014. It was banded at Yanerbie on 16/11/2011 aged 2+.

d) Thompson Beach banded Bar-tailed Godwit ‘AKL’ has been seen at Yalu Jiang in April in both 2014 and 2015.

Pacific Golden Plover photographed by OHTSUKA Yukitoshi on 24/8/14 near Sunomata, Ogaki, Gifu, Japan on an inland wetland. A bird with the same orange/yellow flag combination (highly likely to be the same individual), has been seen at the same place and time in 2010 and 2012. This is probably one of a number of plover banded in 2005/06. These sightings are very rare so this is a fantastic record. Only six sightings of Pacific Golden Plovers have been recorded outside Australia and five of these are SA banded birds seen in Japan, and most likely four, if not all five, are of the same bird.

King Island

It is not unusual that all sightings are of Ruddy Turnstone, the target species on King Island.

Sightings of King Island flagged waders seen away from the banding site overseas and across Australia.

Species	Australia	China (mainland)	South Korea	Japan	Taiwan (China)	Total Overseas	Total Sightings
Ruddy Turnstone	17	7	2	5	11	25	42
Total	**17**	**7**	**2**	**5**	**11**	**25**	**42**

Some understanding of these numbers is shown here:

- Four Ruddy Turnstone sightings were at Darwin, all during southern migration and were two individual birds. Another five of the turnstone sightings were from Broome in October and November 2014 and were also two individual birds.
- Sightings of twenty-five individual turnstones were reported during the year.
- Of the overseas sightings, all the Japanese (three individuals) and two of the Chinese records (two individuals) are from August on southern migration, while all the others are from the northern migration.

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

Roger Standen, Clive Minton, Roz Jessop, Maureen Christie and Margaret Bennett

Despite the leg flag database being brought up-to date there were disappointingly few records reported of leg flag sightings from within the VWSG region of birds seen away from their banding area. A total of 40 sightings of these birds is 20-30% less than the previous two years.

Only two overseas sightings were made. When the number of birds being flagged across the flyway is increasing, it would be expected that we see more, rather than less. A concerted effort is needed to search for flags in a complementary effort to the banding program.

Some detail on individual sightings is provided in the sections below.

Victoria

The only two sightings of overseas flagged birds were made in Victoria, nine were from interstate and seven from within the state, but inland from the banding areas along the coast.

	China (mainland)		**Japan**		**Australia**				
Species	Chongming Dongtan NNR	Bohai Bay		**Total overseas**	NWA	SA	TAS	Total Australia	**Total All**
Ruddy Turnstone				**0**			2	**2**	**2**
Sanderling				**0**		4		**4**	**4**
Red-necked Stint		1	2	**3**		4		**4**	**7**
Curlew Sandpiper	1	1		**2**	2			**2**	**4**
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper				**0**	1			**1**	**1**
Banded Stilt				**0**		3		**3**	**3**
Total	1	2	2	**5**	3	11	2	**16**	**21**

Some detail is provided here:

- The Sharp-tailed Sandpiper from NWA was seen at north Williamstown, high up in Port Philip Bay.
- The Red-necked Stint seen in Victoria were all seen from Werribee or west of there, but two of the SA flagged Sanderlings were seen at Corner Inlet.
- The Japanese flagged stints and Chongming Dongtan NNR flagged Curlew Sandpiper were seen at Werribee and the two Bohai Bay flagged birds were seen on the Bellarine Peninsula.

South Australia
Eleven of the SA sightings were of interstate flagged-birds, three were seen away from the flagging area but within the state and four were flagged overseas.

	China (mainland)	**Taiwan (China)**	**Russia**		**Australia**				
Species	Chongming Dongtan NNR		Kamchatka	**Total overseas**	SA	Vic	TAS	Total Australia	**Total All**
Ruddy Turnstone				**0**	3		4	**7**	**7**
Red-necked Stint		1	1	**2**		4		**4**	**6**
Bar-tailed Godwit	1			**1**		3		**3**	**4**
Common Greenshank	1			**1**				**0**	**1**
Total	2	1	1	**4**	3	7	4	**14**	**18**

Some detail is provided here:

- Two of the three Ruddy Turnstones seen in SA were seen at Thompsons Beach, 450km away from their south-east banding site and the third was seen 850km away at Streaky Bay. All three were banded in November 2013 aged 1, so may have relocated in their first year exploration of their non-breeding area.
- Godwit 'P0' was flagged at Corner Inlet in June 2009 aged 1 and was seen at Yalu Jiang on 6 May, 2012 and then on 11 April, 2014 in South Korea . Nothing unusual there. However, it has been seen again twice at Ceduna in February, 2015, which indicates that it had probably spent the non-breeding season there. The third sighting of a Victorian flagged godwit was of an engraved, but unreadable flagged bird also seen at Ceduna, but this was from November 2014. It is highly likely that this was the same bird and confirms the use of the area for the non-breeding season.
- The sighting of the Chongming Dongtan NNR flagged Common Greenshank continues a series of irregular sightings of this species from the Coorong over several decades.

Tasmania
Some of the Tasmanian sightings came from the VWSG catching team and some from a group conducting summer wader counts.

	Australia		
Species	SA	VIC	**Total**
Ruddy Turnstone	3		**3**
Red-necked Stint		2	**2**
Total	3	2	**5**

Tern Recovery Report 2014/15

Roger Standen, Clive Minton, Roz Jessop, Robyn Atkinson and Susan Taylor

In the lists below banding details are given first, followed by recovery details

Caspian Tern
Only two recoveries were reported during the year. All the rest of the movements were from flag sightings. These are given in a separate report.

091-49350	Chick	21.12.06	Corner Inlet	30.11.13	Wonboyne River, NSW	Found dead	500 km ENE
091-44560	Chick	14.11.04	Mud Islands	28.09.14	Seaford	Alive	44 km NE

The above birds were close to 7 years and 10 years old respectively. The metal band number was read on the live bird at the Eastern Treatment Plant of Melbourne Water, near Seaford.

Little Tern
Two Little Terns originally banded in New South Wales were recaptured in an unusually good cannon net catch of 75 at Barry Beach on 18.03.15. These controls provide additional evidence for the post-breeding dispersal into Victoria (in March) of Little Terns from the NSW breeding population.

042-54813	Adult	06.01.09	Lake Wollumboola, NSW	18.03.15	Barry Beach	Recaptured	570 km SW
042-54819	Chick	31.01.09	Tuross Heads, NSW	18.03.15	Barry Beach	Recaptured	442 km SW

The first of these birds had also been recorded breeding in NSW colonies in several years subsequent to banding.

Fairy Tern
Amongst 12 Fairy Terns cannon netted at Barry Beach on 18.03.15 (with 70 Little Terns) was a bird originally banded as a chick (by Steve Johnson) at a small colony at Inverloch nearly 4 years ago. The seasonal and lifetime movements of Fairy Terns seem to be quite restricted, with few ever moving out of Victoria.

042-58517	Chick	03.02.11	Inverloch	18.03.15	Barry Beach	Recaptured	50 km E

Crested Tern
All recoveries of Crested Terns showing interstate movements or survival for more than 10 years are included in the tables below. All birds had been banded as chicks. The recoveries of birds marked at Mud Islands are listed separately from those banded at The Nobbies. In both tables birds are listed in date-of-recovery order. The first date relates to the date of banding as a chick. This is followed by the information relating to the recovery.

Fairy Terns (Photo Prue Wright)

Banded as chicks at Mud Islands

072-85854	20.12.98	Found dead	9.9.14	McCrae	15 years 8 months	16 km ESE
072-72706	21.12.96	Found dead	11.12.14	Mystery Bay, NSW	17 years 11 months	524 km ENE
072-65466	17.12.95	Found dead	17.12.14	Mud Islands	9 years 0 months	Nil
	(P/R at nest 26.11.03 at Mud Islands)					
073-08739	13.12.01	Found dead	17.12.14	Mud Islands	13 years 0 months	Nil
	(P/R at nest 2.11.11 at Mud Islands)					
072-36380	18.12.93	Found dying	3.1.15	Phillip Island	21 years 0 months	48 km ESE
	(P/R at nest 14.11.04 at Phillip Island)					
072-36264	18.12.93	Found dead	8.1.15	Blanket Bay	21 years 1 months	118 km SSW
	(P/R at nest 23.11.04, 20.12.04 and 24.11.11 at Phillip Island)					
072-76139	21.12.97	Found dead	24.1.15	Phillip Island	17 years 1 months	52 km ESE
	(P/R at nest 1.12.04 at Mud Islands)					
071-95162	17.12.88	Found dead	1.2.15	Port Melbourne	26 years 1 months	51 km N
	(P/R at nest 8.11.05 and 2.11.07 at Mud Islands)					
074-31321	17.12.14	Found dying	9.4.15	Margate Beach, QLD	0 years 3 months	1451 km NNE
073-39443	1.12.04	Alive	2.7.15	Ballina, NSW	10 years 7 months	1330 km NE
073-32474	6.12.05	Alive	5.7.15	Byron Bay, NSW	9 years 6 months	1348 km NE
074-31265	17.12.14	Found dead	2.8.15	Port Macdonnell, SA	0 years 7 months	365 km W

This is probably the most impressive set of recoveries we've ever had in a year from the Crested Tern chick banding at Mud Islands, which commenced in 1985. In the 12 recoveries listed, nine refer to birds 10 or more years old. The oldest was 26 years - equal to our existing record age for this species. Six of the birds had been previously recaptured as breeding adults - four at the Mud Islands colony and two at The Nobbies on the west end of Phillip Island.

It looks as if there must have been an adult 'mortality event' in late December/January in the Port Phillip Bay and adjacent Victorian coast habitats, with five individuals being found dead in this period.

There were three long distance movements to wintering areas on the northern New South Wales coast (two birds) and in south east Queensland (1 bird). The last of these was a young bird reported only three months after fledgling. It had moved 1451 kilometres north-north-east – about as far north as any Crested Tern from Victoria ever reaches.

Another unusual winter movement (again a juvenile) was westwards to Port MacDonnell in South Australia.

It is not clear why a 17 year old bird was at Mystery Bay, in southern New South Wales, in early December. Crested Terns usually return each year to breed at or close to their natal area. Maybe the bird had been dead on the shore for some time before it was found?

Crested Terns breeding at Mud Island – (photo Roger Standen)

Banded as chicks at The Nobbies, west end of Phillip Island

073-19655	16.12.02	Found dead	13.7.14	Aspendale Beach	11 years 6 months	56 km N
074-02845	21.12.10	Alive (breeding)	28.11.14	Currie, King Island, Tas	3 years 11 months	192 km SSW
073-19294	29.11.02	Found dead	28.11.14	Phillip Island	11 years 11 months	-
073-45397	21.12.05	Found dead	9.12.14	Phillip Island	8 years 11 months	-
073-19103	29.11.02	Found dying	26.1.15	Phillip Island	12 years 1 months	-
07430159	22.12.14	Found dead	3.2.15	Narawntapu N.P., Tas	0 years 1 month	316 km SSE
074-32225	22.12.14	Found dead	7.2.15	Wye River Beach	0 years 1 month	108 km W
074-30382	22.12.14	Found dead	20.2.15	Apollo Bay	0 years 2 months	129 km W
073-99119	22.12.09	Found dead	25.3.15	Stanley, Tas	5 years 3 months	249 km S
073-53779	18.12.07	Found dead	27.4.15	Parkdale	7 years 4 months	59 km N
074-25461	23.12.13	Alive	2.7.15	Ballina, NSW	1 years 6 months	1331 km NE
073-54220	7.1.08	Alive	2.7.15	Ballina, NSW	7 years 5 months	1331 km NE
074-16772	21.12.12	Alive	4.7.15	Ballina, NSW	2 years 6 months	1331 km NE
073-26584	18.12.03	Alive	5.7.15	Ballina, NSW	11 years 6 months	1331 km NE

In contrast to the previous list only four of the 14 birds from The Nobbies were more than 10 years old (maximum 12 years). The reason for this is not clear as the colony at The Nobbies has now been in existence for 20 years, with comprehensive chick banding being carried out annually.

A particularly interesting feature was the recapture, at a breeding colony at Currie on King Island of a four year old bird. This may have been nesting for the first time and it is interesting that it was doing this 192 kilometres from its natal area. At least three individuals also seem to have been caught up in the die-off which occurred on the central Victorian coast in late 2014/early 2015.

There were also two other recoveries in Tasmania, which could refer to birds wandering a little on their general easterly migration immediately after the breeding season. One of these birds was reported only a month after it would have fledged.

The band numbers were read by Steve McBride on four adult birds wintering at Ballina in northern New South Wales (1331 kilometres north-east of The Nobbies). Such sight records are particularly valuable in giving a more realistic estimate of the age structure of wintering populations. Recoveries are normally biased towards immature, naïve birds which are more vulnerable to food shortages and accidents (e.g. getting caught up in fishing line).

Crested Tern chick banding at The Nobbies (photo Graeme Burgan; Phillip Island Nature Parks)

Sightings of Terns Leg-flagged in Victoria 2014/15

Roger Standen, Clive Minton and Roz Jessop

Introduction

This brief report summarises the sightings of orange flagged terns seen away from the banding area.

Caspian terns continue to dominate these sightings, partly because they move up the east coast where there are observers and partly because of their large size that enables the flags to be seen more readily than on the smaller terns.

While thousands of Crested Terns are banded every year, they do not have flags applied, so tern sightings come from the species that we band relatively few (see separate report on banding of terns).

Caspian Terns

This year's report shows that Caspian Terns continue to move up the East Coast post-breeding.

Species	New South Wales	Queensland	Victoria	Total Australia
Caspian Tern plain		8	1	9
Caspian Tern ELF	12	13		25
Total	12	21	1	34

Records of interest:

- Two birds 'E2' and 'E6' were seen in southern Queensland in March 2015, 1400km and four months after their banding at Corner Inlet where they were banded as chicks in December 2014. Both are likely to have moved with their parents.

- All the Queensland sightings were around the Toorbul/Bribie Island area in the south, about 1400 km from the banding sites, except for one bird that was seen over 1630km from the banding site, near Bundaberg.

- Among the 24 sightings of engraved-flagged terns, twelve individuals were identified.

- The sighting in Victoria was of a Mud Islands banded bird that was seen at Cairn Curran Reservoir in central Victoria, about 150km away.

- The only other Mud Islands banded tern seen was orange engraved '77' that was seen at the Hunter Estuary in NSW some 800km away. This was banded as a chick on 29/11/12 and was seen in NSW on 6 February 2013, two months after banding. It was accompanied by a parent that was also banded and as it wore the metal band on the right tarsus, it was also banded on Mud Islands, so it had returned there to breed.

- Apart from the above two birds, all other sightings were of birds banded at Corner Inlet.

- An initial review of all the sightings of the known individuals reveals that they tend to stay where they first move to for a few years, or return there after breeding back in Victoria. This applies to both central NSW (around the Hunter Estuary) and to

southern Queensland (around Bribie Island). There were no sightings of a bird interchanging between these sites, even though several birds have been seen in each year from 2012-2015. An example is shown below of sightings of bird '24' in the Bribie Island area:

ELF	Banding date	Sighting 1	Sighting 2	Sighting 3	Sighting 4
24	3/1/12	16/9/12	24/8/13 - 20/10/13	21/7/14	17/5/15

Caspian Tern in non-breeding plumage taken in Queensland (Rog Standen)

Fairy Terns

Only one Fairy Tern sighting was reported over the past year and that was only the third ever sighting reported over 200km from the banding site. The other two were seen in NSW and South Australia.

The sighting was at Wynyard in Tasmania on 30 May 2015. It was quite possibly a chick from Inverloch catches in 2010 and 2011, but we have put orange flags on adults as well, before and after those catches, including a catch of 12 Fairy Terns at Barry Beach in March 2015.

Little Terns
Only one Little Tern sighting was reported over the past year, which was from Japan.

This sighting was on May 10, 2015 at Kasai Seaside Park, Edogawa and was of an orange flagged Little Tern that was most likely one of 75 banded at Barry Beach on March 18, 2105. This was approximately 8200km from the banding site, less than two months later.

Orange flagged Little Tern seen in Japan.

South Australian Team Report

August 2014 – July 2015

Maureen Christie and Jeff Campbell
Friends of Shorebirds SE Inc.

Ever since we have had our own catching team, our targets have been very clearly defined. Departure weights, arrival weights and overwintering flocks of both turnstone and sanderling. So, a catch of 21 turnstone on 24 August got us off to a good start. There were 2 retraps in the catch, one of which was banded at Central Manuka, King Island on 23.3.14. This year we were set another challenge. The visiting VWSG team in April 2015 had only managed to catch 5 sanderling. Hardly enough to guage % juvenile and hence breeding success. We had managed to catch 61 in Yanerbie, but Clive was anxious to maintain the integrity of the SE data base that went back to 1993. Finally we located a flock of 4-500 Sanderling between Stony Drain and Donovan Drain east of Paul's shack. The net was set several times, over two days, until finally on Anzac Day, a text book catch of 80 Sanderling.

Once again the VWSG made a special visit in November to retrieve geolocators. This visit was based at Carpenter Rocks and resulted in the retrieval of three geolocators. And, of course, the VWSG annual expedition in April, when 5 geolocators retrieved with another 14 deployed. Funding received from the Upper South East Natural Resources Management (NRM) Group and Natural Resources South East means that we have funding for 20 geolocators for next season. Our contribution to this project now totals $25,690.

A highlight of the November visit was the discovery of a strange plover on Livingston Bay. What started out as 'Probable Little Ringed Plover' very quickly became 'really something else'. It took this photo to unravel the mystery – look at the foot. A Semi-palmated Plover, and the first sighting for South Australia.

Predator Control – Threat Abatement Project
This is a continuing project and a comprehensive overview was included in last year's report. We continue with our work of protecting nests, monitoring, banding and flagging beach nesting species. We still don't have nearly enough Hooded Plover banded yet, but we are already getting some interesting results – see separate article. Two members accompanied Ross Anderson to the Beach Nesting Birds Forum at Point Nepean. Last winter we conducted – dogs on leads, and dogs off leads, GPS walks along the beaches where we hold Dogs' Breakfasts. The results were no-where near as stunning as the studies conducted in Victoria. But there were significant difference in methodologies. Our walks were linear with no real opportunity for dogs to roam at will whilst owners fished, or sunbaked! And walks were conducted in winter when few birds were present. They still emphasised the extra kilometres an unleashed dog travels. And it has certainly been useful to have data collected from our local beaches. The Beachport track is illustrated – and no prizes for guessing where the flock of Silver Gulls was!

As a group we are still struggling with the problem of too few volunteers and too many miles of beach. We appreciate all of the help we receive from Barry Schriever, member of the Coastal Department of Environment Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) team who is responsible for fox baiting. Barry is responsible for over half of our entries to the 'My Hoodie Portal'!

We continue with our Dog's Breakfast program. Our volunteer vets, District Council By-laws Officers and the Coastal Team of DEWNR all continue to support this project, even though we still struggle to reach our target audience. This year a change of venue meant better

numbers at Kingston. But lousy weather meant failure at Beachport. It seems we are destined never to have success at all four sites. However, all concerned consider we are making a difference, and that it is worth persevering.

Over the years we have had several nesting sites for small terns – the Glenelg estuary, Piccaninnie Ponds, Green Point, Danger Point, Hammond Drain, Port MacDonnell, the Obelisk at Robe, several sites in the Beachport area. Port MacDonnell has been deserted since an adult Little Tern was predated on the nest in the 2011/12 season. There were no sites found last year. Over the last decade, Danger Point has been the most consistent site, and this year there were three nests there – a pair of Little Tern, a pair of Fairy Tern, and a mixed pair. Signs and a fence were put up. But, late December a high overnight tide coinciding with a low pressure system and big swells, resulted in all being washed away. There were several more attempts, but all failed. The last clutch of two Fairy Tern eggs was deserted by 8 February and the eggs were collected for the SA museum.

Flyway Print Exchange and Birds without Borders

You will all remember Kate Gorringe-Smith giving a presentation at our AGM last year (or was it the year before?). Whatever, it was decided to try and bring her Flyway Print Exchange to South Australia. Tony Flaherty enthusiastically came on board and organised for the exhibition to be hung at the Adelaide Festival Centre as part of the OzAsia Festival in September 2014. As this festival coincided with the official opening in Melbourne, a facsimile 'travelled' set of prints was created. This facsimile set, plus a pristine set of prints, are now resident in SA. It will be hung in the Riddoch Gallery, Mount Gambier, from 18 September to 25 October. It will then move to Portland.

Intrinsically linked with the Flyways Print Exchange is Birds without Borders, an initiative of Raelene Mibus, Senior Coast & Marine Officer - South East Region, DEWNR. Her vision is that, like shorebirds, artists also have no borders. Under this banner we obtained a small grant from Country Arts SA and Kate conducted a very successful print workshop in Mount Gambier in July. As an outcome of this, an invitation has been issued inviting print makers to submit their works for inclusion in a 'Birds without Borders' exhibition that will hang alongside the Flyway Print Exchange at the Riddoch.

Kate has advised that all proceeds from the sale of the Exchange prints has gone into funding BirdLife Australia's 2015 Indigenous Grants for Bird Conservation and Research. The grants support Indigenous communities to conduct science - based conservation on their Traditional Lands. The 2015 grants all have a focus on shorebird conservation, and will help improve the situation for shorebirds and enhance the capacity of the recipients for on - ground, knowledge - based conservation work.

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Beachwrack Harvesting

There has been a small scale beachwrack harvesting industry based at Beachport since the early 1990's. Small scale though it may have been, it was still cause for concern. Comment has been made regularly on management plans, etc., commencing in 2003. Although we had serious concerns about the impact of the industry, it was, indeed, a cottage industry, harvesting, on average, less than 100 wet tonne per year from Rivoli Bay. But with Australian Kelp Products (AKP) being purchased by Qingdao Gather Great Ocean Seaweed Industry Co Ltd in 2013, hoped for annual take was revised upwards to 2,000 dry tonnes per year. Dried kelp is to be exported to China for fertiliser. Both the company and the SA government are helping fund research at Flinders Centre for Marine Bioproduct Development, Flinders University. Beach-cast Seagrass and Marine algae is deemed a 'fishery', and so under the ambit of Primary Industry and Regions SA (PIRSA). In order for AKP to get an export licence, PIRSA has had to convince the Federal Department of Environment (DotE) that the fishery is being managed in a sustainable manner that does not pose any threats to threatened species.

This current Assessment began last year, with PIRSA submitting a report dated 31 March, 2014. This was put to public consultation by DotE, closing May 2014. Comment was submitted by Birdlife and their special interest group AWSG, SE DEWNR, FoSSE, VWSG, Conservation Council of SA, Robe CoastCare, Nature Conservation Society of SA, and three private individuals. There were 10 submissions; all were on the side of conservation.

PIRSA called a 'by invitation' meeting in Millicent of people who had made comment. Held in Wattle Range Council chambers on 21 January they refused a request from a prominent local Rock Lobster fisherman to attend. Documents tabled for discussion – a rewritten assessment dated 23rd Dec. An ESD Risk Assessment for an Exploratory and Developmental Fishing Permit Application (to extend the licence to the Vic border). Maps of proposed 'take' and 'no take' zones for area Cape Jaffa to Victorian border.

DotE called for comment (limited to those who had originally commented) on the new Assessment. This was dated 23 December and was identical to that tabled at the Millicent meeting. Comment closed February. Once again there were 10 submissions.

The DotE have issued an 'Amendment of List of Exempt Native Specimens' and Declaration of an approved wildlife Trade Operation dated 3 June, 2015, along with an 'Assessment of the South Australian Beach-cast Marine Algae Fishery dated June 2015. These documents are all on their website http://www.environment.gov.au/marine/fisheries/sa/seagrass

The DoTe approval contained a list of Conditions. This is a brief summary of them:

1. 50% of the area is excluded from harvest
2. No harvest 100 metre either side of breeding Hooded Plover on sandy beaches of Wrights Bay, Nora Creina, Stinky Beach and Rivoli Bay.
3. Monitoring and research to be carried out.
4. Three 'Internationally Important Bird' areas identified in the TAKE zones, have been given some protection
   a) Rivoli Bay – two seasonal closures September – December; and January – March.
   b) Nora Creina and Stinky Bay. No heavy machinery September – December; Seasonal closure January – March.
   c) Wrights Bay, No heavy machinery September – December; Seasonal closure Jan – March

We had 28 days within which to either appeal, or 'request reasons'. We chose to 'request reasons'. The next step was to examine the Reasons and see if there were grounds for appeal. Although it was universally agreed that there were grounds for appeal, only FoSSE were prepared to do so. A decision was taken to lodge an appeal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal within the no-cost jurisdiction. A panel of 'technical experts' (Alison Russell-French, Doug Watkins and Ken Gosbell) were recruited to assist us. With their help an Appeal was lodged today. Without their help we would not have been able to get this far. And we will be relying very heavily upon them in the coming negotiations! I should point out that they are acting as individuals, not as members of the AWSG committee.

We understand that comment is due to be called on an application by AKP for an Exploratory and Developmental Fishing Permit for the area to be extended to the Victorian border. This matter will be in a State jurisdiction. We have an email tree devoted to this issue so that those planning comment can share expertise. Several other individuals and groups have become involved along the way, SE Professional Fishermans Association, Nora Creina Shack Owners Association, Rural Communities Australia, so hopefully there will be a broader range of comment this time around.

Between us we have made comment on various other matters, including Dog legislation in SA, and review of the status of Curlew Sandpiper.

Eyre Peninsula: – Catching 8 – 12 December (inclusive)
Once again a team went to Streaky Bay. This year we managed to catch samples of both Sanderling (61) and turnstone (29). Retraps are gradually building up a picture of site fidelity for the various species. Red-necked Stints were three from 2012, four from 2013. Sanderling two trapped in both 2011 and 2012; four from 2011 and eight from 2012 (we failed to catch Sanderling in 2013). One Sanderling had been originally banded as a 1 year old in Canunda. Unfortunately weather prevented us from banding oystercatcher chicks in Venus Bay. However, this year brought news of the resighting of a Pied Oystercatcher banded as a chick on our first outing on Venus Bay in 2012 – see photos below.

Oystercatcher chick H1 (photo Maureen Christie)

A great deal of excitement was also created by the capture of a Broad-billed Sandpiper. Although we didn't have an engraved flag for it, it is still unique, as the only individual wearing orange over yellow in the flyway! Sightings of waders flagged in Yanerbie are accumulating. This year reports have come to hand of turnstone seen on northward migration in Taiwan and southward migration in Taiwan and Darwin. Sanderling seen in Bohai Bay and Japan on northward migration and Taiwan on southward migration. Sightings of Curlew Sandpiper A0 are included in the flag sightings report.

Thank you to Jane Cooper who not only managed to arrange funding for our accommodation, but also a contribution to our travelling expenses. Thanks also to the DEWNR team who came out catching with us, and supported us in many ways.

Thompson Beach, Gulf St Vincent.
Three visits: 24 - 30 October; 6 - 12 March; 20 - 26 March. With each failure that we meet in the Gulf St Vincent we extend the aims of our project. Originally Red Knot were targeted, then we added Bar-tailed Godwit, and finally, this year, we added Grey Plover. Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM, represented by Tony Flaherty, have enthusiastically and financially supported our efforts. They have not only funded our field work, but have also funded 10 transmitters and associated satellite charges. DEWNR SE have made our field work much easier by lending us a gator - a 6 wheel ATV with a tray. Despite all of the disappointments, we manage to get people into the field. Thank you to all! Please see Tony's article for details of this project! We still have 7 satellite transmitters to deploy and an expedition is planned for 13 – 19 November. Do come!

Departure Lounge
This northward migration Shorebirds 2020 set up a 'Departure Lounge' on their website. Blackfellows Caves was 1 of 8 sites throughout Australia where observers reported once a week during March and April on the numbers of migratory waders at their sites. Once again emphasising the conundrum that the shorebirds who have the furthest to go, leave the latest, Blackfellows Caves still had turnstones present on 30 April, a full two weeks after all of the other sites had closed down!

General
All SA and King Island data is entered by David Trudgen. David is also responsible for maintaining the VWSG Oystercatcher Database. Flag making is organised by Jeff and Sarah Campbell. Newsletters continue to be issued from time to time. Jeff continues as both Shorebirds 2020 count coordinator and the Beach Nesting Birds Coordinator, as well as being our unofficial 'Conservation Officer'.

Our group was pleased to be involved in a campaign to purchase land in the Carpenter Rocks area. Several blocks were involved and their purchase has resulted in a continuous strip of land from the Carpenter Rocks Conservation Park to Southend, through Bucks Lake Game Reserve, Lake Bonney SE, and Canunda National Park to Southend. We were one of several local community groups who each contributed $2000 to this project. Lake Bonney SE is an important wader site.

Jeff was presented with a Premier's Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Volunteer Service. The Beach Nesting Birds Team presented us with a Certificate of Appreciation for our work in Advocacy and Research. We were nominated in two categories for the Premiers NRM & SA Landcare Awards. Although unsuccessful in 'The Big Picture' category, we have been selected as finalists in the Research and Innovation category. Winners will be announced in September.

A very successful AGM and working bee was held at the Campbell family home in Mt Gambier.

Thank you to the members of the group who have worked hard to produce these results. Thank you too, to the members of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources South East who have provided encouragement and practical help.

Net transportation SA style (Photo Maureen Christie)

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TEAM CATCHES 01.08.14 TO 31.07.2015

DATE	PLACE	Bar-tailed Godwit	Ruddy Turnstone	Red Knot	Sanderling	Red-necked Stint	Sharp-tailed sandpiper	Curlew Sandpiper	Pied Oyster-catcher	Sooty-Oyster catcher	Banded Stilt	Grey Plover	Red-capped Plover	Double-banded Plover	Hooded Plover	Other	Terns	TOTALS
24.8.2014	Livingston Bay		21			2							1					24
30.11.2014 #	Long Beach, Robe														1			1
2.12.2014 **	Cape Banks Lighthouse								1									1
8/9.12.2014 +	Morella Basin, Coorong										5							5
11.12.2014 +	St Kilda Beach, Adel.										6							6
20.12.2014 **	Piccaninnie Ponds								2									2
23.12.2014 **	Riddock Bay												1					1
23.12.2014 #	Port Mac (Orwell Rocks)														1			1
26.12.2014 **	Piccaninnie Ponds														2			2
18.1.2015**	Piccaninnie Ponds														1			1
24.1.2015**	Stony Point												1					1
29.1.2015#	Beachport														1			1
1.3.2015	Nora Creina*																	0
3.3.2015#	Cape Banks Lighthouse														1			1
21.3.2015**	French Point												2					2
21.3.2015**	Stony Point												1					1
31.3.2015#	Robe														1			1
25.4.2015	Stony Drain, Brown Bay				80								1					81
SA TEAM THIS	SA this year		21		80	2	0	0	3	0	11	0	7	0	8	0		132
B/F SA team	1.12.00 – 31.7.2014		575		26	433	107	18			1731							2890
B/F other				13					37	8			20	25	27	3	320	453
TOTALS SA	**SA TEAM TO DATE**		**596**	**13**	**106**	**435**	**107**	**18**	**40**	**8**	**1742**	**0**	**27**	**25**	**35**	**3**	**320**	**3475**
Eyre Peninsula																		
13/14.9.2014 +	Lake Hamilton										15							15
8.12.2014	Yanerbie		28			52	18	1					14			1	1	115
9.12.2014	Yanerbie				46	26												72
10.12.2014	Yanerbie					6	1											7
11.12.2014	Yanerbie				15													15
12.12.2014	Yanerbie		1			107	2						1					111
																		0
	Eyre Peninsula this year		29		61	191	21	1			15		15			1	1	335
B/F other									12	4			6			1		23
B/F Eyre			39		201	202	2	7										451
TOTALS	**Eyre Peninsula to date**	**0**	**68**	**0**	**262**	**393**	**23**	**8**	**12**	**4**	**15**	**0**	**21**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**809**
Thompson Beach																		
Seperate table		**18**	**1**	**1**		**20**	**40**	**1**	**3**			**13**	**3**			**11**	**23**	**134**
special geo																		
3.11.2014	Livingston Bay		11			24			1									36
4.11.2014	Blackfellows Caves		18															18
4.11.2014	Nene Valley (1 geo)		6			1												7
5.11.2014	Kyms Beach (1 geo)		23															23
5.11.2014	Livingston Bay (1 geo)		18			4				1								23
	geo trip this year		76			29			1	1								107
B/F geo trips	23.4.2009 - 31.7.2014		250		648	298	77	13	1								7	1294
TOTALS GEO	**Geo trips to date**		**326**	**0**	**648**	**327**	**77**	**13**	**2**	**1**							**7**	**1401**

* net set, no catch made; ** chicks/runners; #noose mat; + Reece Pedler's PhD project (Banded Stilt chick retraps not included in totals)

	OTHER	SE	Yanerbie
b/f	Black-fronted Dotterel	3	
b/f	Golden Plover		1
8.12.2014	Broad-billed Sandpiper		1

	TERNS	SE	Yanerbie
b/f	Crested	199	
b/f	Fairy	104	
b/f	Caspian	1	
b/f	Whiskered	6	
8.12.14	Little	17	
	Crested		1
		327	1

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TEAM CATCHES - Month Waders Caught in 1.12.200 TO 31.07.2015													
	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTALS
Ruddy Turnstone	5		11	218	38	16	46	87	77	1	97		596
Red Knot				1		12							13
Sanderling		17	2	82				5					106
Red-necked Stint		34	34	102	4	20	49	93	32	43	1	23	435
Sharp-tailed									6	101			107
Curlew Sandpiper						2	7	6		3			18
Pied Oystercatcher	9	2	1	1	1			2			8	16	40
Sooty Oystercatcher			2	3	2						1		8
Banded Stilt	192	173	12	351		54	429	520				11	1742
Red-capped Plover	4	4	4	5				6		1		3	27
Double-banded Plover			4	7		4		10					25
Black-fronted Dotterel			3										3
Hooded Plover	6	5	3	2	2					2	6	9	35
Little Tern	17												17
Fairy Tern		104											104
Crested Tern	199												199
TOTALS	432	339	76	772	47	108	531	729	115	151	113	62	3475
excludes special geo expeditions by visiting Vic teams, Thompson Beach and Eyre Peninsula catches.													

THOMPSON BEACH CATCHES

DATE	PLACE	Common Greenshank	Bar-tailed Godwit	Ruddy Turnstone	Great Knot	Red Knot	Red-necked Stint	Sharp-tailed sandpiper	Curlew Sandpiper	Grey Plover	Pied Oystercatcher	Red-capped Plover	Fairy Tern	Caspian Tern	Whiskered Tern	TOTALS
2012 November			12		4	1	20	39				3				79
2013 November			6													6
B/F totals		0	18	0	4	1	20	39	0	0	0	3	0	0		85
26.10.2014	Third Creek			1	2					9						12
28.10.2014	Township	4							1	1						6
29.10.2014	Township							1								1
30.10.2014	Third Creek										3					3
31.10.2014	Third Creek												5	4	14	23
Totals Nov 2014		**4**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**10**	**3**	**0**	**5**	**4**	**14**	**45**
5-12 March 2015	Reccies, net gun															0
20-26 March 2015	multiple sets, 2 catches															0
22.3.20.15	Township									3						3
23.3.2015	Township	1														1
Totals March 2015		**1**								3						**4**
TOTALS TO DATE		**5**	**18**	**1**	**6**	**1**	**20**	**40**	**1**	**13**	**3**	**3**	**5**	**4**	**14**	**134**

Shorebird Counting on the Bellarine Peninsula

John Newman - Shorebird Survey Coordinator

Members of the Geelong Field Naturalists Club and associated volunteers have been regularly and systematically counting shorebirds at numerous sites on the Bellarine Peninsula since the RAOU counts of the early 1980s. To date we have never missed a count giving a valuable and continuous dataset. Twice a year we set off to cover twenty four sites across the Peninsula over three successive days. Counter numbers vary from approximately 20-40 depending on season and availability. Count days are coordinated with surveys of the nearby Avalon Saltworks and Western Treatment Plant at Werribee.

Counting at Lake Connewarre (Photo John Newman)

The first day is spent covering the 500+ hectares of the Moolap Salt Works and associated Alcoa-Point Henry wetlands. The site is divided into 6 sections for the purpose of the count and volunteers venture into the wonderful wetlands in groups of 2-4 to count all shorebirds and, more recently, all waterbirds. The now decommissioned site is particularly important with the current threat of development into canal-style housing and marina despite it regularly providing critical foraging and roosting habitat for between 1000 shorebirds (winter) and 3000+ birds (summer). Moolap still held approximately one third of all shorebirds counted on the bird-rich Bellarine Peninsula this winter 2015 count.

The second day of the count covers the wetlands surrounding Lake Connewarre and various coastal sites around Barwon Heads and Breamlea. Boat access to the Lake Connewarre Delta enables detailed surveys to be undertaken while the surrounding sites including Hospital Swamps, Reedy Lake and Barwon Estuary are covered on foot.

The third day covers the wetlands surrounding Swan Bay including a boat trip to the captivating Mud Islands (organised by Friends of Mud Islands) and land based counts of Swan Island and adjacent Sand Island, Lake Victoria and the long walk to Edwards Point Flora and Fauna Reserve to name a few.

The dedicated volunteers return count after count to provide an experienced and reliable team over some very demanding and at times saturated terrain. Great pride is taken in continuing to submit data to the Shorebirds 2020 database and pursuing the commitment to preserve some of the most important shorebird sites in the state.

Further information on the Bellarine Peninsula shorebird surveys can be found at http://www.gfnc.org.au

Banded Stilt at Moolap Saltworks (Photo John Newman)

Long distance movement of a Hooded Plover

Jeff Campbell

A fledged Hooded Plover banded and flagged on Piccaninnie Ponds beach in South Australia on 18 January 2015 was seen on the Sir Richard Peninsula, 2km east of the nineteenth beacon near the Murray Mouth on 10 July 2015 by Rob Brinsly. On another visit to the area on 21 July it was again seen and on this occasion also photographed. The movement is a straight line distance of approximately 300 km or if following the coast about 440 km. This would appear to be the longest known distance travelled by this species.

It is possible through various observations to give a partial history of this bird. On 15 November 2014 a Hooded Plover nest was located on Piccaninnie Ponds beach (Lat. 38 02979, Long. 140 54433). The nest contained one egg two adults were nearby and acting in an agitated manner. A Pied Oystercatcher nest was located ~3 metres away in a direct line higher on the beach. This nest contained two eggs. No aggressive interactions were observed between the two species. Due to the physical nature of the beach at the site it was not considered possible to erect a temporary rope fence without the likely risk of it being run over by vehicles however *Shorebird Nesting Area – Please Keep Clear* signs were erected.

We returned to the site on 7 December 2014 and found that the Hooded Plover nest now contained three eggs while the Pied Oystercatcher nest still contained two eggs. On our next visit on 20 December 2014 the nest site was devoid of eggs and the nest scrapes were not visible due to a build-up of windblown sand. The pair of adult Hooded Plover was still in the area and due to their somewhat agitated behaviour it was presumed that they may have had one or more chicks in hiding. The Pied Oystercatcher adults were accompanied by two largish downy young which were caught, banded and flagged D1 and D2. Our next visit on 31 December 2014 revealed that the Hooded Plover adults were accompanied by two downy young. The young birds were considered too small to flag but were caught by hand and banded. The Pied Oystercatcher young D1 and D2 were still in the area with the adults.

On 18 January 2015 we once again visited the area and found the two now partly fledged young Hooded Plover with the adults. One of the two was flying too strongly to be caught by hand but the other, which could fly only weakly, was caught and flagged OWOM (left leg Orange/White, right leg Orange/Metal). The adult Pied Oystercatcher pair was still in the area and D1 was found hiding by lying motionless and partly under beach-cast wrack. We could not locate D2.

On the next visit on 24 January 2015 the Hooded Plover family were still present as was the adult Pied Oystercatcher pair and D1, now flying strongly. We attempted to catch the plovers using a noose carpet but we were unsuccessful, mainly due to the conditions with rogue waves constantly flooding the noose carpet. We did not visit the area again until 3 April 2015, on a recce with Clive Minton, and although we saw three Hooded Plover in the area of the nesting site we were unable to determine if any were flagged.

The second longest known movement of a Hooded Plover is of a bird banded and flagged at Red Rocks on Phillip Island (Vic.) in 2012. This bird was later seen and photographed at Collendina between Point Lonsdale and Ocean Grove, some 60 km distant in a straight line and across Western Port and Port Phillip Bays. In July of the same year it was seen at Rutledge's Cutting between Warrnambool and Port Fairy, a total distance travelled of approximately 250 km in a straight line or 300 km along the coast.

Other Hooded Plover movements in the south east of South Australia of interest, though not of great distances, include that of a juvenile banded and flagged at Nora Creina on 24 January 2015 which was later seen at Piccaninnie Ponds beach on 22 April 2015, some 120 km distant in a straight line. In addition another juvenile was banded and flagged by Maureen Christie at Cape Banks Lighthouse in March 2015. This bird was accompanied by a pair of unbanded adults. The bird was resighted with a pair of adults including one flagged NOYM at Nene Valley West on 5 April and then on 6 April it was with a different pair of adults, including N-YM (seen with one flag missing previously) on a different section of the same beach.

OWOM . Sir Richard Peninsula. (Photo Rob Brinsly).

Catch and Release - entangled Hooded Plover: Surf Beach – Phillip Island

Jon Fallaw (Ranger, Phillip Island Nature Parks).

Entanglement Report
29/07/15 09:30 Bec McIntosh observed a pair of Hooded Plover (unbanded and Om/GO Orange metal / Dark-Green, Orange) near Park Street access, east of Surfies Point at Surf Beach, Phillip Island while on the quarterly 'Hoodie Gull Count'. Om/GO had a ball almost the size of a ping pong ball of what looked like either pinkish seaweed or some sort of fibre attached to its lower right leg.

Great concern as Om/GO was part of a resident pair, it first nested at Surf Beach 14/12/05 (<12mths old) fledging 3 chicks 02/03/06; and against all odds fledged another 3 chicks on the 24/01/15.

Banding information: Om/GO

DATE	BAND	AGE	BEACH	FLAGS	Left tarsus	Right tarsus
25/01/2005	05223641	J	FARM BEACH Phillip Is.	OM/GO	Orange / metal	Dark-Green / Orange

29/07/15 Caught and banded the partner of the entangled bird. (Moderate NW wind)

- 13:00 Steve Johnson (SJ), Sharon Woodend (SW), Jon Fallaw (JF) and Sue Walton (SW) found the birds at Park St. Entanglement looked like pink fibre. SJ and SW set up loop trap.
- 13:30 caught the unbanded partner on first run through the trap (banded 052-68612 Yellow flag '19') just ahead of the tangled bird which hopped over. Despite running the tangled bird 6 times through the trap it failed and the tangled bird flew to Surfies Point way out on the reef and despite JF attempts it flew off and could not be located. On inspection it appeared that the entanglement was flattening the loops on the trap and the hobbling gait may also have contributed to the lack of success. Decide to leave as pushed bird enough for the day. SJ said he was available the next day and could bring his loop traps over.
- 14:20 departed

30/07/15 Caught entangled bird – disentangled and reflagged. (Strong NW wind)

- 09:00-10:00am JF searched Bruce Ave to Smiths Beach - no sign of pair.
- 11:30 SJ found the pair at Forrest Caves. Disturbed by walkers pair flew west around the point to Crazy Birds Beach. Steve did a great job tracking, catching and disentangling.
- 12:30 SJ and Shani Blyth (SB) set up SJ's loop traps (2x short offset) on Crazy Birds beach.
- 12:50 SJ was able to keep its mate YLF '19' lower on beach and push Gm/GO through the trap and caught on first attempt.
- The entanglement was around the lower flag where it had causing the foot to swell. It appeared that blood was still able to reach the toes and we thought that we had caught the bird in the nick of time and that we could proceed to remove the entanglement and that no vet help was required. We decided to remove the colour flags as well and replace with a yellow flag **YLF '20'** on the other leg so we could monitor recovery.

- As we removed the fibre and orange flag could see sand built up under the flag which had taken off surface skin. There were fibres around the toes however a restrictive thread around the middle toe was cutting in and took Steve a while to remove with fine tweezers.
- Once the entanglement was removed JF processed and reflagged. The foot was still swollen but was good colour and functional.
- 13:30 bird released; we were fairly sheltered in dunes but NW wind was very strong and hoodie disappeared quickly east around the point to Forrest Caves.

Entangled Hooded Plover (Photos: Steve Johnson)

04/08/15 Found pair at Surfies Point west

- JF found the pair YLF '19' and YLF '20' sheltering under cliffs from very strong NW wind at Surfies Point west. They were very close to where they nested on cobbles last season and went on to fledged 3 chicks 800m east between Park St and Dunvegan Cres on 25/01/15.
- Both birds looked fine with no discernible difference in their walk, could only tell between them from the bands. The foot may still be a bit puffy but seems to be fine.

06/08/15

- Sent fibre samples to both Grainne Maguire (BNB BirdLife) and Mike Weston (Deakin University). Mike will have the fibres analysed.
- Main fibre sample, feather sample with the Nature Parks with Dr Peter Dann, Manager Research.

Update of VWSG & Friends of the Shorebirds SE Work in Gulf St Vincent

Based on articles by Tony Flaherty, Manager Coast and Marine, Natural Resources, Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges, for the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary e-newsletter

As the arctic summer draws to a close, many shorebirds are departing for their epic journey south. Species such as Godwits and Great Knots may have already finished nesting at breeding grounds in Siberia, northern China and Alaska and are flocking to staging areas in preparation for migration.

Millions of birds will journey back through to China and East Asia to Australia and New Zealand along the East-Asian Australasian flyway with thousands due to arrive on our shores in spring.

Over the last eight years, Natural Resources Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges, with researchers and volunteers from Birdlife Australia and Birds SA, have been monitoring shorebirds in Gulf St Vincent as part of a National Shorebird 2020 programme. This is leading to a better understanding of roosting and feeding habitats and some patterns of use across the Gulf.

The 2020 shorebird survey work identified large flocks of Red Knot and other shorebirds which attracted the interest of researchers from the Victorian Wader Study Group and Friends of Shorebirds South East. They hoped that flagging studies of the Gulf St Vincent birds may help identify the various sub-species of Red Knot and Bar-tailed Godwit.

Since 2012, with support from Natural Resources Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges, a band of dedicated volunteers, led by Clive Minton from the Victorian Wader Studies Group and Maureen Christie of the Friends of Shorebirds South East have been flagging shorebirds at Thompson Beach, north of Adelaide.

The Thompson Beach environments are challenging. Whilst some sandy beaches occur here, many of the areas favoured by the target species are deep seagrass wrack over tidal mud, making setting up of catching equipment difficult.

When the birds are here, they are in non-breeding plumage and sub-species cannot be identified. By the time Red Knot reach the “halfway” staging area in the Yellow Sea, their breeding plumage is distinct.

Banded shorebirds are also marked with small numbered, coloured leg “flags”. Birds flagged in South Australia have orange over yellow flags on their right leg. This allows the network of bird sighters throughout the flyway, and a Global Flyway Network team working in the Yellow Sea, to identify where the birds have come from, without recapturing the birds. For many shorebirds the sub-species can be identified from breeding plumage, and their breeding destinations in the Arctic, Siberia or Alaska determined.

One Bar-tailed Godwit, flagged AKK, was first banded at Thompson Beach in November 2012. AKK was photographed in the Yellow Sea by Adrian Boyle of the Global Flyway Network, on the 9 April 2013 at Nanpu in Bohai Bay. The bird was roosting in a salt pan at high tide. It was seen 10 times that season in China and was last seen in late April 2013. In October 2014, Godwit AKK was back at Thompson Beach and photographed by local bird

watcher Peter Corcoran. Adrian reported seeing AKK back in China at Nanpu in Bohai Bay on the 17 April this year in full breeding plumage and looking rather fat!

AKK in China (photo Adrian Boyle)

In April this year, another Thompson Beach banded bird, a male with the flag AKL, has been photographed in north-east China near the Korean border. Another godwit CAH was also seen there in 2014.

The Yalu Jiang coastal wetland, is an important stopover site along the flyway during northward migration for Bar-tailed Godwit, Great Knot, and Far Eastern Curlew. Between April to May, up to 300,000 shorebirds use this reserve as staging site before heading to their northern breeding grounds. Up to 115,000 Bar-tailed Godwits use the reserve, and this one small area may be critical for a large number of godwits from New Zealand and eastern Australia. For many years, the Miranda Naturalists' Trust in New Zealand have recognized the importance of the site and established a sister-site partnership with the reserve.

Part of the coastal reserve was designated as the Dandong Yalu Jiang Estuarine Wetland National Nature Reserve in 1997, to conserve the coastal wetland ecosystem and wildlife. This reserve area is typical of the Chinese Yellow Sea coast, with bare intertidal mudflats and some areas of reed marsh, next to a seawall bordered by farmland and aquaculture ponds for shellfish, jellyfish and sea cucumbers. The shorebirds use aquaculture ponds for roosting during high tide and some feeding.

Mr Quingquan Bai from the Forestry Bureau of Dandong City is a regular contributor of sightings of Australian banded birds at Yalu Jiang reserve. Qingquan Bai joined the China coastal waterbird census team in 2005, counting the waterbirds of Yalu Jiang coastal wetland every month and coordinating volunteers. During the northward and southward shorebirds migration he counts the population, recording and photographing leg flags.

The dedication of Qingquan and thousands of volunteers across the flyway is making a real and valuable contribution to shorebird science and conservation. Equally important is the role that volunteers, such as Roger Standen from the Australian Wader Study Group and others, play in coordinating the leg flag and banding records and sightings.

As well as focussing on flagging of shorebirds in Gulf St Vincent, funding was also available, through the Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board's Samphire Coast Icon Project and the Australian Government, for FoSSE and VWSG to initiate satellite tracking. Lightweight, solar-powered satellite tracking devices are revolutionizing the study of birds. Understanding the paths and countries visited helps our

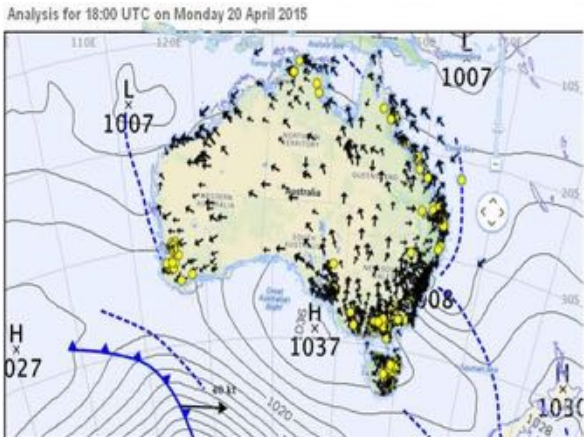
understanding and also strengthens the conservation work being undertaken globally along the East-Asian Australasian Flyway.

The sub-species of Bar-tailed godwits are harder to distinguish at the Chinese staging areas and it is hoped that satellite transmitters can help unravel where the Gulf St Vincent birds breed. Unusually, no godwit were caught this season at Thompson Beach.

With the absence of catchable Godwit at Thompson Beach this season, approval was sought to include Grey Plover in the satellite telemetry work. In late March, researchers from the Victorian Wader Study Group fitted tiny satellite transmitters to Grey Plovers at Thompson Beach, 60 kilometres north of Adelaide.

Movements along the northern beaches were tracked prior to the start of the annual northward migration. In the first week of tracking, the birds used the tide-flooded clay pans or sabkhas behind Thompson Beach. During low tide, during both day and night, the birds made their way to the mudflats to feed.

The Grey Plover, flagged CME, departed for migration on 20 April, as a low pressure system came through with good south-easterly winds. In its first 48 hour track it was 2,800 kilometres away off the Kimberley coast between WA and Indonesia. However the track changed markedly over the sea north of Derby, and the bird seems to have run into an unusually late low pressure system. The transmitter has either failed, or the bird may not have survived the storm.



The Grey Plover is a medium size, long-legged bird (about the size of a small pigeon). As its name suggests it is mottled pale grey, in flight dark patches can be seen under the wing. The bird's colour transforms on the northern breeding grounds to a bold black and white, where it is called the Black-bellied Plover. Whilst often described as solitary, this coastal bird is often seen in small groups at Thompson's Beach.

Grey Plovers feed on feed on marine snails and worms, crabs and other crustaceans. When they reach the arctic tundra they feed on the many insects. Two Thompson Beach Grey Plovers, were weighed in October 2014 and re-caught in March 2015. These birds increased their weight by 100 grams to around 350 grams, an increase of 45% since arrival.

Estimates based on the body weights of Grey Plovers suggest that with a fat load of 100g, the birds could cover distances of up to 4200-5400 km without refuelling, letting them make a non-stop flight as far as northern Vietnam or the central Chinese coast.

In the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, Grey Plovers are known to head north in March and April. They are thought to travel north through East-Asian countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, Korea and Hong Kong to the Russian Maritime Territories. They arrive in northern Siberia and Alaskan breeding grounds around May to June.

A few Grey Plovers banded in other parts of Australia have previously been seen in Japan and South Korea as they make their way up the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. Some younger Grey Plovers may stay over winter. These overwintering birds have been recorded flying between Gulf St Vincent and the western beaches of the Eyre Peninsula.

Based on morphometrics, studies of bird body measurements from across the globe, it is thought that Grey Plovers from southern Australia make their way to Eastern Siberia and Alaska and Wrangel Island in Alaska. But the exact movements of the birds as they migrate is not well understood. In the arctic, the birds nest across the vast tundra, where each pair may lay up to four eggs. The young are tended by their parents for a few weeks and are ready to fly south in just four weeks (Minton & Serra 2001).

Unlike many birds, the sex of Grey plovers cannot be determined by measurements. Genetic tests of feathers from birds in southern Australia suggests that many birds summering here are females. In northern Australia about 20% of birds have been identified as males. Feathers genetically tested from three Grey Plovers at Thompson Beach were all from females.

The stretch of mudflats, samphire swamp and saltfields north of Adelaide and in Gulf St Vincent are a nationally and internationally important shorebird area, being conserved through the South Australian Government's proposed Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary and the already established Upper Gulf St Vincent Marine Park and Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary.

As well as improving our scientific understanding, the banding and flagging work being done by VWSG and FoSSE at Thompson Beach, has been really important in increasing local awareness of migratory shorebirds. The flag re-sightings of Godwit AKK have regularly made the news in state and local papers and radio. Many locals now have a sense of pride in the understanding that their local beaches play a role in the amazing global story of shorebird migration. It's not just something on a television wildlife documentary, but something happening on the beach, across the road from their house or shack.

Anyone along the flyway can help in shorebird conservation by reporting leg flags. In the lead up to our shorebird season in spring, NR AMLR and BirdLife Australia will run Adelaide shorebird identification workshops and training for shorebird counters to prepare for the Shorebird 2020 counts and. These counts involve volunteers from Birds SA and BirdLife Australia and the general public. As part of the Samphire Coast Icon Project community monitoring of resident Red-capped Plover is also underway, an extension of the Beach-Nesting Bird Project.

These studies are part of a Samphire Coast Icon Project supported by Natural Resources Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges which has received a significant boost with funding from the Australian Government.

Contact AMLR Natural Resources Centre
E: DEWNR.AMLR@sa.gov.au T: (08) 8273 9100
www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges
References: Minton, C.D.T. & Serra, L. 2001. *Biometrics and moult of Grey Plovers, Pluvialis squatarola, in Australia*. Emu. 101:13-18 http://www.publish.csiro.au/paper/MU00057.htm

For more information on shorebirds visit
http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges/plants-and-animals/native-plants-animals-and-biodiversity/native-animals/birds/shore-birds-project

For more information on the Samphire Icon Project, shorebird 2020 reports and contact details visit
http://birdlife.org.au/projects/samphire-coast-icon-project

For more information on the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary visit
http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges/plants-and-animals/adelaide-bird-sanctuary to receive the Adelaide International Bird Sanctuary e-newsletter subscribe at
http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/adelaidemtloftyranges/subscribe

For more information on the leg flags used in different countries and reporting flag sightings visit the **Australian Wader Study Group** website http://www.awsg.org.au/
Shorebird flag sightings can be reported through the AWSG website
http://www.awsg.org.au/reportform.php

A guide to the shorebird Leg Flags used in the East-Asian Australasian Flyway can be found on the **Asia-Pacific Shorebird Network** website at http://www.shorebird-network.net/leg-flags.html

Information on the **Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme**, database and becoming a bander is available at http://www.environment.gov.au/science/bird-and-bat-banding

Shorebirds 2020 National Shorebird Monitoring Program http://birdlife.org.au/projects/shorebirds-2020

For more about **Dandong Yalu Jiang National Nature Reserve**
Visit the NZ Miranda Shorebird Centre website http://www.miranda-shorebird.org.nz/archives/97
A research paper on the importance of the reserve is available via the Wetlands Oceania website at
http://www.wetlands-oceania.org/downloads/Barter%20Publications/Yalu%20Jiang%201999.pdf

For information on the **Global Flyway Network** partnership of shorebird researchers worldwide visit
http://globalflywaynetwork.com.au/

Report on visit to King Island

23 November – 1 December 2014

Annabelle Richards and Clive Minton

Introduction

This was the 8th consecutive November trip to King Island as part of the long term study of the Ruddy Turnstones. 11 birds had their geolocators retrieved. Of these 9 birds had them replaced with new geolocators. Two new geolocators were deployed on other birds. It is intended to deploy additional new geolocators on the next visit (February 2015). The old geolocator bands were white (put on in 2013/14) and yellow (put on in 2012/13 or before); the colour for 2014/15 is again yellow. Catching activities were mainly centred around the Manuka area and all deployed cannon netting. All of the geolocators retrieved were in good condition, with less wear than previously sometimes experienced. The catches in several cases produced more geolocator-carrying birds than anticipated. We did not re-catch any birds which had already been fitted with new geolocators on the current trip.

Objectives

The main objectives of the November 2014 visit to King Island were:

1. To retrieve geolocators from Ruddy Turnstone, particularly those deployed earlier in the year.
2. To replace geolocators on the same birds where possible.
3. To carry out a comprehensive count of Ruddy Turnstone numbers at all sites on the west coast of King Island.
4. To band, flag and record data from each bird caught.
5. To assist the Deakin team for their work swabbing, taking blood samples and obtaining faecal samples of all Ruddy Turnstones caught.
6. To assist the Deakin team in catching and banding the requisite number of seagulls for the purpose of obtaining the same samples for comparison and possible pathological interaction.

Catches

A total of 6 Ruddy Turnstone and 2 Silver Gull catches was made during the visit. Apart from one Turnstone catch at Burgess Bay, all wader catches were in the Manuka area. This is where the 60 geolocators had been deployed in March/April 2014. Catches were entirely targeted at retrieving geolocators, and many opportunities were turned down when no geolocator-carrying birds were visible in the catching area. So on every occasion on which the net was fired, at least one geolocator was retrieved. The largest catch was the first catch – 49 birds at North Manuka.

It was pleasing that a total of 25 juvenile Ruddy Turnstone was caught in a total catch of 146 birds. At 17% juveniles, this is close to the long-term annual average. It was good to have such a good result immediately after the bonanza (37%) of juveniles encountered the previous year. These, incidentally, were highly prominent in the samples caught, with a high proportion of previously unbanded birds being able to be positively identified as in their second year. This was possible because many showed wing moult characteristics such as very old unmoulted juvenile feathers from 2013 (“V”s), or some feathers which had been replaced during the first year but not yet moulted during the second year (“R”s). In a few cases, an extremely advanced moult, which could not have been possible for an adult bird arriving back on King Island only in late September or subsequently, was the key to identifying a second year bird which had remained on King Island throughout the Austral winter.

It is interesting that nearly half of the Ruddy Turnstone caught (70 out of 146) were retraps. Some had been originally marked as long ago as our first visit in March 2007.

Part of the reason for the good catching efficiency was that we were able to bring additional equipment with us because, for the first time during a November visit, we were able to bring Clive's car over to King Island from the mainland. We were thus able to deploy two cannon-nets at a time. On two days this actually facilitated two catches on the same day. On the 28th November, the team split into two and each part of the team made an early morning catch, almost simultaneously at Burgess Bay at Currie, and at South Manuka. We hope to continue this more efficient arrangement on future visits.

We had no difficulty in making two good Silver Gull catches for disease sampling by the Deakin University team. The catch at the pig farm was again made within seconds of putting the cheese whey into the catching area. This time 25 Pacific Gulls were also caught. The second catch was made on a beach close to the breeding colony at Burgess Bay in Currie. Again the birds responded instantly to the cheese bait even though they had never been fed this there before. Unfortunately no catch of gulls was possible in the remote southwest of the island, as all gulls had moved away, to the vicinity of the breeding colonies.

Geolocators
A record 11 geolocators was retrieved during the visit. Five of these were obtained in one catch, of 21 birds at South Manuka. Eight of the geolocators had been placed on birds earlier in 2014, and all have downloaded successfully (Migrate Technology, Intigeo C65 units).

Three geolocators were retrieved from earlier years, and one has so far been successfully downloaded giving two complete migratory journeys. The other two had ceased recording new data because their batteries were flat, and these have been sent back to Migrate Technology for downloading.

On nine of the birds from which geolocators were removed, new geolocators were deployed. This is an attempt to maximise the chances of generating information on more than one migration from an individual bird. Additionally, two geolocators were deployed on new birds (accidentally!).

The downloaded information will be circulated separately in due course.

It is planned to deploy a further 60 geolocators on Ruddy Turnstones on King Island during the next visit, scheduled for 7-16 February 2015.

Counts
As usual on all King Island visits, a complete count of the Turnstone population along the whole of the west coast was made. Details are given in the attached table, which also shows the corresponding figures for November 2013.

For the first time in our 7 years of visits, the Turnstone population seems to have increased since the corresponding visit in the previous year. In this case the increase, from 546 to 754, is quite marked, and was noted at most of the main Turnstone locations. It is considered this most welcome population increase is the result of the extraordinarily high breeding productivity in the 2013 Arctic summer. It was noticeable in the catches, as mentioned earlier, that there was a high proportion of second year birds in the population. This bonanza 2013 cohort of juveniles appears to have survived well and, at least temporarily, has reversed the decline in Turnstone population thought to be caused by the major habitat losses at one of its key migratory stopover areas, the Yellow Sea.

Flag Sightings
As always during our visits to King Island, the team was on the lookout for birds carrying flags put on elsewhere, as well as for locally deployed engraved flags. The table gives the details of all such sightings.

Altogether, engraved flags were read on 8 Pied Oystercatchers (4 from Corner Inlet, 2 from the western part of Western Port, and 2 local). A pair of Sooty Oystercatchers was also seen carrying yellow flags from Corner Inlet, but were too distant for the engraving to be read. Three Ruddy Turnstones flagged in South Australia were also seen, with one of these also carrying a geolocator. Unfortunately, none of the engraved flags on these birds could be read. However, the engraved flags on 5 other Turnstones, all originally marked on King Island, were deciphered.

The marked Hooded Plover was breeding in the same place as usual on the North Manuka beaches.

A visit to the 2000 pair Crested Tern breeding colony revealed that approximately 5% of the adults had metal bands. The only one which could be read in the field had been banded as a chick on Phillip Island, Victoria, in 2010. The first nests were just starting to hatch – about 2 weeks later than at Mud Islands, Victoria. It is planned to bring some Crested Tern catching equipment with us in November 2015 so that we can obtain a larger sample of retraps to determine their origin. Apparently no Crested Terns have been banded previously on King Island itself.

Deakin University Avian Influenza Study
Over the last four years Deakin University, in conjunction with the regular catching events of the VWSG, has sampled almost 450 shorebirds from two species on King Island, Tasmania. Our focus has been on the Ruddy Turnstone – a long-distance migratory species that breeds in Eastern Siberia, traverses East Asia, Indonesia, and Northern Australia before spending approximately 5 months on King Island. Although very few individuals have been found to be infected with avian influenza viruses in most locations across the globe, prevalence in Ruddy Turnstones migrating through Delaware Bay, USA may be as high as 30%. Delaware Bay is therefore considered a global avian influenza 'hotspot', with the high prevalence of infection attributed to the extremely high density of turnstones foraging at this site.

In contrast, King Island is home to fewer than 1000 turnstones, spread out along its entire western coast, and yet in March 2014 we found prevalence levels comparable to those reported from Delaware Bay, with 55 of 172 turnstones infected. These infections were found 4-5 months after the birds had returned from East Asia, suggesting the turnstones were most likely to have become infected while residing on an isolated island in the middle of Bass Straight! We are currently trying to further investigate the genetic structure, and hence the evolutionary origins, of the avian influenza viruses that we found circulating on King Island. We are also continuing our sampling efforts on King Island to assess whether this high level of infection is a regular occurrence.

Contributed Bethany Hoye
(Interested residents joined the KI team on Wednesday 26 November for a combined dinner and to enjoy Bethany's fascinating presentation of the Deakin Team's work. Ed.).

Avian pathogen report by Simeon Lisovski

Background
Shorebirds in the order Charidriiformes are thought to form a component of the avian influenza virus (AIV) reservoir community, but outside of Delaware Bay in USA, prevalence in this group has been extremely low.

The high levels of infection in Delaware are generally attributed to the high density of birds there. Notably, Ruddy Turnstones show a higher prevalence there than any other shorebird species to date.

In March 2014 Bethany Hoye and Simeon Lisovski sampled 172 Ruddy Turnstones on their non-breeding grounds (King Island, Tasmania) just prior to northward migration, collecting cloacal and oropharyngeal swabs (combined into a single sample; and whole blood). *Virus Transport Medium* (VTM) is a liquid with antibiotics and other chemicals allowing the virus to persist while other organisms and enzymes that might digest or damage the virus will be killed. They put out swabs straight in the field into this medium to be able to extract the virus later on!

Swab samples were analysed using a nested RT-PCR protocol targeting the matrix gene at DEPI. The isolated RNA product from positive samples was then sequenced to determine subtype. Virus isolation was also attempted (through double passage, 5 eggs per sample per passage) for all PCR-positive samples. Anti-NP antibodies in serum were detected using IDEXX b-ELISA kit; samples run on duplicate plates, with supplied positive and negative controls. Samples considered positive for Anti-NP when average S:N <0.5.

Preliminary results
55 out of 172 (32.0%; 95% CI: 25.1 – 39.5) Ruddy Turnstones were positive for AIV at the time of capture - as high or higher than many years in Delaware. This was quite unexpected given the low density of both shorebirds and ducks on King Island.

57out of 166 (34.3%; 95% CI: 27.2 – 42.1) Ruddy Turnstones had detectable antibodies.

Given that this was quite similar to the proportion of the population showing active infection, it may suggest the population was at the beginning of an outbreak, having been relatively naïve (or having not experienced an outbreak for a considerable period). Individuals with antibodies were equally likely to be infected as those without antibodies, and infected individuals were equally likely to have antibodies as not.

Of the 55 AIV positive samples, 31 were successfully sequenced/subtyped; 3 subtypes (H3 (3), H6 (21) and H10 (8)) identified. Three viruses were isolated.

Prevalence of infection and subtype composition showed some spatial structure across the five sampling sites), as did *seroprevalence*. Notably, these birds are quite site faithful and show little movement between locations, which may explain some of the site-level infection patterns.

Additional results that they are planning to investigate
Age and sex distribution wrt infection, antibodies and locations.

Ct values for all matrix positives (with some knowledge of how the nested PCR Ct values relate to viral copy number)

Phylogenetic position of the 31 sequenced samples within HA types (from longer fragments if possible, otherwise from the 600BP sequences from DEPI).

Resighting/recapture data to quantify (lack of) between-site movements of turnstones on King Island.

Counts of both shorebirds and ducks to demonstrate very low density throughout the time the turnstones are on King Island.

Interesting discussion points
Perplexingly high level of infection (especially given the lack of all previously cited drivers of infection).

Spatially structured (potentially).

Begs the question: where is the source for these infections?

Acknowledgements
The team would like to extend sincere thanks to Angus Roberts, the master of the Searoads ferry, for transporting Clive's Land Cruiser (full of equipment) from/to Melbourne. We also thank Jenny Marshall for letting us use her house as our base, and Shelley Davidson (Tasmanian Parks Service) for lending us the Environment Department's trailer.

Our warm thanks go to Margaret Bennett (Bird Life Tasmania Rep.), and Margaret and Graeme Batey who were most generous in providing accommodation for 2 people each in their homes, as well as providing transport, and helping with the field work. Margaret also picked up Clive's vehicle from Grassy, and returned it. As well Margaret assists with storage of equipment.

On several occasions local people helped the team, including Jenny Thorn, Liz Bond and Harold Trout, and we thank them.

Once again the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service facilitated the banding permits and other permits necessary for the work.

Postscripts from Ken Gosbell and Alice Risely 10/12/14

Subject: *RuT from KI _ CPZ*

' Today I have battled with some analysis of several KI geos. Two were pretty much as expected (I'll write them up and send you shortly) but then I looked at CPZ. This is the bird that you said had not commenced moult and you wondered why. Well we now have that answer as the bird stopped over on the WA coast from around 8/10 to 17/11 when it started to move East. It seems to have also stopped on one of the peninsulas or Kangaroo Island before getting back to King Island on 29 Nov. You caught it on 30 November so the bird got quite a home coming! This would explain why it was in its breeding plumage. I have attached a screen shot of the southward track for your information'……. … Ken Gosbell

'This was the bird which kept being chased away by the flock and was generally being bullied. If it had just suddenly appeared in the flock the day before maybe that explains it?... not the warm welcome home greeting it was expecting possibly (sounds like it was having a very bad day in general!).' AliceRisely

Seagulls are trapped! Photo by Margaret Bennett, King Island Pig Farm Nov 2014

Catch Details – King Island

25 Nov – 1 Dec 2014

Date	Location	Species	New	Retrap	TOTAL	(Juv)	Nets fired	Comments
24/11/14	North Manuka	Ruddy Turnstone	**34**	**15**	**49**	(10)	1	[1 geolocator retrieved & replaced, 2 new geolocators deployed]
25/11/14 (1st catch)	Central Manuka	Ruddy Turnstone	10	10	20	(2)	1	[2 geolocators retrieved & replaced]
		Pied Oyster-catcher	3	-	3	(-)		
		Total:	**13**	**10**	**23**			
25/11/14 (2nd catch)	Currie Pig Farm	Silver Gull	70	3	73	(-)	½	[Deakin University] [10 Pacific Gulls also released from net]
		Pacific Gull	15	-	15	(-)		
		Total:	**85**	**3**	**88**			
27/11/14	Simeon Point, Burgess Bay, Currie	Silver Gull	80	2	82	(-)	½	
28/11/14 (1st catch)	Burgess Bay, Currie	Ruddy Turnstone	**9**	**10**	**19**	(1)	1	[1 geolocator retrieved & replaced]
28/11/14 (2nd catch)	South Manuka	Ruddy Turnstone	**5**	**16**	**21**	(1)	1	[5 geolocators retrieved & replaced]
29/11/14	Central Manuka	Ruddy Turnstone	4	3	7	(3)	1	[1 geolocator retrieved but not replaced]
		Red-capped Plover	1	-	1	(-)		
		Total:	**5**	**3**	**8**			
30/11/14	North Manuka	Ruddy Turnstone	**14**	**16**	**30**	(8)	1	[1 geolocator retrieved but not replaced]
		Silver Gull	10	-	10	(9)		

Summary of Catches

Species	New	Retrap	TOTAL	(Juv)
Ruddy Turnstone	76	70	146	(25 = 17%)
Pied Oystercatcher	3	-	3	(-)
Red-capped Plover	1	-	1	(-)
Total	**80**	**70**	**150**	
+ 165 Silver Gulls (Deakin birds and +15 Pacific Gulls)				
11 geolocators retrieved (9 replaced) + 2 new ones deployed				

King Island, spot the Turnstone! (Photo Prue Wright).

Ruddy Turnstone Counts on King Island
23/11/14 to 1/12/14

	Number of Ruddy Turnstone	
Location	**23/11/14-1/12/14**	**22/11/13**
Stokes Bay	74	33
Last gate at Surprise Bay to Stokes Bay	32	32
Surprise Bay/Denby Bay	182	125
Dripping Wells	55	60
Burgess Bay (Currie)	80	69
Manuka (South, Central, & North)	145	88
Porky Beach	20	37
Unlucky Bay	20	11
Whistler Point/South Whistler/Duck Bay/Green Island	112	36
The Springs	34	55
Total	**754**	**546**
Coverage of the whole of the west coast of King Island. No birds found in Seal Bay (on 24/11/14).		

Flag Sightings – King Island
25/11/14-1/12/14

	Location	**Species**	**Colour/Flag**	**Comments**
25/11/2014	Porky Beach	Pied Oystercatcher	Black K3	
26/11/2014	North Manuka	Hooded Plover	Orange WY/B	breeding - 3 eggs
26/11/2014	North Manuka	Pied Oystercatcher	Black B1	breeding - 2 eggs
28/11/2014	Burgess Bay, Currie	Ruddy Turnstone	YRD	seen by Robyn
28/11/2014	Burgess Bay, Currie	Crested Tern	074-02845	band read on breeding adult
30/11/2014	North Manuka	Pied Oystercatcher	Yellow RL	
1/12/2014	Surprise Bay	Sooty Oystercatcher	Yellow flag	paired mate not banded
1/12/2014	Sealers Wall	Sooty Oystercatcher	Yellow flag	pair - both flagged
1/12/2014	Stokes Point	Ruddy Turnstone	O/Y flag	right leg
1/12/2014	Cataraqui	Pied Oystercatcher	Yellow O1	paired
1/12/2014	Dripping Wells	Ruddy Turnstone	O/B TLZ	seen with TWD
1/12/2014	Dripping Wells	Ruddy Turnstone	O/B TWD	seen with TLZ
1/12/2014	Porky Beach	Ruddy Turnstone	O/Y flag	white geolocator
1/12/2014	South Whistler = Duck Bay	Ruddy Turnstone	WV	white geolocator, with YWL
1/12/2014	South Whistler = Duck Bay	Ruddy Turnstone	YWL	white geolocator, with WV
1/12/2014	Unlucky Bay	Pied Oystercatcher	Yellow 96	paired, mate not banded
1/12/2014	Unlucky Bay	Pied Oystercatcher	White K4	paired, mate not banded
1/12/2014	South Whistler (Green Island)	Pied Oystercatcher	Yellow 1D	
1/12/2014	South Whistler (Green Island)	Pied Oystercatcher	White V9	paired
1/12/2014	The Springs	Ruddy Turnstone	O/Y flag	

King Island Visit Report 7-16 February 2015

Robyn Atkinson and Clive Minton

This is a joint report with Robyn Atkinson, the team leader, having written the first part giving details of the daily activities. Clive Minton (who was not part of this King Island team) has added some tables of data and explanatory notes.

Robyn's Report

Objectives for our King Island trip were

a) To deploy 60 new geolocators on adult Ruddy Turnstone in the Manuka area.

b) Half of the birds to which geolocators are applied will be given an anti-helminth medicine which is intended to kill off all their internal intestinal parasites. It is hypothesised that such birds may be more successful in their migration, partly because of greater efficiency in accumulating pre-migratory fat deposits. This is a Deakin University project.

c) Retrieve any further geolocators put on previously (except those deployed during the last visit, in November 2014).

d) Census the Turnstone population at each of the main Turnstone locations along the whole of the western half of King Island.

e) Catch, band, flag and fully process samples of Turnstones at each of the main locations on the west coast of King Island.

f) Catch another sample of Silver Gulls at both Currie and in the remote south-west corner of King Island at Stokes Point for the Deakin University project.

To facilitate these objectives we needed to put forward the planned K.I. trip by one month. One of the consequences of this was that the birds were not fattening for migration, and as there was a plentiful supply of food, only feeding for short periods. The rest of their time was spent sitting out on the rocks watching our efforts with interest. Early in the morning, on a falling tide, when the kelp was still damp, seemed to be their preference?

Saturday: We arrived to a lovely day on KI. After organizing ourselves, three cars headed out to count the entire west coast. A total of 513 Turnstone were found. This was a disappointingly low number as the November count had recorded 754. Where it was possible to recount bays we did, but never counted more than the original count.

The next two days were extremely long, frustrating and disappointing. We set a net at Central Manuka, the heart of our catch area for deploying geolocators, but no Turnstone found the site of our net attractive.

As a consolation we set off to catch gulls, for the Deakin team, at the local pig farm. This is always an easy catch. Just throw out some smelly old cheese, the gulls fly in, and the net is fired within a few minutes. Not this time! Simeon threw out the cheese and the couple of gulls present took a long, long time to call in their nervous mates. While we were waiting, gazing hopefully at the sky, Simeon tried his hand at catching a wild turkey in the adjoining paddock, but the turkey was old and wise, and knew exactly when it was time to depart. Finally we made a gull catch, the first catch for the trip.

Tuesday, Bethany left us. We moved the two nets to North Manuka and made a good catch of 33 Turnstone deploying 25 geolocators.

Wednesday was a busy day, we had set a net the previous evening at Burgess Bay and made an early morning catch of 39 Turnstone. The local school children from grades 5 and 6 were scheduled to spend the morning with us. It was good to have birds in the hand to show them and to be able to deploy most of our remaining geolocators. Thanks to everyone who spent time explaining our work to the children.

In the afternoon we made another good gull catch on the beach and that evening attended a talk by people from the Natural History Museum of London, who amongst other things, touched on the now extinct King Island Emu *Dromaius ate*. The hunt for emu bones seemed to obsess some members of the team for the rest of the trip!

Thursday, after two successful days hopes were high for a catch at Duck Bay. Simeon left and Marcel arrived. Despite much effort, that was the only thing that happened all day.

Friday, back to Duck Bay for an early morning catch. Things looked pretty grim again but after a lot of twinkling a good flock arrived in the bay and with a seemingly impossible twinkle by Birgita we caught 27 Turnstone and 31 Red- necked Stint.

Saturday, another attempt at Central Manuka finally caught us 7 Turnstone. That evening Margaret Bennett took Marcel and Justin on a turkey catch. They were keen to take samples from turkeys if they could find them and Margaret knew of a reliable roost. Four turkeys were caught.

Sunday, we set out ridiculously early for Stokes Point, the southern most tip of the island. Our plan was to arrive at first light, quickly set a net and catch before the tide ran off too far. A catch of 13 Turnstone was made and after a hard week we finally had time for some sightseeing on the way back to Currie.
A total of 119 Turnstone were caught in five catches, 63 were retraps and 16 juveniles. 64 geolocators were deployed and 3 geolocators retrieved in good condition.

Thanks to a great team for their enduring good humor and positive input. Special thanks must go to the twinklers who every day had a difficult job as falling tides exposed more and more rock.

Thanks also to Margaret Bennett and Margaret and Graeme Batey whose invaluable help and local knowledge we could not do without.

Special thanks also to Jenny Marshall for allowing us to again stay at her house, which is such a comfortable base for our work.

Thanks also to:
Angus Roberts (Master of the SeaRoad Mersey) for transporting Clive's vehicle to and from Melbourne.

Shelley Davidson (Parks and Wildlife Service Tasmania) for use of the trailer.

Parks and Wildlife Service Tasmania for facilitating the banding permits and other permits necessary for the work.

Clive's Report

Population Count
All the usual Ruddy Turnstone sites along the west coast of King Island were counted on 7 February. Figures were slightly adjusted at some sites where population estimates from visits later in the period were different (Table 1).

The total count of 513 was well down on the figure for March 2014 (604). This illustrates the continuing decline of Ruddy Turnstone populations in the Flyway. The 2014 figure was buoyed by the extraordinarily large number of juveniles produced in the Arctic 2013 breeding season, and it is disappointing that this does not seem to have slowed the long-term decrease of Ruddy Turnstones in the Flyway.

Catching
Five cannon-net catches were made with a total of 119 Ruddy Turnstone being caught (Table 2). This was rather fewer than in previous autumn visits, partly because considerable effort was put into catching birds in the Manuka region for the deployment of new geolocators. Two excellent catches of Silver Gulls were also made in support of the Deakin University studies of avian-borne diseases. It seems that Silver Gulls are attuned to the taste of cheese whey from the local cheese factory and that they cannot resist such temptation even when it is presented to them in Burgess Bay rather than at the place where they are usually fed this food, at the Currie Pig Farm!

Recaptures
As in 2014, 53 % of the Ruddy Turnstone were already carrying bands and flags. It thus seems we have now reached a stable situation where approximately half of the birds in our study area are carrying bands and flags.

Percentage Juveniles
The proportion of Ruddy Turnstones which were aged as juvenile (1st year) was 13.4 % (Table 3). This is close to the 9 year average (11.5 %) and well down on the exceptional breeding performance of 30.6% juveniles last year (the result of a most successful Arctic 2013 breeding season).

Weights
The fat-free weights of Ruddy Turnstones on King Island is usually between 90 and 100 g. Average weights before departure reach 160-170 g with some individuals up to 195 g. With this visit being earlier than usual, only a small amount of weight had been accumulated on adult birds. Weights were typically 110-120 g with a maximum of 134 g.

Sex-ratios
Because birds had only partially gained their breeding plumage at the time of this visit, it was not possible to reliably sex most of them on plumage characteristics. Blood samples for DNA sexing were taken and Deakin University will provide the results in due course.

Geolocators
Three previously deployed geolocators were retrieved, and all produced good tracks of their northward migration to the Arctic and back south again to King Island. Most of the tracks followed the frequently used course through Taiwan, the Yellow Sea, the Sea of Okhotsk, to their breeding grounds on the north coast of central Siberia. Two returned via a similar route, but one made a long trans-Pacific crossing from Kamchatka to Papua New Guinea. Another appears to have reached the south coast of Western Australia and then back-tracked to Broome before flying across the continent to King Island.

An additional 64 new geolocators were placed on Ruddy Turnstones at Manuka and at Burgess Bay in Currie.

Half of these birds were also treated with an intestinal medicine to remove parasites (see below).

Avian Disease Studies

The Deakin University team again collected blood and "poop" samples from all the waders caught. Half of the Ruddy Turnstones fitted with geolocators were given a pre-treatment of a medicine which will kill parasites in their intestines. Theoretically these birds should be able to put on weight, both at King Island and at stopover locations, more efficiently, and therefore make a more efficient/successful migration. The geolocator tracks of treated and untreated birds will be compared to test for this.

"Poop" and blood samples were collected from Silver Gulls in an attempt to assess whether they also play a role in the annual cycle of the avian viruses detected in Ruddy Turnstone.

Table 1. Counts of Ruddy Turnstone on King Island, February 7-16, 2015

West Coast	Feb 2015	Mar 2014	Mar/Apr 2013	April 2011	Mar/Apr 2010	1985*
Seal Bay/Black Point	n.c.	43	12	n.c.	60	
Seal River mouth	n.c.	0	0	n.c.	0	
Stokes Point	49	62	60	30	20	
Stokes Point to Surprise Bay	66	52	12	70	110	
Surprise Bay (including Denby Beach)	71	106	80	75	105	
Seal Rocks	0	0	0		0	
Dripping Wells	30	45	75	62	65	
Ettrick Beach	0	0	0	0	0	60
Miller Bay	0	0	0	0	0	
Currie Golf Course (Burgess Bay)	66	42	75	85	90	330
Currie Harbour	0	26	20	15	25	
Dirty Bay	0	?	0	13	30	
Manuka - South Manuka - Central Manuka – North (Whalebone)	1} 50} 91 40}	40} 50} 150 60}	65} 70} 165 30}	45} 50} 155 60}	10} 150} 175 15}	67
South Porky	38	0	25	9	0	28
Unlucky Bay	19	15	25	48	10	20
North of Bungaree Creek	0	0	n.c.		0	35
Duck Bay - Island Point} South Whistler}	60	35	70	70	115	260
Whistler Point	0	0	0	4	40	106
The Springs	23	28	26	50	45	
Wickham Lighthouse	0	0	0	0	n.c.	
Total	**513**	**604**	**645**	**686**	**890**	

* Count by D. B. Whitchurch

Table 2. Ruddy Turnstone Catch Details, King Island, 7-16 February 2015

Date	Place	New	Retrap		Total	(Juvs)
10/2/15	North Manuka	9	24		33	(5)
11/2/15	Burgess Bay (Currie)	16	23		39	(4)
13/2/15	South Whistler (Duck Bay)	19	8		27	(1)
14/2/15	Central Manuka	5	2		7	(1)
15/2/15	Stokes Point	7	6		13	(5)
	5 catches	**56**	**63**	**(53%)**	**119**	**(16) (13.4%)**

3 old geolocators retrieved and replaced
64 additional new geolocators deployed
Also caught – 31 Red-necked Stints (7 juveniles) and 4 Pied Oystercatchers (no juveniles)
Also 2 catches of Silver Gulls (59 on 9/2/15 at the Pig Farm and 62 on 11/2/15 at Burgess Bay)

Table 3. Ruddy Turnstone Catch totals and % juveniles on King Island 2007-15

Year	New	Recapture	Total	(Juveniles)	% Juv
2007	230	11	241	(0)	0%
2008	354	65	419	(75)	17.9%
2009	124	99	223	(0)	0%
2010	123	88	211	(30)	14.2%
2011	122	75	197	(29)	14.7%
2012	65	53	118	(18)	15.2%
2013	125	130	255	(3)	1.2%
2014	81	92	173	(53)	30.6%
2015	56	63	119	(16)	13.4%
	1280	**676**	**1956**	**(224)**	**11.5%**

Note: only includes Mar/April visit catches, not Nov. visits

Ruddy Turnstone being flagged (Photo P. Wright).

HAVE YOU SEEN?

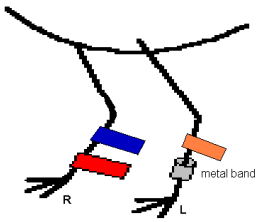
By Roz Jessop

Always read flag combinations from top to toe

RED-CAPPED PLOVERS WITH ENGRAVED LEG-FLAGS?
In 2008 Deakin University commenced a banding study of Red-capped Plover at Cheetham Wetlands and Truganina Swamp, west of Melbourne – near Altona and Altona Meadows. Dr Mike Weston and students have flagged over 100 Red-capped Plover on the upper leg with an orange leg-flag engraved with two letters. They would greatly appreciate any sightings you may make. Masked Lapwings have also been marked with engraved flags at Phillip Island.

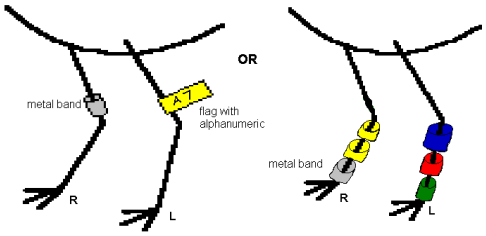
Please send details (including date and place) to
Dr Mike Weston, Deakin University,
221 Burwood Hwy, Burwood, 3125.
Email: mike.weston@deakin.edu.au
Phone: (+61 3) 9251-7433

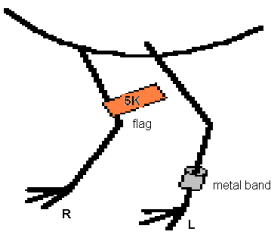
HOODED PLOVERS, OYSTERCATCHERS OR GREY WADERS WITH FLAGS?



Hooded Plover with colour bands or flags?
Phillip Island Nature Park has an ongoing study colour flagging Hooded Plover chicks on Phillip Island. Any sightings of colour marked or alpha numeric flagged Hooded Plover should be sent to Jon Fallaw jfallaw@penguins.org.au

Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers with colour bands or flags?
Any sightings of Pied and Sooty oystercatchers with colour bands or flags should be sent to David Trudgen trudgen@iinet.net.au





"Grey" waders and terns with engraved or plain flags or colour bands? Any sightings of grey waders or terns with engraved flags or plain colour flags should be reported to Roger Standen flagging@awsg.org.au

Wader breeding success in the 2014 Arctic summer, based on juvenile ratios of birds which spend the non-breeding season in south-east Australia.

Clive Minton, Roz Jessop, and Maureen Christie

Introduction

In past years a copy of the paper prepared annually for 'Artic Birds', and also published in Stilt, detailing the 'percentage juvenile' results obtained in both south-east Australia and north-west Australia has been published in the VWSG Bulletin. This year however the corresponding paper has not yet been prepared. The data in this article therefore is confined to that generated by the VWSG in its regular wader study areas in south-east Australia - the central Victorian coasts and bays, the south-east of South Australia and also other South Australian stretches of beach near Ceduna and at Thompson's Beach (60 kilometres north of Adelaide) and at King Island, Tasmania.

The collection of 'percentage juvenile' data is a key component of the VWSG fieldwork program in the November-April period each year when the populations of migratory waders from the Northern Hemisphere are present here. This data serves as a proxy measure of the annual breeding success of each species. It is impossible to generate such data on a wide range of species and over a prolonged time period by measuring the number of young reared to fledgling on the Artic breeding grounds themselves. It should be noted however that the percentage juvenile figures are actually a measure of the proportion of young (juvenile/first year) birds in the population some six months on average after fledging and after completion of the first southward migration. The actual breeding success level is likely to be higher than indicated because significant mortality will have taken place as the young newly fledged birds learn to feed themselves and as they undertake the relatively hazardous task of their first migration. The figures should therefore really be regarded as an index of breeding success. This still facilitates valuable year-to-year and species-to-species comparisons as well as indicating whether there are any longer term trends.

To make such comparisons as accurate as possible the sampling conditions have been standardised. Only birds caught in cannon net catches are included (mist netting often gives a higher percentage of juveniles). Samples are only used if obtained in the period when banding and retrap data have shown that the whole of the adult and first year population of a species is likely to be present. In most species this is from mid-November to late March, but there are variations between species e.g. a cut-off date of 1 March is used for Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Curlew Sandpiper because some adults start departing northwards from early March. Also, geolocator data has shown that the dates of first northward departures of adult Ruddy Turnstone are well into April and that Sanderling do not depart until the very end of that month. So where a key sample has been obtained late in the season it has been incorporated into the data if considered appropriate.

Methods

The VWSG fieldwork program attempts to make as many catches as possible for each species in the period when the full population is known to be present. The more samples obtained and the more different locations at which birds are caught the more likely it is that any inhomogeneity in the catch samples is minimised. The number of catches of greater than 50 birds is indicated as big catches are probably rather better indicators of the situation for the population as a whole. However on some species (e.g. Ruddy Turnstone) small catches are the norm because birds are present in only modest sized flocks and in only modest numbers in total.

It is always difficult to obtain adequate samples of Bar-tailed Godwit and Red Knot because these species are present at only a few places and at locations which are often difficult logistically for catching. The difficulties are accentuated in Red Knot where a high proportion of the Victoria summer population is juvenile birds (because most New Zealand Red Knots spend their first non-breeding season in south-east Australia). This also makes year-on-year variability in numbers high and considerably reduces the number available to be caught following a poor Red Knot breeding season.

Note that two different measures of the 'average/normal' breeding success are given in the tables. In Table 1 the median value percentage juvenile value is given, the median being determined from the full list of percentage juvenile figures obtained over the whole of the study period. Median was originally introduced when the number of years' data was much lower and because the figures were not necessarily fitting a normal distribution. Use of the median as a measure of the norm had the advantage of minimising distortions caused by unusually high or low percentage juvenile figures. The straight forward average percentage juvenile figure has been used in the second table, this being quoted for the data generated since the 1998/99 season. This was the year when similar systematic data from the north-west Australian wader populations was first collected. There are still some quite marked differences between the median and mean figures for some species. But as the data series are now long it is probable that the mean figure, especially that determined for the more recent years, is the most appropriate to consider as the norm. Nevertheless both figures are still quoted in this note.

Results

The two tables give the detailed results for the 2014/15 non-breeding season together with a summary of the percentage juvenile figures results for each year since 1998/99 (Tables 1 and 2).

The percentage juvenile figures for six of the seven species sampled were well down on the figures obtained in the 2013/14 summer (See VWSG Bulletin 37, August 2014, pages 50-56). The resulting broad classifications showed that for the six species where there was adequate data only Ruddy Turnstone could be classed as having had good breeding success. Other species were classed as average/below average but Curlew Sandpiper had a poor breeding outcome in the 2014 Arctic summer. The Red Knot breeding success however could well have been very good but the sample size was too small for firm classification.

Discussion

Marked year-to-year fluctuations in breeding success is the norm for Arctic breeding waders. The 2014 Arctic summer was clearly less suitable for most of the wader populations visiting south-east Australia than the previous year. In 2013, for example, Curlew Sandpiper and Ruddy Turnstone had extremely high breeding success and that for Bar-tailed Godwit was also very good. 2014 was very average, but nothing like as bad as can occur in some years. Factors affecting breeding success include date of snow-melt, June and July temperatures, predation levels (Artic Foxes and avian predators) and late snowfalls (particularly around the time of chick-hatching in early July) The greatest correlations have been found with June/July temperatures and predation levels. However late snowfalls of short duration may not be adequately recorded in Arctic weather data and these may actually be a more important factor than currently indicated.

When attention was first turned, some 40-50 years ago, to the measurement of wader breeding success via the proportion of young birds in populations on the non-breeding grounds in Western Europe and Africa a strong correlation for some species was shown between breeding success and predator levels. In particular predator levels were shown to be closely linked with Lemming cycles, which at that time were generally on a 3 (occasionally 4) year cycle. It was considered that in good Lemming years predators mostly feed on Lemmings, rather than adult waders and their eggs and chicks. But in the following year,

after the Lemming population had crashed, predators turned their attention back to waders and, furthermore, there were high population levels of predators because of their successful breeding in the previous, bountiful summer. The strong three-yearly cycle in, for example, Curlew Sandpiper breeding success in West European and South African 'wintering' populations now seems to have largely broken down according to an analysis carried out by Yaara Aharon Rotman, a VWSG member and PhD student at Deakin University. In reaching this conclusion Yaara used VWSG data going right back to 1978/79 on some species and all the AWSG data collected in North West Australia since the 1998/99 non-breeding season. She also looked at more recent data generated in Western Europe.

Yaara concluded that a strong three-year cycle probably never existed in our Flyway and that in particular, since about 1990, there have been no regular cycles on any of our species. She attributes this situation to the fact that our waders come from a wider geographic spread of Arctic breeding habitats than the populations of birds in Western Europe/Africa which had exhibited strong cyclic behaviours. It also appears that Lemming cycles in the Arctic have become much less pronounced in recent years, possibly as a result of climate change.

It is surprising in view of the various changes noted above and other marked changes in the Flyway populations of some species, due mainly to loss of feeding habitat at the crucial stop-over location in the Yellow Sea, that there do not appear to be any marked long-term trends in the percentage juvenile breeding success data.

The Future

The monitoring of annual breeding success will remain the most important element of the VWSG 'summer' fieldwork program for the foreseeable future. Although alternative methods are being investigated of obtaining such data (e.g. by close examination of individuals in roosting flocks) there are other practical difficulties in these. Also one of the greatest attributes of the percentage juvenile data is that there is now such a long history of systematic collection of this data. When looking for cyclicity or long-term trends continuous series of data are required over a long period of time.

Table 1. Percentage of juvenile/first year waders in cannon-net catches in south-east Australia 2014/15

Species	No. of catches		Total caught	Juv./ 1st year		Long term median * % juvenile (years)	Assessment of 2014 breeding success
	Large (>50)	Small (<50)		No.	%		
Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*	8	10	3494	647	18.5	15.3 (36)	Average
Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*	1	7	490	25	5.1	10.0 (35)	Poor
Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*	1	0	103	15	14.6	19.5 (25)	Below average
Red Knot *Calidris canutus*	0	2	11	11	(100)	58.0 (18)	(Very good?)
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*	0	21	485	81	16.7	10.0 (24)	Good
Sanderling *Calidris alba*	1	4	146	20	13.7	10.1 (23)	Average
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*	2	5	289	45	15.6	13.3 (33)	Average

All birds cannon-netted in period 2 November to 25 March except Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Curlew Sandpiper to end February only and some Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderling to early April and one Sanderling in late April (2015) . *Does not include the 2014/2015 figures.

Table 2. Percentage of first year birds in wader catches in south-east Australia 1998/99 to 2014/15

Species	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	*Average (16yrs)*
Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*	6.2	29	10	9.3	17	6.7	12	28	1.3	19	0.7	19	26	10	2.4	38	17	*14.6*
Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*	32	23	13	35	13	23	10	7.4	14	10	15	12	20	16	22	17	19	*17.4*
Curlew Sandpiper *C. ferruginea*	4.1	20	6.8	27	15	15	22	27	4.9	33	10	27	(-)	4	3.3	40	5.1	*17.3*
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *C. acuminata*	11	10	16	7.9	20	39	42	27	12	20	3.6	32	(-)	5	18	19	16	*18.7*
Sanderling *C. alba*	10	13	2.9	10	43	2.7	16	62	0.5	14	2.9	19	21	2	2.8	21	14	*15.1*
Red Knot *C. canutus*	(2.8)	38	52	69	(92)	(86)	29	73	58	(75)	(-)	(-)	78	68	(-)	(95)	(100)	*58.1*
Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*	41	19	3.6	1.4	16	2.3	38	40	26	56	29	31	10	18	19	45	15	*24.5*

All birds cannon-netted between 15 November and 25 March, except Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Curlew Sandpiper to end February only and some Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderling to early April and one Sanderling in late April (2015). Averages (for previous 16 years) exclude figures in brackets (small samples) and exclude 2014/15 figures

Latham's Snipe and urban wetlands in the Port Fairy region.

Birgita Hansen

In February 2014, I provided expert evidence at a Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) panel hearing regarding a housing development proposal for part of the Powling Street wetlands complex in Port Fairy, south-west Victoria. Powling Street wetlands is one of the most important sites for snipe in south-eastern Australia and has had records of up to 430 birds, with regular counts showing a non-breeding population size of between 50 and 300 birds. As the federal criteria for an important site for snipe is 18 birds, these counts represent a highly significant population.

One of the arguments used by the development proponents during the VCAT case was that snipe displaced by housing and disturbance would simply go somewhere else. Whilst previous surveys suggest that snipe do occur in other locations, there was no evidence to suggest that they did in fact have other suitable sites to use. This argument will be well familiar to many wader enthusiasts, and is a constant source of frustration for wader conservation efforts as we know that birds generally do not go elsewhere as there is not other suitable habitat available.

In the wake of this case, myself and my colleagues in the South Beach Wetlands and Landcare Group (SBWLG) in Port Fairy, who have been monitoring the snipe there for 15 years, decided to investigate the relative use of wetlands in the Port Fairy region. The objective for doing so was to determine the extent to which snipe rely on urban wetlands like Powling Street compared to other 'alternative' habitat. As birds depart the wetland at night to forage in wetlands, paddocks and drains in the surrounding landscape, surveys had to be restricted to the daytime when they are roosting.

During the spring-summer season in 2014-2015, we ran a series of monthly surveys using teams of volunteers. A range of wetland habitats either known to hold snipe, or containing habitat likely to support snipe, were simultaneously surveyed on a single day. Surveys were conducted by walking a transect through the wetland and counting birds as they flushed from the vegetation. On the basis of past observations, we estimated that birds would be disturbed from the vegetation within 50 m of the transect line. In order to check this assumption, we also estimated flight initiation distances for individual birds as they flushed from the observer.

We conducted counts in October, November, and December in 2014, and in January and February 2015. We counted 15 wetlands on each survey day. Four of these wetlands occurred within township areas (designated 'urban' wetlands), three occurred on the township fringe (designated 'peri-urban' wetlands) and the remainder occurred out in agricultural and nature reserve areas (designated 'rural').

Over 95% of the snipe counted were in urban or peri-urban wetlands (Table 1). Only five records, over three different months, were obtained from rural wetlands, and these were only from Killarney swamp and Yambuk Nature Conservation Reserve. The lowest count of snipe at Powling Street wetlands was in December (23 birds) and the highest was in October (133 birds). Urban wetlands in Peterborough also held substantial numbers of snipe, with a single small wetland (<0.25 ha) having 169 birds during the November count.

Flight initiation distances (FID) varied from 5 – 100 m, with the median being 20 m and the mean 26.8 m. There was a slight trend of decreasing FID as the vegetation height increased, although this pattern was not statistically significant.

It was very clear from the study that urban wetlands are very important for snipe during the day. What was very interesting but unexpected was the high number of birds also using small wetlands within the township at Peterborough. What we don't know is where the birds go during the night, and the relative importance of other wetland or 'wet' habitats in the region for night time foraging. In both an urban wetland in Peterborough and the nature conservation reserve at Yambuk, we found evidence of foraging by the snipe (lots of holes in the soft sediment, about the right diameter for a snipe bill). We wish to explore this further.

In order to try and improve our knowledge about where snipe go at night, and what other wetlands they might rely on outside south-west Victoria and on migration, we have initiated a geolocator tracking project to begin this September (2015). We successfully received a small grant from the Australia Japan Foundation (AJF) to purchase geolocators to attach to snipe at Powling Street wetlands, where we have the highest probability of capture (and re-capture for geolocator retrieval). We also hope to raise additional funds over the coming 6-12 months to purchase GPS (satellite) transmitters, in order to increase the likelihood of getting movement and migration data on the snipe. The AJF grant includes a trip to Japan in May-June 2016, to conduct snipe surveys with the Wild Bird Society of Japan and the Japanese Bird Research Association. Although the probability of re-sightings is extremely low, we will nevertheless be on the lookout for marked snipe that we will have captured in the previous season. We also plan to hold a community field day where we talk about snipe monitoring and conservation.

I would like to acknowledge all the hard work on this project and over the years by SBWLG, who have monitored snipe at Powling Street wetlands. A special thanks to all the volunteers who participated in surveys. I would like to thank my collaborators Jodie Honan and Don Stewart in SBWLG. I'd also like to thank my colleagues David Wilson, Richard Chamberlain, Inka Veltheim, and Simeon Lisovski, who will be working on this project with me over the coming year. Thanks also to Clive, Ken and Danny for support and advice in setting up the tracking project.

Table 1. Total counts of snipe, summed over all wetlands counted in each wetland type, in the Port Fairy region over the 2014-2015 spring –summer season.

Wetland type	**Oct 2014**	**Nov 2014**	**Dec 2014**	**Jan 2015**	**Feb 2015**
Urban	318	317	124	147	98
Peri-urban	12	31	20	37	22
Rural	1	0	5	4	0
Regional total	**331**	**348**	**149**	**188**	**120**

Geolocators Update - 2015

Clive Minton, Ken Gosbell, Robyn Atkinson, Marcel Klaassen, Maureen Christie and Margaret Bennett

A comprehensive report on the VWSG's experience with geolocators was included in last year's VWSG Bulletin (Number 37, August 2014). This detailed the number of geolocators deployed on three different species by the VWSG in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania (King Island) between April 2009 and April 2014. It also summarised the number of geolocators retrieved.

The table below gives the further number of geolocators retrieved and geolocators newly deployed in the period between May 2014 and April 2015.

All VWSG geolocator work is now concentrated on Ruddy Turnstones. The greatest effort continues to be in King Island, where the geolocator program is now very much in support of (and financed by) Deakin University projects. Maureen Christie's Friends of Shorebirds SE is correspondingly responsible for the continuing geolocator efforts in the south-east of South Australia. The overall geolocator retrieval rate (22 units) was similar to that from Turnstones in other recent years, at both locations.

The table also shows that in most cases when a geolocator is removed from a bird it is replaced by a new unit. We are now building up a valuable databank of birds on which we have migration information for two or more separate years.

A new development was the deployment of two trial units provided free of charge by Migration Technology on Turnstones at Flinders. These units were rather bulkier than previous geolocators used because of an extra protective layer to reduce seawater corrosion. Flinders was chosen for this trial because the flock of Turnstones there are kept under regular observation by Penny Johns. This provided the opportunity to observe the birds after deployment of the geolocators. If any problems arose then it was practicable to recapture birds to remove geolocators.

Geolocator retrieval from and deployed on Ruddy Turnstone in 2014/15

		Retrieved	**Deployed**	
			Replacements	New
King Island, Tasmania	Nov	11	9	2
	Feb	3	3	64
(sub-total)		**14**	**12**	**66**
South Australia	Nov	3	3	
	Apr	5	3	11
(sub-total)		**8**	**6**	**11**
Victoria	Mar			2
Totals		**22**	**18**	**79**

Sanderling '3K' – a tale of a geolocator track

Rog Standen

An email from Judit Szabo, from the EAAF Partnership, on 7 September 2013, started an interesting story of a Sanderling banded at Canunda NP. Judit said…" I am in Siberia at a meeting. I didn't have anybody else's address in my phone. The Minister of Environment [presumably Russian] proudly presented me with the body of a sanderling, with geolocator …, which was shot recently".

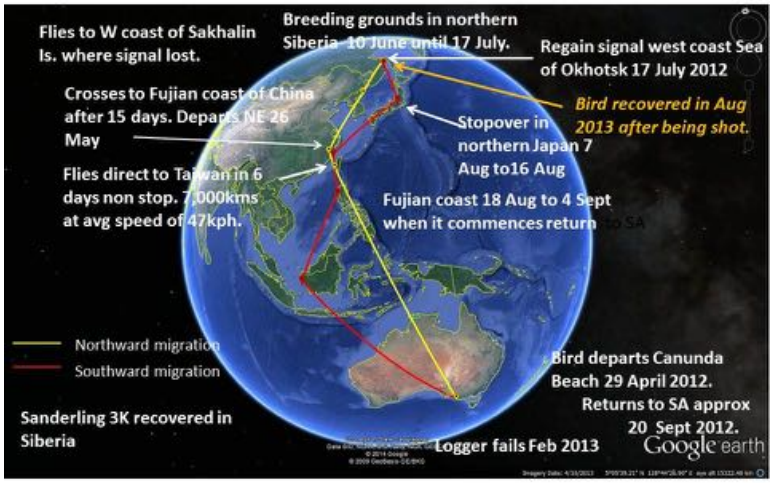
What a shame this bird had been shot, but it is a reminder that hunting of waders continues in many places along the flyway. Judit later said they had come across several dead shorebird bodies on the beach – shot.

The band, flags – it was carrying an engraved orange flag '3K' and a plain yellow flag - and the geolocator, were posted to me. I then took the geolocator to Ken Gosbell's home so that he could attempt to read the tracks. It was nearly eighteen months since the bird had its geolocator applied (29/3/12) and the hope was that there may be two northern and one southern migration 'in store'.

Unfortunately Ken couldn't extract the data and had to send it back to James at Intigeo, who did manage to piece enough data together for Ken to draft two migration routes, one north and one south. James said that "despite the geolocator being the worst corroded Intigeo I have yet seen (mostly due to internal battery leakage…), I managed to extract a significant amount of data; almost a year. I think you have a complete loop." What good news this was. As the bird had only spent five weeks in the arctic, it was unlikely to have bred, certainly not successfully, but at least we had a track so that was some good to have come from the loss. The bird was shot in the Gulf of Patience on Sakhalin Island, at the southern end of the Sea of Okhotsk (49.2N 143.1E).

The northern route was similar to other Sanderling geolocator tracks, but the return route through Japan was a bit more unusual. The bird arrived back in Australia in late October 2012 and the logger ceased operating in February 2013.

Many Sanderling geolocator tracks have now been analysed and reported by Ken and others in various places, but the story of this individual seemed worth expanding on.



Map of '3K' migration route provided by Ken Gosbell

Conservation

Doris Graham

Western Port

With the change of state government late last year the proposed expansion of the Port of Western Port has been put on hold.

A new study has been released to support local action on climate change impacts in Western Port by SECCCA – South-east Councils Climate Change Alliance.

The Western Port Local Coastal Hazard Assessment, which provides detailed mapping, modelling and data, was released on 5 June 2015.

The Western Port Local Coastal Hazard Assessment project is part of a wider Victorian Government program led by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to generate detailed coastal mapping and information. This information will help Victorians understand and plan for climate risks along the coast through better information on storm surges and possible sea level rise impacts.

The reports can be downloaded from:

http://www.seccca.org.au/projects/western-port-local-coastal-hazards-assessment/

Moolap Saltfields and Pt Henry

The Moolap (Geelong) Saltfields Project and Pt Henry redevelopment is ongoing. The Geelong Environment Council is pushing for the saltfields to be developed as an "internationally significant" birdlife park. For more information see:

http://www.geelongadvertiser.com.au/news/geelong/have-your-say-on-salt-fields-future/story-fnjuhovy-1227474418271

South Australia (Maureen Christie)

Beach Wrack Harvesting

See update in the Friends of the Shorebirds SE report in this bulletin.

The Round Bellied Clive

Marj Reni

The Round Bellied Clive is an extremely rare bird- In fact he is possibly the only remaining individual of this unique and most unusual species.

He is an 80+ bird easily recognised by his shape, which is as his name indicates – round.

His legs are strong and well able to carry him across sand dunes, mud-flats and beaches where he is most frequently observed leading a small flock of other rare birds weighed down with a lot of equipment.

However his plumage is generally quite dull which allows him good camouflage, but he has been observed from time to time displaying a bright red rump which does not appear to be from any practical purpose other than amusement for himself and others.

His voice is usually of a loud and clear nature with a definite, instructional ring to it. Sounding – "Everyone do something" or when on the beach – "Three, Two, One, Fire!!" followed by a very loud "Run, Run" as he propels himself on those thick legs toward the tide-line.

A sociable bird seen frequently in large flocks around a barbeque where he consumes large amounts of meat, salads and much dessert. He's even been seen consuming large amounts of condensed milk straight from the tube.

He migrates North annually to the sunny beaches of Broome and beyond where he congregates with other like-minded, rare birds to observe other migrating species. One such sojourn was made with the Bright-coloured Marj on a low-flying four days travel to Broome. Interrupted for a few days in Kalgoorlie where he predated on Banded Stilts.

His breeding habits have not been closely observed but we do know that he has mated for life with the Long Suffering Pat-bird. A very faithful bird with who he shares a nest and have produced two strong offspring.
There is much more to be said about the Round-Bellied Clive but perhaps that could be conveyed in detail in someone's thesis.

October 2014

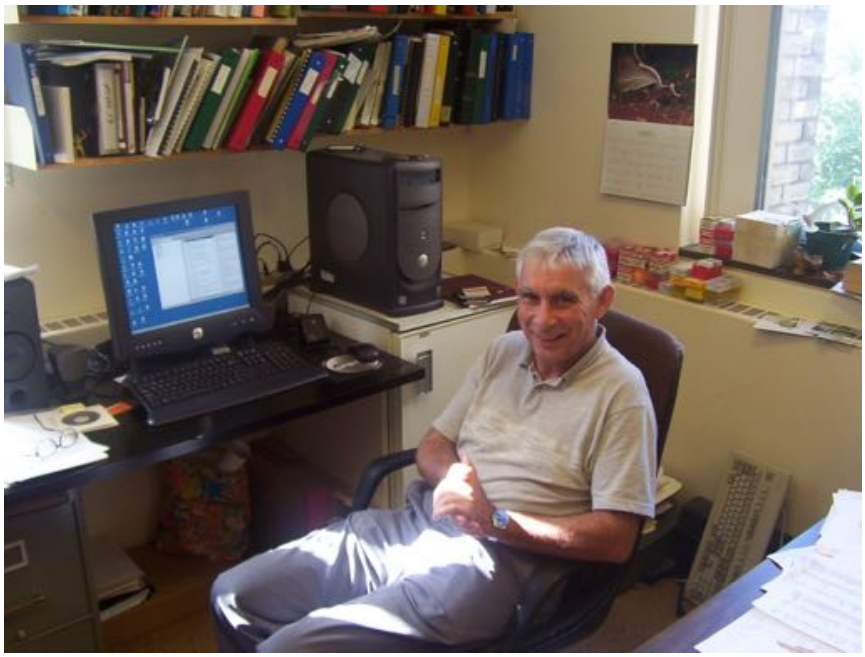
In memoriam: Allan J. Baker, 1943-2014

By Theunis Piersma from http://globalflywaynetwork.com.au/allan-baker/

On 20 November 2014, suddenly and unexpectedly, the worldwide shorebird community in general, and Global Flyway Network in particular lost a great friend and key contributor. Still in his post of 42 years as Senior Curator of Ornithology at the Royal Ontario Museum, and yet full of an unrelenting lust for life and scientific adventure, Allan lost a brief battle with an intestinal disorder. He was preparing for another expedition to the *rufa* knots' southernmost nonbreeding grounds, and was on the verge of various scientific breakthroughs. All of a sudden we are left to our own devices, without his vision, encouragement and support, without his 'grumpy frown' and his sparkling mischievous humour.

In 2006 Allan helped to establish the Global Flyway Network, being a board member since. The financial backing provided by BirdLife Netherlands secured the work by Patricia González in Argentina and indeed elsewhere along this flyway, and also the means to set up complementary work by Chris Hassell and associates along the beleaguered East-Asian Australasian Flyway. This latter flyway connects Allan's homeland New Zealand with the Russian Far-East, through densely human-populated East Asia. We will miss him a lot.
A full obituary can be found on the Wader Study Group web page:

http://globalflywaynetwork.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/WaderStudyGroupBull2014-Allan-Baker-obituary.pdf



Allan Baker in his office at the Royal Ontario Museum.

Publications and Presentations using VWSG data

Compiled by Roz Jessop

NEWSLETTERS

Members made contributions to the following:

- **"The Tattler",** Newsletter for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. Copies can be down loaded from the AWSG web page http://www.awsg.org.au/. You can also download previous copies of the AWSG journal Stilt from this site.
- **"VicBabbler",** quarterly newsletter of the BirdLife Victoria
- **"Friends of the Shorebirds South East"** email newsletters prepared by Maureen Christie

Papers of interest:

Ding Li Yong, Yang Liu, Bing Wen Low, Carmela Espanola, Chang-Young Choi and Kazuto Kawakami. 2015. Migratory songbirds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway: a review from a conservation perspective. Bird Conservation International, 25, pp 1-37.

Hansen B., Minton C.D.T., Harrison A. and Jessop R. 2014 Conservation assessment of the Sooty Oystercatcher *Haematopus fuliginosus*. International Wader Studies volume 20: 116-128.

Taylor I.R., Newman M., Parks, P., Hansen B., Minton, C.D.T., Harrison A. and Jessop R. 2014. Conservation assessment of the Australian Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus longirostris*. International Wader Studies volume 20: 161-172.

Yeung Choi, Batley P., Potter M., Rogers K. and Ma Z. 2015. The importance of Yalu Jiang coastal wetland in the north Yellow Sea to Bar-tailed Godwits *Limosa lapponica* and Great Knots *Calidris tenuirostris* during northward migration. Bird Conservation International. 2, pp 53-70.

VWSG Financial Report
Rosemary Davidson and Clive Minton

The attached statement gives details of the income and expenditure incurred by the VWSG during the year ending 30 June 2015. It also provides a statement of the financial position of the Group at year end.

As usual for recent years, operating expenditure exceeded income. Overall the VWSG made a loss of $5648.13 in the 2014/15 financial year. This loss occurred in spite of a further generous financial contribution towards operating costs by Coast Care ($2500). Other potential expenditure was saved through Parks Victoria (French Island) paying for a batch of electric fuses, used to discharge the cannons. Also, this year Deakin University paid the whole of the cost of the geolocators deployed on Ruddy Turnstone on King Island. And Parks Victoria (Sam Remo) again kindly paid for the cost of the boat for our visit to catch waders on Barralliar Island.

Most income and expenditure levels were similar to those in the previous financial year. The main comments are:

A. Subscription income ($1905 vs. $2625) was significantly down. This is partly because of a lesser amount of follow-up of slow-paying members by the treasurer. However it may also relate to an ageing membership not being fully replaced by new, younger, members.
B. Donations ($515 vs. $1385) were also lower than in the previous year. They were again mainly from members.
C. General fieldwork operating expenses were very similar for both years- $4041 in 2014/15 compared with $4755 the previous year.
D. Payment for secretarial assistance for Clive Minton was similar in both years ($4948 vs $4168)
E. One-off costs ($1542) of contributing towards two members attending the AWSG conference in Darwin also increased this year's financial loss.

At year end the financial position of the VWSG was still satisfactory with $61,142.06 in cash assets.

Donations to the VWSG

We wish to thank the following people and institutions for their generous support of the VWSG at the AGM in 2015. It is greatly appreciated.

These donations help enormously to provide funds for maintenance and equipment such as flags, bands and geolocators without which we would not be able to carry out our much needed research.

Flinders Hotel,
Mr. Baillieu Myer, AM and Elgee Park Winery,
Dr David Hollands, OAM
Mr. Nicolas Day

Penny Johns
VSWSG Committee

Victorian Wader Study Group Inc.

ABN 12 794 488

Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 30 June 2015

INCOME		**EXPENDITURE**	
Subscriptions	$1,905.00	Printing Bulletins	$2,051.50
Bank Interest	$570.36	Postage, photocopying etc.	$186.00
Term Deposit Interest	$1,050.23	Bank Charges	$10.00
Donations:B Clifford, B Dawson, X Dennett, D&J Gillespie, A Gutowski, O Gouley, B Hansen, T Ireton, J McDonald, P Park, K Shannon, J Shaw, N Takeuchi, D Thomas, C Villani	$515.00	Incorporation Fee	$53.00
Sub-total	**$4,040.59**	**Sub-total**	**$2,300.50**
		EQUIPMENT	
		Black powder	$330.00
		Engraved flags & colour bands	$1,698.37
		Polyvinyl sheets for flags	$280.00
		Solvent cement,sealant, glue	$274.00
Sale of polyvinyl sheets to N Z	$200.00	Firing box repairs & batteries	$642.92
Sale of T shirts	$90.00	Misc. items	$177.65
Excess from AGM food	$130.00	New chairs & stool repairs	$196.29
Proceeds from AGM Door Prizes and Book Sales	$575.00	Calipers & balance	$204.98
		Camouflage material & windbreaks	$100.00
Excess from KI, SA and Yanakie stays	123.35	Hovercraft fuel	$137.00
Sub-total	**$1,118.35**	**Sub-total**	**$4,041.21**
		Payment for sec. help (C Minton)	$4,948.36
Grant from Coast Care	$2,500.00	Payment for conference expenses:	
		to Inka Veltheim	$542.00
		to Laura Tan	$1,000.00
		South Australian Permit	$75.00
		Reimbursment for KI expenses	$200.00
		C Minton's birthday party expenses	$150.00
		Flowers (Lorraine Moore)	$50.00
		Sub-total	**$6,965.36**
TOTAL INCOME	**$7,658.94**	**TOTAL EXPENDITURE**	**$13,307.07**
Cash Balance at 1/07/2014		**Cash Balance at 30/06/2015**	
Petty Cash	$29.35	Petty Cash	$162.10
Westpac Com.Solns Account	$5,883.12	Westpac Com. Solns. Account	$3,526.36
Westpac Cash Reserve Bonus Account	$29,306.27	Westpac Cash Reserve Bonus Act.	$24,851.92
	$31,350.0		$32,400.2
Westpac Term Deposit	0	Westpac Term Deposit	3
Macquarie Account	$220.85	Macquarie Account	$224.85
		Unpresented cheque	$24.00
NET TOTAL	**$66,789.59**	**NET TOTAL**	**$61,142.06**

VWSG Inc Membership List August 2015

Bev & Geoff Abbott
Richard & Margaret Alcorn
Charles & Jocelyn Allen
Malcolm Allen
Terri Allen
Mark Anderson
Peter Anton
Robyn & Steve Atkinson
Graham & Jenny Beal
Andy Bennett & Kate Buchanan
Margaret Bennett
Rob & Gail Berry
David Billinghurst
Malcolm & Judy Brown
Paul & Anna Buchhorn
Gordon & Dawn Cameron
Jeff & Sarah Campbell
Mervyn & Ann Chappel
Rob Clemens
Smathie Chong
Maureen Christie
Allan Clarke & Marj Reni
Bretan Clifford
Pete Collins
Mike Connor
Mary Cowling
Dave Cropley
Rosemary Davidson
Michael Dawkins
Bob Dawson
Xenia Dennett
Joris Driessen
Dianne Emslie
Alice Ewing
Jon Fallaw & Becky Hayward
Erin Farmer
Maureen & Robin Fitzgerald
Amellia Formby
Colin & Angela Gibbs
Don & Joyce Gillespie
Kate Gorringe-Smith
Ken & Carlene Gosbell
Andrew & Kath Gosden
Olivia Gourley
Doris Graham
Nicole Grenfell
Patrick-Jean Guay
Jim Gunn
Angie Gutowski
Birgita Hansen
Neville Hatten & Robin Borland
Peter Haward
Peter Hermans
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Bernie McCarrick
Clare McCutcheon
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Rod McFarlane & Helen Vaughan
Pat Macwhirter
Grace Maglio
Ila Marks & Eric Miller & Heidi
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Stewart Monckton
Lorraine Moore
Ben Oliver
Maureen, Paul & Jordan O'Neill
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Priscilla Park
Rob & Linda Patrick
Reece Pedler
Hugo Phillipps
Heather & David Phillipson
Mike Preeston
Thomas Putt
Susan Quirk
David Rantall
Ann Renkin
John Renowden
Jim, Jenny & April Reside
Roger & Annabel Richards
Bruce Ridgeway
A Riseley
Don & Jude Ripper
Bruce Robertson
Ken, Annie & Danny Rogers
Don & Greta Robertson
Yaara Rotman
Neville & Nancy Roussac
Graeme & Margaret Rowe
Liz Sarrailhe
Kelly Shannon
Julie Shaw
Charles Silveira
Howard Simco
Holly Sitters
Marta Slawuta
Mark & Mem Smith
Roger Standen
Jonathan Stevenson
Iain, Sandy, Sally, Anna & James Stewart
John Stoney
Bob Swindley
Naoko Takeuchi
Laura Tan
Susan Taylor
Deryn Thomas
David & Wendy Trudgen
Lyn Turner
Connor Van Doorn
Paul & Kay Van Loon
Inka Veltheim
Cameron Villani
Hazel Watson
Dan Weller
Andrea West
Mike Weston
David & Jean Wilbraham
Ross Williamson
Jeannine Wilson
Sharon Woodend
Prue Wright
Dallas & Judi Wyatt
Meijuan Zhao
Elizabeth Znidersic

Bulletins are also sent within Australia to:

Australian Bird & Bat Banding Scheme
Australasian Wader Study Group
Birdlife Australia
Broome Bird Observatory
CSIRO Library, ACT
Dept. of Defence, Swan Is.
Queenscliff
Eyre Bird Observatory
French Is. Head Ranger FINP *(Mick Douglas)*
Melbourne Water (Werribee Sew. Farm) *(Peter Gall}*
National Library- ACT
NSW Wader Study Group (*Phil Straw)*
NWA WSG- Chris Hassell
Phillip Island Nature Park
Parks Victoria, Foster (*Gerard Delany)*
Parks Victoria, Queenscliff
Parks Victoria, Wonthaggi
Queensland Wader Study Group
Victoria Museum
Victorian Ornithological Research Group
Victorian State Library
And landowners on whose property the group operates in Victoria

Overseas recipients of the Bulletin: *Alaska*:R Gill- Alaska Science Centre
B McCafferty-US Fisheries & Wildlife Service
China:National Birdbanding Centre
Ma Qiang -Chongming Dongtan Nature Reserve
France:Natural History Museum, Paris
Hong Kong- Geoff Carey, Yu Yat-Tung, John Allcock
*Indonesia*Y R Noor-Wetlands International
Iwan Londo
Japan:
Kiyo Ozaki & Y Shigita-Bird Mig. Res. Cent.
T Hiroi-Japan Wetlands Active Network
M Kashiwagi
Korea:Nial Moores, Dr K Jin-Han
Mongolia:
M Gilbert, Wildlife Conservation Soc.
New Zealand:
NZWSG – Adrian Riegen
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Dr H Sitters
Wash Wader Ringing Group: Phil Ireland

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Bulletin Number 38 2015

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