WADER QUEST

THE NEWSLETTER Volume 12; Issue 1 2025

Common Redshank - Elis Simpson

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THE NATURAL HOME FOR WADER LOVERS

Registered Charity England and Wales; 1193674

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Vacancies: Interested parties in any of the above, please email info@waderquest.net for further information.

Next meetings: **Trustees**: 11th March 2025 **Exec. Comm**: 18th February 2025 **AGM:** 30th Nov 2025

Friends of Wader Quest fees:

Individual	**£10.00**
Family	**£15.00**
Life	**£200.00**

Sponsorship fees:

Club	**£20.00**
Corporate	**£50.00**

General enquiries:	info@waderquest.net
Wader Conservation World Watch enquiries:	wcww@waderquest.net
Grant applications and information:	applications@waderquest.net
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Wader Quest's aims

To raise awareness about the challenges waders face in the modern world.
To raise funds to support wader conservation worldwide, especially those involving locally led community projects.

Our mission:

To promote, for the benefit of the public, the conservation and protection of waders or shorebirds and improvements of their physical and natural habitats; and
To advance the education of the public regarding the conservation and protection of waders or shorebirds and their natural habitats.

Wader Quest is an entirely voluntary organisation.

CORPORATE AND CLUB SPONSORS

Wader Quest news

Editorial Comment

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2025. Lots in here to keep you entertained and interested for the still cold winter days ahead of us. Make yourself a warming brew, and settle down to read this packed issue.

This is the first issue with the Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* as the focus species for 2025 so, commencing with this issue you can look forward to learning some fun facts about that species this year (see page 9)

As always we have items about colour-ringing to try to encourage people to observe them and more importantly report them, we have three features concerning Oystercatchers on three continents involving Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus longirostris* in Australia and the American Oystercatcher *H. palliatus* in north and South America. A feature about Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* migration, new information about Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea* nesting and stop-over sites, the perils Nordmann's Greenshanks *Tringa guttifer* face from habitat loss, more about Eurasian Curlews *Numenius arquata* and much more besides in this issue, plus some of our regular features like from the library and the Who's Who of wader nomenclature and taxonomy. But rather than tell you all about it here, I'll let you get on and discover all that this issue has to offer and hope that you enjoy what you find.

We always welcome new ideas and contributions, so, if you have an idea for an article, or have some item of interest about waders that you would like to share in the newsletter then feel free to get in touch with me. rick.simpson@waderquest.net

Chair's Comment

I'm pleased to say that at the end of the year a final check of the membership revealed that we had done better than expected, all things being considered, with an increase of members and not a decrease as feared. With the new system being implemented this should improve the admin of this vital part of our organisation and will help us build on what is a fairly solid core of support.

We look forward to the year ahead with the usual exciting events happening again this year, Birdfair in particular, a chance for us to meet so many people, both friends and complete strangers, with whom it is always great to chat and an opportunity to fundraise into the bargain.

We will be creating a new gallery system on the website so that people that generously share their photos with us can get a wider viewing of their work. Currently the galleries are buried at the foot of the species account pages and, as a result, take some finding. We plan to make the galleries more visible and so, if anyone out there has any wader photos they'd like to share with us, please send them to info@waderquest.net.

Wader Quest stand at Global Birdfair 2024 - Elis Simpson

Board of Trustees update

At the AGM in November the proposal to change the number of Wader Quest Trustees possible was voted on and accepted unanimously. The number of Trustees had been restricted to just six, but the change means we can now have a maximum of 12.

The change was immediately put into effect at the meeting with two new Trustees being ratified by a vote. I'm sorry to say that we had to say goodbye to John Beaumont, who decided to step down. I, and all the other Trustees wish him well and thank him for his support and input during his two year tenure as a Trustee. We were though, very pleased to recruit both Louise Hathaway, who is our Treasurer and long-standing ExCo member and also Rob Clay who has been on our Grants Panel for a number of years and has been a supporter of Wader Quest for many years more than that

We are of course now able to recruit more Trustee, so if this position appeals to you please do get in touch. We will not be, necessarily, hoping to fill all the vacancies in the short term, we just felt it would be good to have some latitude should the right candidate come along.

Executive Committee updates and news

Although Louise Hathaway has stepped into a Trustee role, she will remain part of the ExCo group too. It is hoped that we can grow the number of ExCo members and make a clear division between the roles of the two governance bodies. The Trustees remaining responsible for the oversight of the charity and for financial decisions, whilst ExCo will, with some more support, be taking on much of the day to day running of the charity. If this role is something that you feel you'd like to explore, by all means get in touch and let us know, we are actively looking to recruit ExCo members.

Wader Quest news - cont'd

Events attended

- The Northwest Birdwatching Festival held annually at Martin Mere WWT centre, is one of our favourite events. It is always a laid back and friendly event and also there are plenty of birds to go and see during quiet periods. This year we were treated to the appearance of a Snow Goose on one of the scrapes.
- Naturally we were once again busy during our Wader Conservation World Watch weekend. Elis and I visited two venues in the north of England, Redcar beach on Saturday morning and Stag Rock near Bamburgh Castle in the afternoon. Sunday was spent starting to collate the results being sent in from around the world. The results of the event can be seen on page 6 but the full report, including the Roll of Honour, species seen and loads of wonderful photographs and reports on the 2024 Newsletter Special.
- More recently we attended a Curlew Skills Share series of workshops. Details of that can be seen on page 14.

Further events we will be attending in 2025

- **10th May Global Big Day** - Once again we will be joining this event as a team and that team includes everyone in the world! We have been coming in third place and doing well in previous events, but this year we'd like to see if we can knock the optical and travel firms off the top spots. So, please join us and share your list on that day to our eBird team - WaderQuestTeam (as written), let's give those commercial organisations a run for their money.
- **11-13th July Global Birdfair;** Lyndon Top, Oakham, Rutland LE15 8RN. We will be making our annual visit to Rutland again this year. More details on stand location and talks will be provided nearer the time, but we are very pleased to announce that once again the stand will be sponsored by Limosa / Wildwings
- **12-14th September Spurn Migfest;** North Field Spurn. Another excellent event held in the wonderful Spurn area and always replete with rare birds to see over the weekend as well as the obvious attraction of the Wader Quest stand of course. **Details here.**
- **Northwest Birdwatching Festival; [**tbc] Although this event has not yet been announced, rest assured that, should it be so, we will attend again if invited.
- **1st-2nd November Wader Conservation World Watch** - Wherever you happen to be in the world, why not join our world wader watching event? It is a bit of fun but a really useful awareness raising tool for us, so, the more the merrier. See details here.

Grants Panel updates and news - Ray Heaton; Grants Panel Chair

Wader Quest Grants Panel has recently received two applications, both of which focus on protection and improvement of critical wader habitats.

One overseas project is working on the relocation of beach parking, so as to provide a secure nesting area for wader species and other shore nesting birds. This idea of ameliorating anthropogenic pressures to allow species to survive and complete their breeding cycles, is an area that needs to be addressed in wildlife conservation work. It is and will become even more important in future for wader species in particular. Wader Quest is looking at how best to fund the study aspect of this project which should show how successful this conservation intervention may be and to direct repeatability.

Another project is working on two UK farms that already support wader species. On each of the farms more suitable habitat to carry more breeding pairs of waders will be created and will also provide greater areas for winter feeding and roosting. Wader Quest again will look carefully at funding some of the research aspects and other areas to show the success and repeatability of this work. We remain very interested in chick survival and population recruitment.

We are pleased to have received some interesting preliminary reports, from the study in Nepal, on Ibisbill *Ibidorhyncha struthersii*, for which we have provided some equipment funding.

A further request for funding has been received from the ongoing study of Wilson's Plover *Anarhynchus wilsonia*, on Margarita Island Venezuela. Continuing work would involve the study of anthropogenic effects on egg hatching and the local movement of birds outside the breeding season. More details of these projects and the associated Wader Quest grants, will be presented in a future Newsletter.

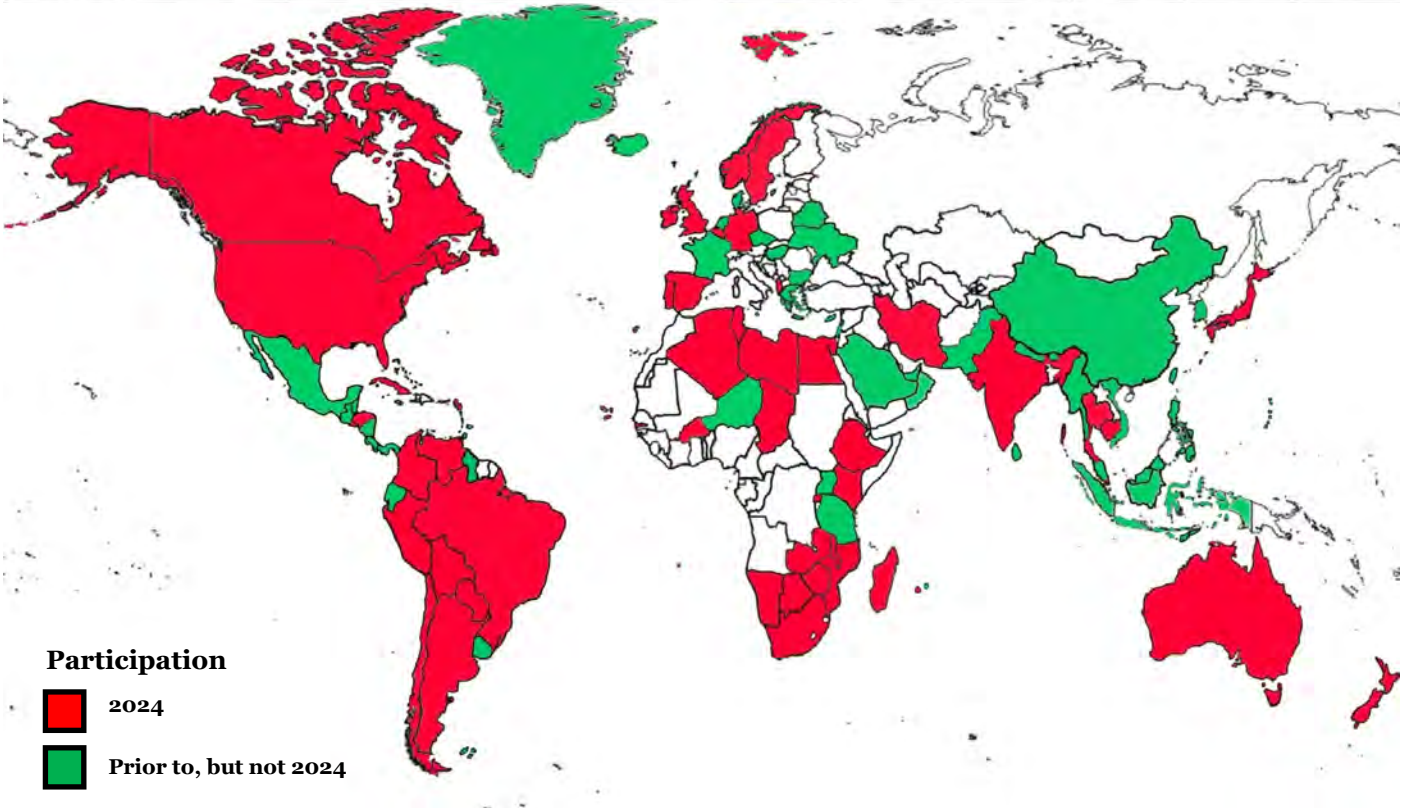
Wilson's Plover chick on Margarita Island, Venezuela - Virginia Sanz

Wader Quest news - cont'd

Wader Conservation World Watch 11 results

Click image to view full newsletter.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Participants	70	182	241	327	309	252	459	582	451	481	445
Species	117	124	124	131	145.5	135	165	176	150	125	139
Countries	19	33	38	35	37	32	52	65	52	42	54
Continents	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Flyways	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9



Global Big Day May 10th 2025

OK, so this is not about waders, but it is about building Wader Quest's profile.

Last May 11th WaderQuestTeam entered Global Birding Big Day ; look where we came in the international teams...

3rd!

This year let's beat the big optics and travel firms!

Our organisation is non-profit and entirely voluntary.

So a great result, but... 318 species is not an insurmountable target is it?

Support the little guys!

Help champion Wader Quest at the same time as doing what you love doing best... BIRDING!

Have fun.

These countries entered as WaderQuestTeam last year;

Anguilla – 50 species
Australia – 126 species
Brazil – 166 species
Bulgaria – 60 species
Canada – 57 species
China – 96 species
Mongolia – 62 species
New Zealand – 11 species
Portugal – 52 species
South Africa – 133 species
Spain – 70 species
Sweden – 56 species
Thailand – 92 species
United Kingdom – 123 species
Thanks to everyone who entered

Don't see your country mentioned, then put that right this year.

Simply share your day's eBird sightings with WaderQuestTeam and be part of the winning team.

Don't use eBird? email your results to info@waderquest.net, we'll get your birds added.

Last year's details here.

Wader Quest funding appeal

easyfundraising

Great news for
Wader Quest

Your cause has raised
535
donations

Your supporters have shopped **535** times via easyfundraising, raising **£658.00** for Wader Quest so far.

Keep up this momentum! **Share the good news** and invite others to sign up and boost your donation count.

Plus, sign up as many supporters as you can before 30th September to get entries to **win one of ten £100 donation prizes** in our Big September Sign up*.

easyfundraising

535.0
shops have supported
Wader Quest

Sign up

Booking.com · ebay · John Lewis · Just Eat · M&S · Sainsbury's · Argos · Etsy · Screwfix · TUI
and 8,000+ online brands...

Sign up today and make a difference!

Thanks to our wonderful supporters shopping via #easyfundraising, we've received 535.0 free donations from popular retailers! Please sign up to support us today if you've not already. You can help increase our donations too when you shop and raise with over 8,000 retailers including eBay, TUI, Tesco, Just Eat and more. Plus, join before 30th September and we could win an extra £100 donation! Sign up here: https://join.easyfundraising.org.uk/waderquest/LTOYPM/c2s/X4EN2Hqv/CR149/facebook/535.0

Species Focus for 2025; Common Redshank - James Cutting

Why the Common Redshank?

The Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* is an emblematic wader of the UK's wetlands. Its striking orange/red legs and evocative calls make it a familiar presence along mudflats and saltmarshes. Here we delve into the species' ecology, conservation concerns, and why it has been chosen for special recognition.

A quintessential wader of coastal habitats

The Common Redshank is a widespread and easily identified wader, favouring tidal mudflats, saltmarshes, and wet grasslands. Its white trailing edge to the wings and erratic flight pattern make it distinctive in flight, while its alarm call, a piercing "tewee," is ubiquitous in estuarine and marshland soundscapes. As a sentinel species, it is often the first to signal potential disturbance, flushing noisily at the slightest threat. Its propensity to feed and roost in the open, make it a very accessible and visible bird and so it is often the first wader many birders within its range learn to identify and used as a comparison to others.

Common Redshank - Elis Simpson

Breeding and Migration

In the UK, there are an estimated 22,000 breeding pairs, which breed primarily in coastal and wetland habitats, with a preference for lake edges, wet meadows and saltmarshes. Their nests, located on the ground and concealed by vegetation, hold a clutch of four eggs. The precocial chicks take their first steps and feed almost immediately after hatching. On average these birds survive for around 4 years, however the current record, set in 2007, was 20 years 1 month and 15 days. While some UK breeders are sedentary, large numbers migrate to Britain in winter from Iceland and northern Europe, swelling estuarine roosts with an estimated 100,000 wintering birds present across the UK

Conservation Challenges

Despite being classified as "Least Concern" globally, the UK has them on the Amber list of concern due to a worrying 19% decline between 1997-2022. The population faces pressure from habitat loss, changes in land use, particularly from agricultural intensification, and increasing human disturbance. The drainage of coastal wetlands for agriculture and development has reduced key breeding and wintering sites. Additionally, rising sea levels and climate change threaten the delicate balance of intertidal ecosystems on which they rely.

Conservation efforts focus on habitat protection and restoration, with organisations like the RSPB and BTO monitoring populations as well as engaging with landowners to agree mitigation steps during the breeding season. Suggested measures include reducing livestock density, manipulating water levels and suspending agricultural proceedings during the breeding season if and where appropriate. In addition, the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the European Habitats Directive plays a crucial role in safeguarding sites for the species.

Indicator of Ecosystem Health

The Common Redshank's presence is often an indicator of the health of coastal and wetland environments. Declines in its numbers can highlight broader ecological issues, from pollution to hydrological changes. Protecting habitat benefits a suite of other waders and wetland dependent species.

How You Can Help

Birders and conservationists can contribute by reporting sightings through apps such as Birdtrack or eBird, supporting habitat conservation initiatives, and engaging in citizen science projects such as those run by the BTO. Minimising disturbance in key breeding and roosting areas, particularly in winter, is also vital. Initiatives such as Bird Aware Solent or BirdWise, engage with the public to educate and inform of the risks humans can pose and ways to reduce disturbance. Small charities such as Wader Quest also provide a platform for raising awareness and supporting wetland conservation, by donating or getting involved, individuals can make a tangible difference for waders like the Common Redshank.

A Species Worth Celebrating

The Common Redshank is more than just a familiar figure along our shores, it is a key species reflecting the health of our wetlands. Recognising it as Wader Quest's focus species for 2025 highlights the importance of ongoing conservation efforts. By protecting the habitats they depend on, we ensure future generations can experience the sights and sounds of this charismatic wading bird in the UK's coastal landscapes.

Species Focus for 2025;
Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Common Redshank © Phil Hadley

The Wader Guru's fun facts about… Common Redshank?

What's in a name?

There are no prizes for guessing that the common English name refers to this species' legs (shanks), which are orange/red. However, like so many common and familiar wades there are a number of other names including; Watery Pleep, Ebb Cock, Shanker, Warden / Sentinel of the marsh (see page 11 for full list).

But why the Sentinel of the marsh? Well this paragraph from *Birds of Britain* by J. Lewis Bonhote (1907) in the Common Redshank species account sums it up rather nicely;

"In winter it occurs abundantly round all our coasts and causes much annoyance to shooters from its habit of flying up on the least alarm and warning all the other less wary fowl, with its shrill 'tui too too.'"

The scientific name is *Tringa totanus*; *Tringa* is the Neo-Latin name given to the Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* by the Italian naturalist Ulisse Aldrovandi in 1603 based on the Ancient Greek *trungas*, which refers to a thrush-sized, white-rumped, tail-bobbing, wading bird mentioned by Aristotle. The specific *totanus* is from *Tótano*, the Italian name for the Common Redshank.

Cover photo; Common Redshank - Elis Simpson

Common Redshank - Elis Simpson

Common Redshanks are difficult to photograph. If you are not able to use a hide they are alert, and in the air alarming, long before they come into range. However, that does sometimes lead to opportunities, like the chance of getting a flight shot.

Flight shots in full sun can be difficult to pull off, but this obliging individual came within range and flew slowly past as the sun accentuating the white wing patches and tail feathers. The reflected light from the water, over which the bird was flying, threw a soft light onto the underside of the bird, reducing the contrast, resulting in this rather pleasing shot.

An added touch is the small droplet of water hanging onto the tip of the lower mandible as the bird screams profanities at me in passing and its muddy feet from the substrate, in which it had been feeding prior to objecting to my presence, adding to the sense of place. With no time to plan for it, the background was fortunately out of focus providing no distractions from this subtly beautiful bird.

Common Redshank - Rick Simpson

Common Redshank
Tringa totanus
Linnaeus 1758
IUCN Least Concern

Scientific name explained: *Tringa* is the Neo-Latin name given to the Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* by the Italian naturalist Ulisse Aldrovandi in 1603 based on Ancient Greek *trungas*, a thrush-sized, white-rumped, tail-bobbing wading bird mentioned by Aristotle. The specific *totanus* is from *Tótano*, the Italian name for the Common Redshank.

Alternative English names: yelper, watery pleep, ebb cock, shanker, watch-dog / warden / sentinel of the marsh, clee, redshank tattler, gambet sandpiper, pellile, pool snipe, red leg, red-legged horseman, red-legged sandpiper, red-legged snipe, red legs, sand-cock, shake, swat, teuk, took, tuke, whistling plover.

European language names:
Asturian: *Chibibí, Chibibí común, Mazaricu Rial/Chibibí* **Basque:** *Bernagorri arrunt, Bernagorri arrunta, Gamba roja vulgar* **Belarusian;** *Кулік-случок, Кулік-случок* **Breton;** *Ar strelleg pavioù ruz, Strelleg, Strelleg pavioù ruz* **Bulgarian;** *Малък*

Common Redshanks - Jaysukh Parekh 'Suman'

Common Redshank - cont'd

червенокрак водобегач, Малък червеноног водобегач **Catalan;** *Gamba roja* **Cornish;** *Gar ruth* **Croatian;** *Crvenonoga Prutka* **Czech;** *vodouš rudonohý* **Danish;** *Rødben* **Dutch;** *Tureluur* **Estonian:** *Punajalg-tilder* **Faeroese:** *Stelkur* **Finnish;** *punajalkaviklo* **French;** *Chevalier gambette* **Friulian:** *gjambe rosse* **Frisian:** *Tjirk, Tsjirk* **Gaelic;** *Cam-Ghlas, Cam-glas, Feadag, Maor-Cladaich* **Galician:** *Bilurico común, Bilurico patirrubio, Gamba roja vulgar* **German;** *Gambettwasserlaüfer, Rotschenkel* **Greek:** *Κοκκινοσκέλης, Κοκκινοσκέλης, Φλυαρονεραλλίδα* **Hungarian;** *Piroslábú cankó* **Icelandic;** *Stelkur* **Irish:** *Cosdeargá, Cosdeargán, Ladhrán deargchosach, Ladhrán trá* **Italian;** *Pettegola* **Latvian:** *Pļavas svilpis, Pļavu tilbīte, Zāles tilbīte* **Lithuanian;** *raudonkojis tulikas* **Luxembourgish:** *Routpatt* **Macedonian:** *Црвеноглава (Црвеногога) тринга, црвеногога тринга* **Maltese:** *Pluverott* **Manx;** *Goblan Marrey, Gollan marrey* **Moldavian:** *Fluierar cu picioare roșii* **Montenegrin;** crvenonogi sprudnik, црвеноноги спрудник **Norwegian;** *Rødstilk, Raudstilk* **Polish;** *krwawodziób* **Portuguese;** *maçarico-de-perna-vermelha, perna-vermelha-comum* **Romanian;** *Fluierar cu picioare roșii, Fluierar cu picioare roșii* **Russian;** *Травник* **Serbian;** *Crvenonogi sprudnik* **Slovak;** *kalužiak červenonohý* **Slovenian;** *rdecenogi martinec, rdečenogi martinec* **Spanish;** *Archibebe Común* **Swedish;** *rödbena* **Ukrainian;** *Коловодник звичайний* **Valencian:** *Picarot* **Welsh;** *Coesgoch, Goesgoch, Pibydd coesgoch, Pibydd goesgoch, Troedgoch.*

Collective nouns: A number of collective nouns pertain to sandpipers in general, including a cluster, a contradiction, a fling (often used for Dunlin in particular) and a time-step, none of which really seem to fit the bill for these birds, except perhaps a cluster, but there is none specifically for Common Redshank.

A cluster of Redshanks - Elis Simpson

Order: SCOLOPACIDAE **Rafinesque** 1815
Suborder: Scolpacii **Huxley** 1867
Family: Tringidae **Leach** 1820
Subfamily: Tringinae **Rafinesque** 1815
Tribe: Tringini **Rafinesque** 1815

Synonymy of genus:
Scolopax Linnaeus 1758
Totanus Bechstein 1803
Gambetta Kaup 1829

Protonym:
Scolopax Totanus Linnaeus 1758

Synonymy of species:
T. gambetta Linnaeus 1758
T. striata Linnaeus 1758
Totanus calidris Bechstein 1803
Totanus maculatus Bechstein 1803
Totanus raii Forster 1817
Gambetta calidris Kaup 1829
Totanus Bewickii 1831
Totanus graecus Brehm 1855

Common Redshank - Liudmila Korjukova

Common Redshank - cont'd

Taxonomy:
Six subspecies currently recognised.
T. t. totanus Linnaeus 1758 - Breeds: Orkney, Shetland and N Scandinavia south to the Iberian Peninsula, Italy, Tunisia and Turkey, and east to western Siberia. Winters: from the Mediterranean to tropical Africa, India and probably also Indonesia.
T. t. robusta Schiøler 1919 (*Totanus calidris robustus*) - Breeds: Iceland, Faeroes and possibly Scotland. Winters in the British Isles and western Europe.
T. t. ussuriensis Buturlin 1934 - Breeds: southern Siberia and Mongolia east to north-east China and the Russian Far East. Winters: from the eastern Mediterranean and eastern Africa through the Red Sea, Persian Gulf and Arabia to southern and south-eastern Asia.


Common Redshank chicks - Astrid Kant

T. t. terrignotae Meinertzhagen, R; Meinertzhagen, AC 1926 - Breeds: in the extreme north-east of China (S Heilongjiang). Winters: in south-eastern and eastern Asia.
T. t. craggi Hale 1971 - Breeds: in north-western Xinjiang (north-west China). Winters: probably in south-eastern Asia and/or eastern China, but uncertainty surrounds this range.
T. t. eurhina Oberholser 1900 (*Totanus totanus eurhinus*) - Breeds: Pamirs, N India and C and S Tibet: Winters: in India and southeastern Asia.

Synonymy of subspecies:
T. t. bewickii Rennie 1831 (*Totanus Bewickii)= T. t. britannica*
T. t. britannica Mathews, GM 1935 *= T. t. totanus*
T. t. meinertzhageni Thiede 1963 *= T. t. eurhina*


Ruff (L) and Common Redshank - Naveen Singh

Systematic / Taxonomic history: A bird with which Linnaeus would have been familiar and was named by him *Scolopax Totanus* [sic] in 1758. He also listed *Tringa gambetta, Tringa striata and Scolopax calidris,* which were synonyms of the same species later in 1766. In the meantime Bresson had erected *Tringa totanus*, which we now use, and having *striatus* as a subspecies and including another subspecies *nævius* both of which are now considered invalid. Bechstein was the first to use *Totanus* as the genus in 1803 using Linnaeus' *calidris* as the species name. The subspecies *bewickii* was based erroneously on a specimen of a Ruff *Calidris pugnax.*

Conservation status - Least Concern: Threatened by habitat loss on both breeding and wintering grounds (agricultural intensification, wetland drainage, flood control, afforestation, land reclamation, industrial development, encroachment of Spartina spp. on mudflats, improvement of marginal grasslands *e.g.* by drainage, inorganic fertilising and re-seeding, coastal barrage construction, and heavy grazing *e.g.* of saltmarshes); disturbance on intertidal mudflats (construction work and recreational activities) and at breeding sites (hikers and dog walkers on footpaths); severe cold weather periods in winter and nest predation; avian influenza.

Population: Globally estimated at around 1,300,000-3,100,000 individuals. European population estimated at 340,000-484,000 pairs, which equates to 680,000-968,000 mature individuals.

Curiosities: *Redshank's Warning*; is a children's adventure book written by Malcolm Saville in 1948 that used the Common Redshank's reputation for warning of danger in its title. The story is about a group of children that have gone to the Norfolk coast for a birdwatching trip with their parents. However, the Redshanks warning cries alert the children to some mysterious activity, which, being children of a perhaps safer age, they feel they must investigate, forgetting their birdwatching and of course uncovering a band of crooks.

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Wader Quest
Wikipedia

Northern Curlew Skill Share; Grassington, North Yorkshire - Rick Simpson

Matt Trevelyan, who set up the North of England Curlew Awards, which we attended last August, created a further event to bring Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* conservationists together and boost the impact of curlew conservation, in what he called the Northern Curlew Skill Share on the 16th of January.

The idea behind the event was for those involved in curlew conservation to gather, discuss and potentially collaborate on various aspects of their work, hopefully giving ideas to, and learning from, each other, to increase the efficacy of their work and improve breeding outcomes for the curlews. Very kindly Matt invited Elis and me to attend.

The emphasis of the event was on farmland, 'below the moorland line', practical solutions to problems, connecting the curlew conservation community, sharing tried and tested practices, discussion and demonstration of innovative and experimental approaches, specialists sharing their expert knowledge, sharing experience and seeking answers to questions people may have with an overall DIY ethos encouraging a hands-on approach to problem solving and experimentation.

The day was divided up into three separate workshops with a panel session at the beginning and end. The event was Chaired by Rob Yorke who navigated us through the day and throughout added his own perspective to what he had heard and seen while moving between the workshops.

The first action was a Panel Session with all panellists introducing themselves and commenting on their involvement in Curlew conservation.

Curlew Skills Share panel; L-R Rob Yorke, Matt Trevelyan - Darley Beck Curlew Project, Mary Colwell – Curlew Action, Rob Foster – Grosvenor Estate, Winner of 2024 Farmland Curlew Award, Kate Appleby – Curlew Connections Wales, Pete Webster – Lawkland Hall Farm - Elis Simpson.

Then followed the first workshop session; each session had three subjects to choose from, which took part in different areas of the venue. The first workshop had the following options.

Morning session

Workshop One

Option A: Boosting Breeding Success on Farmland - Intensive grass cropping is detrimental to breeding success but sympathetically managed farmland allows them to thrive. Boosting breeding success requires familiarity with a range of positive management options, so targeted interventions will be well received and suited to a range of enterprises. The session was designed to examine project fundamentals, challenge conventional thinking and share innovative practices.

Option B: Amazing Wetlands - a discussion of wetland related projects, including practical advice on siting design, consents and installation.

Option C: **Curlews in Culture** - Celebrating curlews and raising awareness through arts and education with examples and best practice advice.

We opted for the Amazing Wetlands option led by Christie Irish, Wetlands Officer for Nidderdale National Landscape.

It was an enlightening discussion mainly surrounding how to create wetland on your land and some aspects of the legalities of doing so. I was particularly interested in hearing how, if you break the ground, even if you own the farm, the government has to give you permission to do so, as it is ostensibly a food production area. I was also interested to hear that wetlands, be they pond or scrape, once they are created and the landscaping is done, are left to develop entirely naturally, no planting or other artificial colonisation is carried out.

Another interesting aspect was the use of any space available. Depending on what your aims are, it is often better to create a number of small wetlands within an area, at different times, to create a spread of age among them. Wetlands,

Northern Curlew Skill Share - cont'd

however large or small, naturally develop and at each stage different types of wildlife find it suitable for their needs. Thus, providing a succession of new wetlands at intervals will create a range of habitats suitable for a variety of wildlife. Also having both ponds and scrapes will also increase biodiversity.

It was also interesting to hear how much planning goes into creating a wetland. Not every corner of a field is suitable, considerations such as soil and land types, proximity to roads and human disturbance potential, leading to threats to wildlife, and whether or not a site is naturally prone to being wet or not all need careful consideration.

Regarding costs, it was estimated that each wetland area would cost around £2.5 to 3k, the main cost being the hire of the digger and operator.

Workshop Two

Option A: Predation - An open discussion on predation, one of the major drives of breeding failure, with themes like evidencing predation, non-lethal and lethal controls, challenges and innovations and tackling root causes.

Option B: Project evaluation / Contribution to Science - How can projects provide useful evidence to advance understanding and boost conservation outcomes. How should observations, records, data and footage be processed and shared. Use of equipment available *e.g.* cameras, thermal loggers, colour rings, GPS. What capacity as citizen scientists do we have to drive curlew conservation forward and how can we work with academic partners?

Option C: **Making Curlew Conservation Viable** - Strategies for project funding, biodiversity net gain and corporate sponsorship plus land management payments.

In this second session we opted for Option A, Predation. Much of what we do centres around predation, not necessarily in a radical sense, but in the raising of awareness about wader misfortunes regarding their breeding success. It was an interesting discussion, with conflicting thoughts and ideas on lethal control, and some aspects of the practicalities of, for example, Larsen traps.

One thing that I particularly found interesting was something that is rarely talked about, and perhaps this is because of a moral issue about tampering with biology, but non-lethal control of predators can be carried out by immunotherapy. Squirrels have been successfully orally fed therapies that mix up their hormones rendering them infertile. This leads eventually, to a population reduction at least and if successfully carried out across an entire population, extinction of that population. This could be introduced to fox populations, the problem being that treating a whole population of foxes in any given area, can be almost impossible and whenever a fox territory is vacated, another moves in immediately.

In all the discussion it became apparent to me that whatever the species, in whatever habitat it may dwell, the problems they face vary little and predation is always at or near the top for all species. However, the solutions and problems faced by conservationists differ little across the board when it comes to that thorny problem of predation and its prevention.

Afternoon Session

Workshop Three

Option A: Repairing ecosystems at the landscape scale - Most projects work at a local scale, but a greater impact could be achieved if we work strategically across wide areas, but how do we provide a framework for this with targeted advice for farmers and the public alike? How can extensive volunteer networks be built up and how do we make the best use of technology to set up a speedy response to nest protection. We need to assess how we work in partnership with organisation, volunteers and farmers to make best use of our limited resources and put curlews at the heart of Landscape Recovery Projects.

Option B: Conversations with DEFRA - Working with Natural England and DEFRA to influence agri-environment schemes, an update on wider actions including Sustainable Farming Incentives (SFI), endorsed SFI an Higher Tier.

Option C: **Invertebrate-rich landscapes** - Curlews require a variety of insects and invertebrates to thrive. This session is designed to provide insights into the causes of invertebrate decline and discuss an array of solutions to reverse it. Subject covered were making farms resilient to climate change, building soil health and plant diversity, regenerating farmland, and discussing strategies to reduce harm caused by veterinary medicines and the use of pesticides.

The day finished with another panel session discussing the events of the day, sharing highlights and tackling issues that had arisen from the discussions earlier in the day and also some topics that had not been covered including talking about on farm days later in the year, headstarting role in the north, afforestation, wintering curlews, vehicle and human disturbance and the Curlew Awards for 2025.

Eurasian Curlew - Elis Simpson

American Oystercatcher on the coast of the State of São Paulo update

- Karina Ávila and Bruno Lima

News from São Paulo's wader island.

Versão Brasileira

Summer shows signs of ending in the Southern Hemisphere. The rain is increasing in intensity and the cicadas are beginning to hide in the tree trunks. On the extensive sandy beach of Ilha Comprida, Semipalmated Plovers *Charadrius semipalmatus,* American Golden Plovers *Pluvialis dominica,* Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* and other Nearctic waders gather in large flocks, already dressed in their breeding plumage. From March/April onwards they will begin migrating to North America.

Among those flocks, there she is: she walks clumsily, picks up shells with her beak but drops them. Then she sticks her beak into the sand once, twice, three times and finally removes a lugworm! Jujuba bears the colour ring A1, and was born in September 2024, in a small stretch of dunes that had already been significantly altered by man. When looking at the sky, Jujuba didn't see stars, but the lights of the beach road. Jujuba was introduced to the noise of engines and tyres that crush shells and everything they passed at an early age. More than once she had to lie still, barely breathing, when feral dogs picked up her scent and looked for her among the dunes. She saw the beaches filled with people in high summer and the sand covered with their detritus.

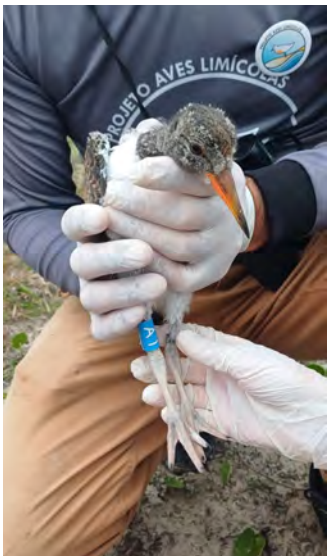
A1 (Jujuba) and A2 - Davi Pasqualetti

But she also saw people who were concerned about her: they installed signs warning about the presence of nests, stood in front of the engines and tyres and even measured her, weighed her and put a ring on her.

Jujuba managed to overcome all these dangers, grow strong and is now more than 20km south of the place where she was born. She lives with other young birds and adults, in a group of 45 individuals.

Unlike Jujuba, Icapara, given ring A3, was born in a protected area, on the north end of the island: the Ilha Comprida Environmental Protection Area. Every night, Icapara left the protection of the dunes accompanied by her parents, to seek food by the sea, under the starry sky. Icapara is still with her parents, but they are taking her further and further south. Will she join Jujuba and her friends one day?

In the first campaign of 2025, we have even managed to ring the youngest chick on Ilha Comprida: Araçá with ring K0, who lives in the protected dunes on the northern tip of Ilha Comprida, with its parents and two older brothers – who already know how to fly!



Jujuba with A1 ring - Karina Ávila

KO being processed for ringing - Karina Ávila

In previous campaigns we found several nests and, even though we were not able to ring all the chicks because they were too small, they remained in their birth areas, which makes us realize that this has been a good breeding season.

Even so, this species is always under threat within the State of São Paulo, which is why we work ceaselessly, day and night if necessary to study them. Future campaigns will see us ringing adult individuals. We will follow everything that happens to and in the environs of these birds so that we may be able, in time, do what needs to be done to reduce negative impacts affecting this species on São Paulo's coast.

The work to protect the American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus* in the most populous state in Brazil has involved scientific research through ringing, the monitoring of the population and also promoting environmental awareness through educational tents and teaching materials. All of this has been possible thanks to a joint effort: Wader Quest has supported us in every way: funding, rings,

American Oystercatcher on the coast of the State of São Paulo update - cont'd

equipment, publicity and most importantly, encouragement. We were also recently awarded funding from Manomet to assist with fieldwork and citizen science. Biosensu embraced the idea of this project since the outset, helping in all aspects and with the granting of authorizations. The ornithologist and friend Paulinho has helped us from the beginning with the issue of ringing. The members of the Peruíbe Bird Watchers Group and the Ilha Comprida Bird Watchers Club go to great lengths to help us in the field and in the work to raise awareness among the local population. Ilha Comprida City Hall always responds to us promptly and has worked on the issue of unauthorized vehicles on the beaches. The ICMbio Iguape Integrated Management Centre has helped us with accommodation for field campaigns and APA Ilha Comprida has helped us publicize the presence of this species in the region.

Display table at local event - Karina Ávila

A family affair, Bruno and Karina's daughter gets involved too - Karina Ávila

Adult (foreground) and juvenile American Oystercatchers (note greyer legs, dull orbital ring and iris, and dark-tipped bill on juvenile) - Karina Ávila

Pied Oystercatcher Port Hacking, NSW shorebird update, summer 2024/25 - Julie Keating

My Xmas wish was granted, but it wasn't without tragedy.

Port Hacking has had the most successful season yet recorded for fledged beach nesting birds. This is the last Greater Sydney public beach that beach nesters are still able to use, but it is only possible with help.

Black-shouldered Lapwings *Vanellus novaehollandiae* are notorious swoopers during nesting season, however the pair we had were nest sitters. So much so that the nesting bird was almost stepped on, refusing to move no matter what, therefore a small fence had to be installed around their nest.

The first clutch saw one of the chicks squashed in the nest after hatching. That day also saw a swell event with the chicks being washed about and having to fight the current to swim back to the beach for around 2 hours.

Black-shouldered Lapwing with its chicks - Julie Keating

Once the swell abated the parents proceeded to swim the remaining 3 chicks off the exposed beach to the more protected campground. One chick didn't hear the call to leave and was left sitting on the beach, back turned towards the rest of the family. The family was starting to disappear into the distance, with the chick still not moving, so I scooped it up and swam it across the channel to reunite it. Unfortunately, all 3 chicks were predated on day 6 so the parents went straight back to nesting in the same location they used the first time.

Close to fledging of the 2nd clutch a large goanna was seen approaching the area the family was using as their base. I was so relieved when it turned away before discovering the family. The Lapwings managed to fledge all 4 of their chicks from their second clutch. Usually, they are lucky if they get just one of their chicks to fledge. Strangely, nesting commenced six weeks earlier than previous years with the first nest being placed in the middle of winter.

Our other beach nesters, endangered Pied Oystercatchers *Haematopus longirostris* (oyks), are territorial. They fight to protect a beach that is capable of supporting nesting. In the past, this beach has only been big enough to host one pair. This year both ends of the spit beach saw a nesting pair.

The eastern pair had their first nest taken by a fox two weeks into nesting. Surprisingly the Lapwing's nest was only 20 metres away and was untouched. Fox lights were installed for the second nesting attempt and no more fox tracks were seen on the beach. This oyk pair managed to fledge one of their two chicks successfully.

The northern pair had completely different personalities to any oystercatchers I've encountered before. I dubbed them the impossible/miracle birds. Usually, oystercatchers will leave a nest or chicks when perceived predators approach from as far away as 100 metres. Had this pair not been people tolerant their nest would have failed given how busy that end of the beach is. Having nested so late they were going to have the last three weeks of the chicks' growth occurring when most Australians are enjoying summer holidays, and people flock to the beach.

I would often hear the call of the eastern end oystercatchers chasing away a single male oystercatcher that was invading their space. They would chase it to the northern end and that would see the northern pair chase it back. This single male was not leaving the area and was bouncing between both nesting spots hoping for an opportunity to be able to partner up.

I was spending sunup to sundown on the beach helping to minimise threats, particularly by dog owners breaking the law having their dogs on this dog prohibited beach. With two weeks to go until fledging I decided to have a sleep in as I had been going since mid-July. Big mistake.

I arrived at the nest site to find our northern end male dishevelled, bill broken off down to the bone and a broken wing. The only thing that could account for that amount of damage, without a broken neck, was a dog attack.

The injured male was caught, he could still run like a demon, and was placed into a carrier with a photo taken and sent to a vet for assessment. While he was in the carrier, sitting by my feet, he was calm. I'd spent so much time out there with this family that he was comfortable around me. The vet determined the injuries were catastrophic and he would need to be euthanised. When the carrier was picked up by someone to take him to a vet, he kicked up a storm trying to fight his way out. He did not want to leave his family.

Pied Oystercatcher Port Hacking, NSW shorebird update, summer 2024/25 - cont'd

We now had a quandary. How would a single female be able to do guard duty, provide enough food for herself plus two chicks, and somehow grab some sleep when the beach was overloaded with people, some with dogs in tow?

Pied Oystercatchers in New South Wales are endangered, so a decision was made to try supplemental feeding to help mum out to avoid her abandoning the chicks. If she did abandon, the chicks would also need to be euthanised, as they can't survive without a parent teaching them to be self sufficient. But how to provide food? You can't just scatter food as the Silver Gulls *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae* would just pick it all off.

Pied Oystercatcher with its chicks - Julie Keating

How do you get close enough without scaring her, while throwing objects at her that she has to realise is food? Turns out it wasn't a problem as the female must have been tossed food before as she jumped at it, first toss. She gobbled that first piece but the pieces after that went straight to the chicks. She was close enough that I could hear the chicks racing to get to the food first. The chirps sounded so much like "give it to me, give it to me".

To add to the stress level the single male that had been hanging around worked out there was now an available single female. When he arrived at the northern end there was now only one bird chasing him, when there should have been two.

Finally, here was the girl of his dreams. No matter how much she tried chasing him away he kept circling back. She couldn't keep wasting energy on this male, clearly not going anywhere.

He had worn her (SeaSea) down. I named him Nuisance. SeaSea had to allow him to be close and she only intervened when he was close to her chicks. He was attacking and chasing her chicks off whenever he had an opportunity to do so. He wanted his own chicks.

He and SeaSea became a bonded pair when he started mating with her. He was wandering the beach digging scrapes but SeaSea was not following and approving his nest choices.

He worked out SeaSea was not going to abandon her chicks and was not going to nest with him as it was too late in the season.

Instead, he decided to show SeaSea what a great dad he could be and adopted her chicks. He stopped attacking the chicks and started to help her feed them. He was renamed Foster, as in foster dad.

The chicks fledged on a Wednesday and the following Saturday saw a massive weather event delivering huge swells. I had placed sandbags out to protect the nest or flightless chicks but I hadn't made them high enough. At the end of the weather event the sandbags had to be located as they had been buried. Knowledge for next season.

The minority of our dog owners in Maianbar were barely tolerating one area of the beach being fenced off to protect nesting birds. This minority illegally walk their dogs on the beach, off leash at that. Our State newspaper, the Sydney Morning Herald, printed an article on how well we were doing with our shorebirds with odds stacked against them. This sent this minority totally crazy and unleashed (pun intended) a bullying social media campaign and one of them called police on me with a false statement. This small group of dog owners are planning to put together a petition to ask for the area to be opened to them and their dogs. The tidal flats and beach are home to federally protected, Critically Endangered Eastern Curlews *Numenius madagascariensis* so it would be a massive fail by our government should their request be granted.

On the plus side, as a result of that article, two outcomes:

One, I received a thank you letter that someone threw into the mail system without my address (see right) and it actually made it to me.

Second, the article saw our local State politician organise a meeting with our environment ministers' office, which she had promised for some time, to discuss all the problems our shorebirds, both migratory and resident, face and how to fix them. It will also allow us to apply for grant funding so we can work on educating the general public. Signs no longer cut it as the majority of people no longer stop to read.

Diet overlaps between the sexes in breeding American Oystercatchers - Lyn Brown & Erica Nol

American Oystercatchers - Elis Simpson

Sexual dimorphism in bill size can lead to sex-specific foraging strategies.

All 12 extant species of oystercatchers (*Haematopus* spp.) have sexually dimorphic bills, and most oystercatcher species show intersexual niche partitioning in diet, where males and females eat different prey species in different proportions.

Intersexual niche partitioning in diet has not been examined in American Oystercatchers *Haematopus palliatus.* This study tested for intersexual niche partitioning in diet in a population of American Oystercatchers breeding on two barrier islands in coastal Virginia, U.S.A. in 2022 and 2023. Diet composition, prey size selection, and foraging areas were compared between the sexes (n = 31 males and n = 28 females). Unlike other oystercatcher species, male and female American Oystercatcher diets overlapped by 99%. Both sexes took similar-sized prey across the seven prey species and shared use of 59% of feeding areas. Previous studies on other oystercatcher species may have found intersexual niche partitioning in diet because of highly competitive environments due to high population density or low prey availability. In contrast, the present study in the Virginia barrier islands that found diet overlap between the sexes may be due to a low competitive environment from low breeding densities and sufficient prey abundance. Read full paper here.

American Oystercatchers - Elis Simpson

Threats to shorebirds, particularly Spotted Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*, along the Inner Gulf of Thailand - Philipp Maleko

A shallow salt pan retention pond during draw-down, supporting thousands of shorebirds, from Calidris sandpipers to Numenius curlews, with an oil terminal in the background. Pak Thale-Laem Phak Bia FNS 121, Phetchaburi Province - Philipp Maleko / Wildlife Conservation Society.

In order to support rare species, we need to understand the threats to them. To identify the threats faced by non-breeding Spotted (Nordmann's) Greenshank *Tringa guttifer* we visited coastal sites throughout the Gulf of Thailand. The Inner Gulf of Thailand supports approximately 20–30% of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway global population of 1,500–2,000 Spotted Greenshanks. Identifying the specific threats they face in this area is therefore critical to develop measures to prevent further decline. We assessed the conservation situation at four 'hotspots' for Spotted Greenshank, areas supporting >1% of the global population. We identified three major threats: habitat loss, disturbance, and illegal netting. Each of these threats require place-based management interventions if long-term conservation of Spotted Greenshank, and other EAAF waterbirds, is to be accomplished. Read full paper here.

A plastic-lined salt pan, devoid of avian life. Khok Kham FNS 122, Samut Sakhon Province - Philipp Maleko / Wildlife Conservation Society.

Half a century of conservation work by volunteers - Amanda Lilleyman

Half a century of conservation work by volunteers: History of shorebird monitoring, research, and management actions in Darwin-Garramilla, Northern Territory, Australia

This study highlights the critical role volunteers have played in protecting migratory shorebirds in the Darwin region of Australia's Northern Territory over the past 51 years. Migratory shorebirds face numerous threats, and Australia has legal responsibilities to safeguard their habitats. Since 1972, 83 activities or actions have been recorded in the Darwin area to support shorebird conservation, including monitoring, research, advocacy, and education.

Far Eastern Curlews - Tomas Lundquist

Remarkably, most of these efforts have been driven by volunteers, who have been the backbone of this work. They have conducted essential monitoring programs, raised public awareness, engaged communities, and lobbied for better protection of shorebird habitats. Their contributions have been vital in ensuring that these nationally and internationally significant birds receive the attention they deserve.

We emphasise the need to recognise and build on this volunteer-driven legacy. We recommend better coordination among stakeholders, strategic planning, and sustained funding to support long-term conservation. By showcasing the incredible impact of volunteer efforts, this study provides a model for other regions to follow in their efforts to protect threatened species and habitats. Read full paper by clicking on the paper below.

forum

Wader Study 131(3): 190–194. doi:10.18194/ws.00355

Forum provides a platform for contributions from the wider community reporting particular aspects of wader/shorebird ecology and conservation, as well as previously unknown topics. These articles are subject to editor-only review. If you are interested in contributing to Forum, please contact the Editors-in-Chief at: *editor@waderstudygroup.org*.

Half a century of conservation work by volunteers: History of shorebird monitoring, research, and management actions in Darwin-Garramilla, Northern Territory, Australia

Amanda Lilleyman[1,2*] & Gavin O'Brien[1]

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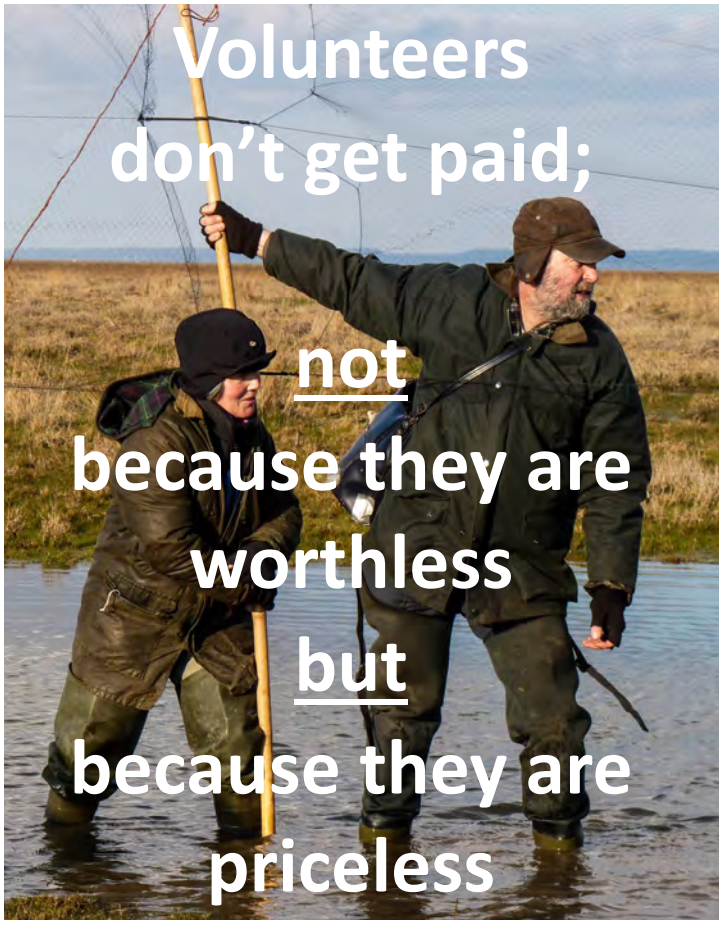
Migratory shorebirds face a range of threats across their migration pathways and many species are declining. Australia has obligations to protect migratory shorebird habitat and maintain sustainable populations. There is territory and national legislation that aims to protect species and their habitats. There are currently 14 shorebird species listed under the federal threatened species legislation in Australia. Across the nation, people have worked to understand and protect shorebirds for more than half a century. This has been done through activities or actions such as monitoring programs and volunteer work in the form of lobbying, engagement, education, and reporting. In this forum piece, we explore and summarise the activities and actions relating to shorebirds in the Darwin-Garramilla region of the Northern Territory, Australia. We present a historical overview of contributions to the management, research, monitoring, and community activities and provide recommendations for managers and stakeholders in the region. We recorded 83 activities or actions relating to shorebirds from 1972 to February 2023 for the Darwin region of the Northern Territory. A variety of stakeholders have been involved in different ways over the years. Through this work we show that, over the last 51 years in the Darwin region, most activities or actions relating to shorebirds have been carried out by volunteers, including monitoring and community engagement. We hope that this summary will help managers and stakeholders to work strategically across the harbour scale region and provide ongoing funding and resources to the protection of these matters of national and international significance and provide a template for use in other areas.

Shorebirds face unique conservation challenges due to their migratory lifestyle, which sees them crossing international borders spanning multiple political jurisdictions. They face a range of threats across their migration pathways and many species are declining (Piersma *et al.* 2016). Maintaining an adequate set of sites along a flyway is critical for conserving migratory shorebird species (Runge *et al.* 2014). Coastal development is causing loss and degradation of staging areas that are crucial stepping-stones for migrating shorebirds (Murray *et al.* 2014). As a consequence, migratory shorebirds are declining in all trans-equatorial flyways, but the fastest declines are in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF). This is largely because important stopover and staging sites for shorebirds in the EAAF are in some of the most densely populated parts of the planet. In some parts of the flyway, such as the Yellow Sea region, 65% of tidal flats used by shorebirds have been lost in the last 50 years (Murray *et al.* 2014) with rapid land use change restricting many shorebirds and waterbirds to the fringes of highly urbanised environments (Ma *et al.* 2004).

This contraction in available habitat has been linked to the flyway wide collapse of shorebird populations in the EAAF (Amano *et al.* 2010, Piersma *et al.* 2016, Studds *et al.* 2017). Globally, seven shorebird species (Charadriiformes) have gone extinct (IUCN 2023).

In the EAAF, one of the world's largest shorebird flyways, shorebirds are protected under several bilateral agreements between the different countries. Australia has obligations to protect migratory shorebird habitat and maintain sustainable populations. They are protected under national (*Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act* 1999; EPBC Act) and state and territory legislation, that aims to protect species and their habitats. However, there are currently 14 shorebird species listed under the federal EPBC Act (DCCEEW 2022). These are:



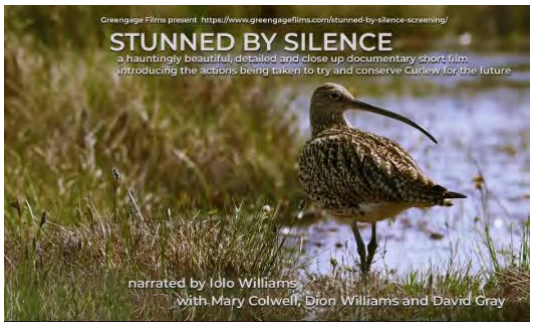
Wash Wader Research Group in action - Elis Simpson

Stunned by Silence - Malka Holmes

Our latest Production, Stunned by Silence, was produced by Greengage Films, it's a campaign film featuring the declining Curlew and its a dual language production.

This film has been a labour of love, it grew out of my personal experience growing up in a remote shepherds cottage, Cwm Hesgin, just within the Snowdonia National Park. Cwm Hesgin is situated in a remote valley near Bala and it's surrounded by peatland.

As a child I looked forward to every spring when the Curlew would return to breed near the cottage. Then about twenty years ago the Curlew disappeared from these breeding grounds and I never saw or heard them up there again.



View film here.

Malka in action - Malka Holmes

My father Clyde Holmes was an artist and eco poet, He lived up in Cwm Hesgin for over thirty years and out of many encounters with this beautiful bird the poem Curlews nest was born. The poem features in the film, and a line from the poem is, *stunned by silence*, hence the title. I thought this is a relevant title as the moorland is so silent without the Curlew's presence.

Along the way I've met very passionate people dedicated to Curlew conservation, all approaching the subject from very different angles. The film strongly reflects this diversity. Iolo Williams narrated the film.

We interviewed Mary Colwell from Curlew Action, and the singer songwriter David Gray.

RSPB staff Lucy Foster and Sam McCready contributed to the film as well as the farmer Dion Williams from Pentrefoelas.

Stunned by Silence was filmed over two seasons with the help of the RSPB. I was lucky to have a great team from Bristol, including Jonathan Eve who recorded sound, and edited the film and Ben Mars from the Black Laboratory, who was the production coordinator, he also helped fund the film. Wader Quest were also good enough to offer funding through their Anniversary Grants scheme for the film. David Gray also gave us permission to use some of his music for the film.

Eurasian Curlew - Malka Homes

David Gray - Malka Homes

The yellow brick road of wader conservation - Mary Colwell

When do we reach the tipping point beyond which there is no option but to act with urgency, determination and vision? From the statistics we are already there, and have been for some time, but on the ground, are we in crisis mode?

Back in 2003, the annual International Wader Study Group (IWSG) conference began with a presentation that is all too familiar in 2024. It highlighted the decline of waders worldwide:

> *'In 2002, world leaders expressed their desire to achieve "a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity" by 2010. The previous year, the Heads of European Union Member States had expressed their intention "that biodiversity decline should be halted... by 2010." New information, presented to an international conference in Cadiz, Spain, indicates declines of a significant proportion of the world's waders (shorebirds) and suggests that, for these birds at least, it will be extremely challenging to achieve these targets without significant investments and highly focussed conservation activity by governments in all continents.*
> *The majority of populations of waders of known population trend are in decline all around the world - a matter of international conservation concern. Of populations with known trends, 48% are declining, in contrast to just 16% which are increasing: thus three times as many populations are in decline as are increasing. The reasons for these declines are diverse and poorly understood.'*

Twenty years later in 2023, the journal Ornithological Applications published a paper that stated:

> *'Between 1980 and 2019, 26 of the 28 shorebird species analysed were found to be declining with more than half of the species losing more than half of their abundance. Furthermore, estimated rates of decline have accelerated during the last three generations for most species.'*

The website of Wader Quest, a charity dedicated to supporting wader projects worldwide, lays out the plight of waders, including the main reasons for the declines, which are now much better understood:

> *'The dubious accolade of being the biggest threat to wader populations, of multiple species, goes to habitat loss, be it by destruction or degradation. This scourge manifests itself in a variety of devastating, human initiated actions; intertidal reclamation, changes in agricultural practices, drainage, pollution, disturbance, afforestation, dredging, river management and ploughing up of grasslands are some of the more obvious actions that are seriously affecting waders, of all kinds, everywhere. Add to this the background threat of the effect of climate change altering the environment, a rather more chronic problem, which is never far away, and you'll discover that every habitat in which waders exist is under threat in one way or another.*
> *….. across the world, study after study is recording declines in wader populations. Some flyways are losing as much as eighty-six per cent of their waders, others may be losing just thirty-three per cent, but the average loss across the board shows that nearly half of our waders have already disappeared! Across North America seventy percent of waders have been lost, especially Arctic breeding species. In the UK alone Northern Lapwings have declined by eighty per cent over the last fifty years. Eurasian Curlews have undergone a similar decline in England, Wales and Scotland, while Ireland has lost a staggering ninety-seven per cent of its breeding Eurasian Curlew population.'*

This was echoed in the 2024 IWSG meeting held in Montpellier, France, when Paul Smith from the Canadian Wildlife Service presented on the dire situation for American waders (shorebirds).

Why, he wondered, given what we know is happening, is the IWSG not rapidly transitioning away from a primary focus on biological science towards more concerted, urgent conservation science and action?

He suggested we revitalise an American 1980s initiative called '*Road to Recovery*' which urges '*a purposeful integration of biological and social science targeted at identifying and addressing specific causes of declines*.' (Note the inclusion of social science as an essential component to understanding the human aspect of conservation, the subject of a Curlew Action webinar in September 2024.)

The yellow brick road of wader conservation - cont'd

A Road to Recovery is desperately needed for waders. This most mysterious and enigmatic species of Curlew, the Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris*, bred in the Asian Steppes and wintered in the Mediterranean region, where it was intensively hunted and is now most likely extinct [*Officially proclaimed Extinct this month* -Ed]. The last irrefutable confirmed sighting was in 1995, but despite extensive searches since then it hasn't been found. We have transitioned from a desperate hope that a few stragglers remain to a cold, deadening acceptance that they have gone. The Slender-billed Curlew joins the American Eskimo Curlew *Numenius borealis* on the roll call of the lost. There are six Curlew species remaining on earth and all are in varying degrees of peril.

It seems to me that we are in a crisis so profound and so shocking that we are numbed by the enormity of it all, and our response is to carry on as normal. Despite staggering losses of both the Eurasian *N. arquata* and Far Eastern Curlews *N. madagascariensis*, as much as 98% in some areas, with the Far Eastern Curlew hot on the heels of the Slender-billed in heading for extinction, we are not behaving as though we are in the midst of a major calamity. What will it take to set us on the Road to Recovery? And if we do snap into action, are we ready for the challenge?

A crisis situation requires a crisis response, which means having a clear vision of what is needed and strong, unwavering leadership to take us there. In other words, we must launch a wader rescue mission that cannot fail.

'For scientific discovery give me Scott, for speed and efficiency of travel give me Amundsen; but when disaster strikes and all hope is gone, get down on your knees and pray for Shackleton'.

So said Sir Raymond Priestly, an Antarctic explorer who had experienced Shackleton's leadership on the Nimrod expedition between 1909-1907. He knew that Shackleton was a flawed hero, but a hero of monumental proportions, nonetheless.

As the ice floe the men were camped on began to break up, Shackleton put everyone into lifeboats and rowed for 7 days to the uninhabited Elephant Island. Leaving 22 men there, he took a small crew of six and rowed 1,299 km in 17 days, through gigantic and stormy seas, back to South Georgia. Shackleton was heading for a whaling station, but the fierce weather forced the boat to land on the opposite side of the island. He selected three men and, taking no rations or tent, led them across the mountains that form the centre of the island. 36 hours later, they made it to the station. After aborted attempts to set out to rescue the stranded men on Elephant Island, they eventually reached them 128 days later. Not a single man died during the whole mission. Throughout, Shackleton showed leadership skills that we are still learning from today. It ranks as the most audacious and inspiring rescue missions of recorded time.

Ernest Shackleton. Scott Polar Research Institute

The Endurance, photographed in 1915, shortly before it sank.
(Photograph- Royal Geographic Society/PA)

Much has been written about how he kept an exhausted, starved and frostbitten team motivated, focussed, hopeful and cooperative when all seemed lost. He immediately banished any dissent; no one was allowed to become dominant, and no one was considered inferior. Everyone was given a valuable role, and personal agendas were sacrificed for the greater good. Shackleton was called "The Boss" but he was renowned for his compassion for the weaker members and his willingness to serve everyone ahead of himself. He never showed despair and never wavered, believing, and making others believe, failure was not an option. As conditions changed, often bringing more challenges, he adapted his course, but not the goal. He earned everyone's trust and in the process each man became more than they imagined they could be.

It is a story about the transformative power of a clear vision. It creates the framework for a plan, and it instils the courage, hope and determination to see it through. As American author and business consultant Warren Bennis says, '*Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality…to have others willingly come when you call, and it is having inspired followers.*'

It seems a far cry from the world of wader conservation, but the principles are sound. We certainly have a crisis – declining species are heading into oblivion, and the clock is ticking. But is there a vision, a plan and an inspired team, or teams, determined to rescue them? Are wader scientists, conservationists, environmental organisations and charities working in cooperative, cohesive groups, focussed and determined to succeed no matter what it takes? Is the greater good more

The yellow brick road of wader conservation - cont'd

important than any individual team member? Or are we still a collection of individual organisations operating on a business model, protective of their own brands, too often distrustful and judgemental of others and far too often unwilling to share resources and information? Is it possible to break this mould?

If there is an environmental Ernest Shackleton out there, please step forward now.

A more likely scenario, however, is that we just start, in earnest, with where we are. The 1939 children's fantasy film *The Wizard of Oz* gives a different model of leadership, but in fact has many of the same messages as the Shackleton example. Packaged in a homely form it attests to the imperative of having a goal and a plan to get there. It is also a tender portrayal of imperfect characters rising to the occasion, buoyed by the faith of the others. The message to the viewer - you are more than you think you are, you don't have to be a great person to be a greater leader, working together is better than being alone, even if it means working with people unlike yourself, and that compassion, kindness, determination and courage win out.

The Wizard of Oz (Photo by Allstar:MGM:Sportsphoto Ltd)

The Wizard of Oz centres around Dorothy Gale, a young girl from Kansas who is stranded in an unknown country '*beyond the rainbow*' and desperate to find her way home. The only way to do that, she is told, is to follow a yellow brick road to the Emerald City, where a wizard can organise her safe passage. The road winds for miles through unknown territory, and there are dangers and enemies all along the way, but she is determined to stay on the path. She meets three characters who want to join her. They are incongruous companions for a hazardous and demanding journey, they lack self-confidence and have no obvious skills: a scarecrow with no brain, a tin man with no heart and a lion with no courage. But as the journey develops it turns out that they have exactly what is needed, and each comes to the fore at different times with inspiring and creative solutions to their many problems. Dorothy is a compassionate (but somewhat annoying!) leader, and the others grow and fulfil their potential under her leadership. It is a tale of unlikely individuals working together to achieve a vision and, despite personal flaws, succeeding.

I sometimes wonder if conservation organisations feel they lack the power and the wherewithal to be courageous, to dare to fail and to set out on a mission alongside others, and that includes all of us - scientists, conservationists, artists, writers, businesses, storytellers and many more. All too often it is easier to carry on with what is known and stick to the familiar protocols, stay within our tribes and hope for better times.

I have probably pushed these analogies as far as they can possibly go! But I hope my point is clear. In a crisis, a business-as-usual model can't deliver an audacious goal, there is too much self-interest and lack of focus on the end point. A group of individuals, no matter how well meaning and caring, must put aside differences and stand shoulder to shoulder to get to bigger and better places. That can happen if the vision is clear and strong, but if we don't have a clear understanding of what we want to achieve, and no one is willing to take risks, we will potter along the road to disaster.

There are signs that times are changing, though, and Curlew Action is part of that. We have been involved in a number of high-profile meetings that brought a range of people together to make a plan to save Curlews. Our recent European Fieldworker Workshop [part funded by Wader Quest] was highly successful and gathered fieldworkers from across the continent to share experiences and ideas, encouraging a wide, shared vision for Eurasian Curlew recovery that went beyond individual projects or countries.

Our Online European Headstarting Workshop in February will do the same, focussing on a crisis conservation technique that is growing in importance. Plans are afoot for a World Curlew Symposium that will inspire cooperation across Curlew flyways around the world. These initiatives, alongside others, are part of forming a clear vision for recovery and could form the first steps on the yellow brick road. We are obviously not alone, there are inspiring examples elsewhere, including the ground-breaking Birdeyes in The Netherlands, which brings a host of different ideas to wader conservation, including the arts. We are part of a sea change that I hope will grow and grow.

I don't know whether all of us who love waders will succeed in making the changes needed to launch a successful rescue mission, but for sure the status quo is not working. Taking some tentative steps on the road to recovery has to be better than standing still.

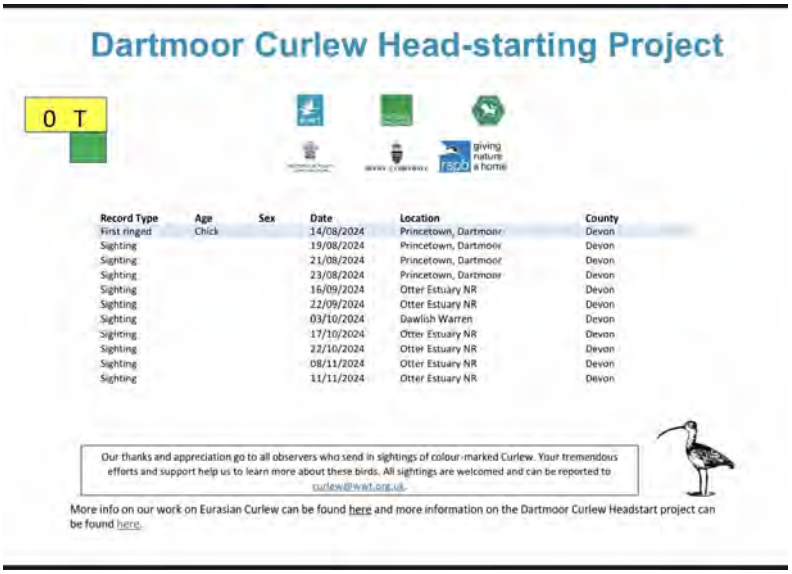
CURLEW ACTION

This is the second of two blog posts on the Curlew Action website about the IWSG conference, read the first post by Mike Smart.

Some significant national first wader records.

Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa*; French Guyana - 16/12/24
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*; South Africa - 07/11/24
Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*; Cape Verde Islands - 11/12/24
Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*; France - 31/10/24

More colour ringed waders from Devon - Tim Ridgeway



Dartmoor Curlew Head-starting Project

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Record Type	Age	Sex	Date	Location	County
First ringed	Chick		14/08/2024	Princetown, Dartmoor	Devon
Sighting			19/08/2024	Princetown, Dartmoor	Devon
Sighting			21/08/2024	Princetown, Dartmoor	Devon
Sighting			23/08/2024	Princetown, Dartmoor	Devon
Sighting			16/09/2024	Otter Estuary NR	Devon
Sighting			22/09/2024	Otter Estuary NR	Devon
Sighting			03/10/2024	Dawlish Warren	Devon
Sighting			17/10/2024	Otter Estuary NR	Devon
Sighting			22/10/2024	Otter Estuary NR	Devon
Sighting			08/11/2024	Otter Estuary NR	Devon
Sighting			11/11/2024	Otter Estuary NR	Devon

Our thanks and appreciation go to all observers who send in sightings of colour-marked Curlew. Your tremendous efforts and support help us to learn more about these birds. All sightings are welcomed and can be reported to curlew@wwt.org.uk.

More info on our work on Eurasian Curlew can be found here and more information on the Dartmoor Curlew Headstart project can be found here.

All photos and table supplied by Tim Ridgeway

Dartmoor Curlew Head-starting Project WWT - curlew@wwt.org.uk

New breeding ground for Spoon billed Sandpiper found - Rick Simpson

Spoon-billed Sandpiper K9 with satellite tag fixed to its back - Dongming Li.

Colour ringing and satellite tagging are not universally popular among birders, but here is an example of how using this technology is enhancing our ability to help save species from extinction, at a time when they need all the help they can get.

Technology is making incredible advances. When you consider how small a Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea* is, it is amazing that a satellite transmitter can be made so small that it can then be attached to a tiny bird without affecting its lifestyle. They can feed and migrate in the same way that they could without it. And it is this fact that has brought about the amazing and important discovery of a new breeding location for this Critically Endangered species.

This individual was dubbed K9 because of the leg flag that was fitted to it in Thailand during the non-breeding season. K9 then migrated north and revealed, not just new stop over sites, but also an entirely unknown breeding area, both crucial bits of information in the fight to save the species. Saving their habitat in breeding and stop over sites is absolutely essential to their continued survival.

K9 departed Thailand in early April 2024 and surprised everyone by using two entirely unknown stop over sites in China on the Yellow Sea coast. Three weeks after leaving Thailand it went via North Korea and then a further 2,000km north to Sakhalin, a Russian Island in the Pacific Ocean and then the same again to somewhere in eastern Russia. The total flight distance was 8,000km, getting on for 5,000miles.

Here was where K9 was to deliver a new surprise for the researchers. Instead of remaining in what we imagine to be its preferred habitat near the coast, it then flew to a river valley that has been described as 'barren'. This location is of course a secret as the rarity of the species and the vulnerability of their nesting habits make then a potential target for would be egg thieves who could earn a good deal of money from stealing these eggs and selling them on to unscrupulous private collectors.

K9 then remained at that site until early August. Waders are not prone to hanging around on the breeding grounds if they have unsuccessful attempts and many failed breeders would already have been arriving back in their winter quarters at that time. If the nest fails at the egg stage, pairs will probably have a second clutch, but if that clutch also fails the adults will leave. This lengthy stay at the potential breeding site suggests, but doesn't prove, that K9 successfully bred there and then returned south.

All this new information now has to be investigated, the new sites visited to see what conservation measures can be put in place to prevent these birds from suffering at the hands of hunters, development and other threats that will adversely affect these locations and the survival chances of the birds that use them.

When you consider that in 2012, when Elis and I set out to travel the world to raise money for this species, it was feared that, were nothing done to prevent it, the species would be extinct in as littles five years. Thankfully that has not come to pass. The work carried out by many researchers and conservationists over the next few years meant that, by 2016 the longevity of the species was estimated at 10 years. The population is still declining, but the speed at which it is doing so is reduced and landmark achievements like this one help in its battle to survive enormously.

Spoon-billed Sandpiper - Elis Simpson

Connectivity and conservation - Graham Appleton

We frequently drive between eastern England, and eastern Scotland. There must be a hundred or more places at which we could stop for a break but we have a favourite few that we visit regularly. It's much the same story for Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa*; individuals have lots of muddy estuaries available to them but each bird only visits a very small number. They probably don't know that the others exist.

Black-tailed Godwits feeding, centre bird with colour rings - Richard Smith

A migrating wader typically visits several sites over the course of a year, each one of which is important to that bird. If all birds of the same species visited the same sites on their annual journeys, it would be pretty straightforward to highlight key areas and to try to get them protected. That's not the case, however. There are examples of Black-tailed Godwits that moult on The Wash, in Eastern England, that go on to spend winter in locations as diverse as Spain, Ireland and NW England. More about this later!

With the help of 'godwiteers', the birdwatchers who take the trouble to report colour-ringed Black-tailed Godwits, we've learnt that individual birds use early experiences to create their annual schedules. This is exemplified in a paper by Tómas Gunnarsson and colleagues, and summarised in the WaderTales blog, Juvenile settlement in Black-tailed Godwits. The fact that a juvenile Black-tailed Godwit usually remains faithful to the sites that it encounters in its first year is likely to limit its capacity to respond if conditions change in the future. A bird that knows where to find food and safe roosting sites in one area may well find it difficult to cope if conditions change and it has to move elsewhere, simply because it will have little knowledge or experience of other options.

Once they have arrived in their winter location, individual Black-tailed Godwits also develop a pattern of movements within the site, taking account of time of tide and day, with changes during the season, as food supplies diminish. When each bird arrives back on site in the following autumn, it will do the same again. When network analysis was used to overlap all of the movements of colour-ringed Black-tailed Godwits within the Tagus Estuary, Josh Nightingale showed that there was a very high level of interconnection between different parts of the estuary, as described in Conservation beyond boundaries (WaderQuest newsletter Volume 10; Issue 2 2023). The article focused on the consequences for Environmental Impact Assessments, highlighting deficiencies in the case that had been made to develop Montijo Airport.

Network analysis

In a recent study, Martin Beal and 43 conservation scientists involved in tracking Black-tailed Godwits through Europe and Africa have expanded the scale of Josh Nightingale's work to consider how migration sites are connected along the East Atlantic Flyway. In their new paper in Journal of Applied Ecology, they used network analysis to combine the movements of

Connectivity and conservation - cont'd

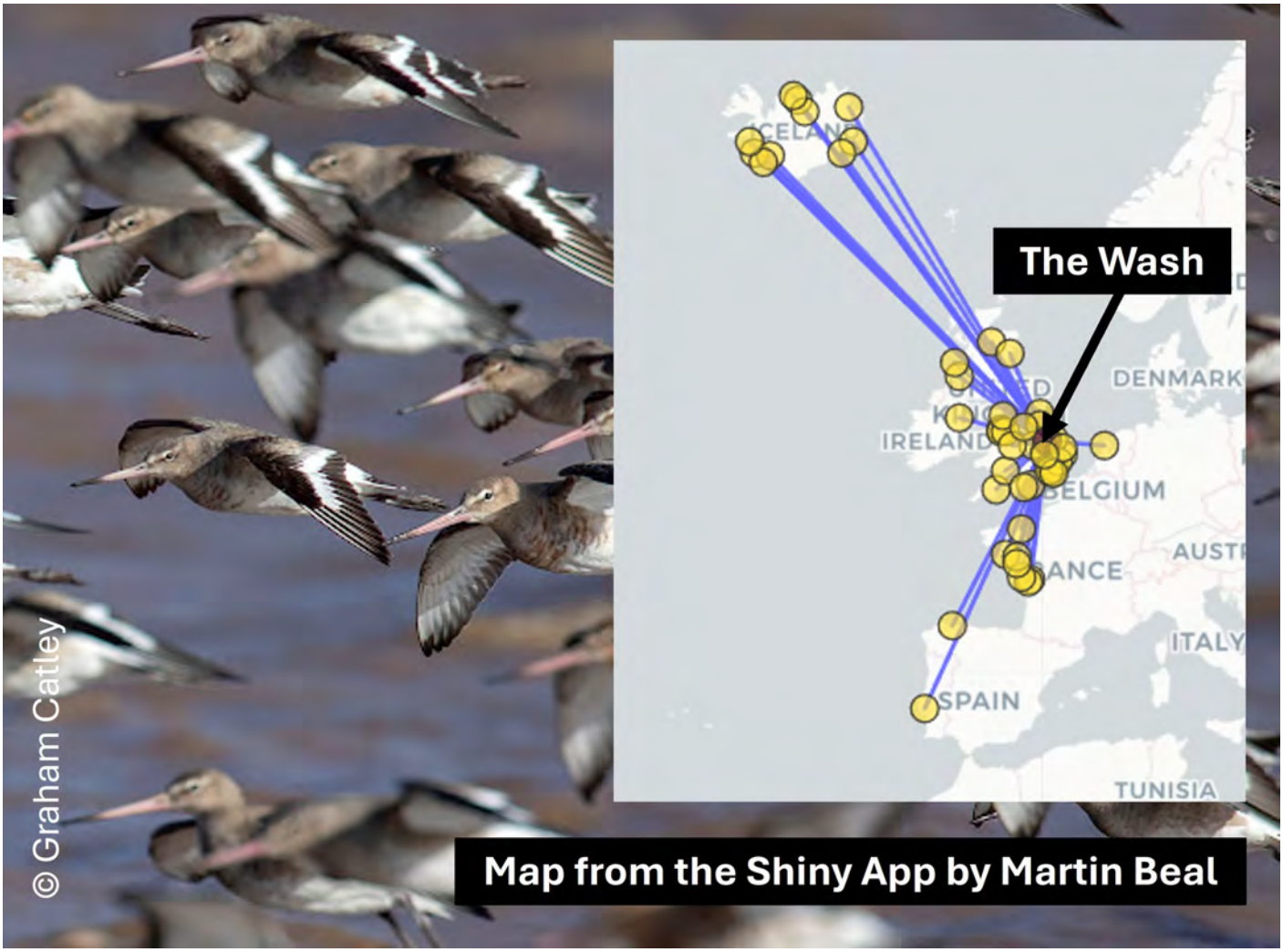
thousands of individuals into a network of nodes (places visited) and edges (the connections between sites). The authors brought together ringing, colour-ringing and GPS tracking data in a paper which is summarised in the WaderTales blog, How are migration sites connected? The analysed data relate to Black-tailed Godwits but the paper is of much wider interest, enabling others to get the best conservation value out of three very different data sets.

So much data!

In the new paper, Martin Beal and colleagues combine data for the two subspecies of Black-tailed Godwits that use the East Atlantic Flyway; *islandica* and *limosa*. Although the Black-tailed Godwit species is classified as globally near-threatened there are big differences in the fortunes of different populations. The *islandica* subspecies, which breeds in Iceland and winters as far south as Spain, is doing well at the moment, while the western population of *limosa* is in serious decline. The Netherlands lies at the heart of the *limosa* breeding range, with most birds migrating south to West Africa but some travelling only as far as Spain and Portugal.

A grand total of 10,701 marked Black-tailed Godwits contributed 434,996 observations to the analyses in the 2025 paper by Martin Beal and his colleagues. There were contributions from reports of metal-ringed birds but the vast amount of information came from sightings of colour-ringed individuals, many of which have been seen on multiple occasions, often at more than one location. The value of these reports from birdwatchers cannot be overstated (see Godwits and Godwiteers). In the last few years, detailed movements of a few godwits carrying tracking devices have added lots of detail and hugely expanded our understanding of the importance of sites in West Africa.

1058 sites were visited by marked Black-tailed Godwits used in the Beal *et al* study. Of these, 70% were associated with colour-ring reports, 50% were associated with tracked birds, and metal-ringed birds were only reported from 25%. To complement the paper, Martin Beal has developed a Shiny App, providing birdwatchers with a chance to map the connectivity of a local site to other sites in the flyway. The map below shows connections from the Wash in eastern England.

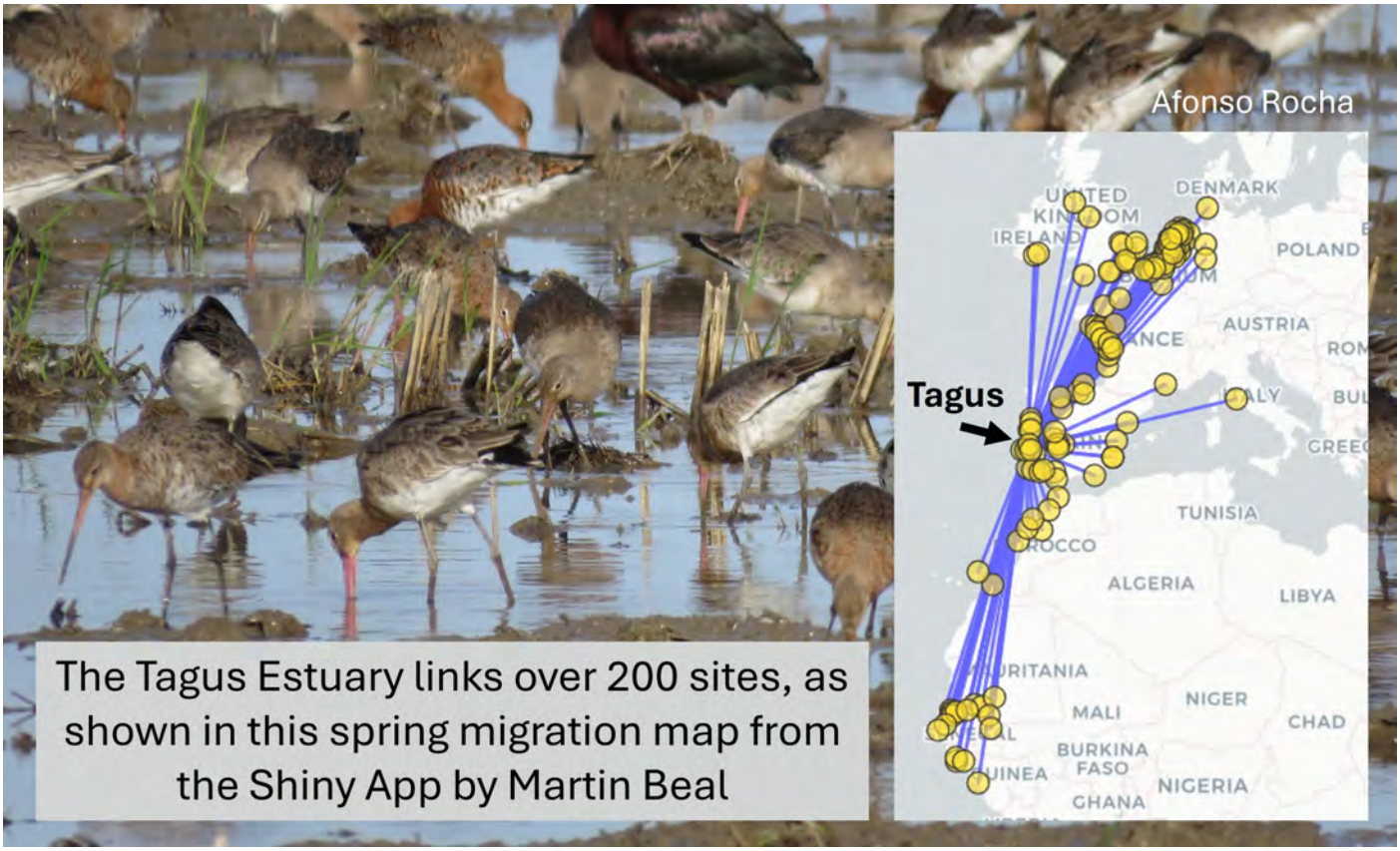


Important sites

The 49 most highly connected sites for Black-tailed Godwits were in 12 different countries, from Guinea-Bissau in the south to Iceland in the north, with the top three countries being the Netherlands (9 sites), Senegal (7), and France (7). The three most connected sites are Guadalquivir marshes (Spain), Tagus estuary (Portugal) and Wonseradeel & Workum (Netherlands), all of

Connectivity and conservation - cont'd

which were linked to over 200 other places on the flyway. An additional six of the top sites were linked to more than 100 other sites. The map below shows spring movements north of a mixture of limosa and islandica Black-tailed Godwits.



Across all 1058 sites, 20% lacked any protection status. Five of the top 49 sites in west Africa were not recognised as Important Bird Areas but hopefully this will soon change, as information from the paper is now being used to help designate new sites. Conservation of the threatened, *limosa* Black-tailed Godwits will be better served if these sites receive international recognition and receive local protection.

As pointed out earlier, this paper is not just of relevance to Black-tailed Godwits. Any migratory wader species on any flyway can benefit from the techniques employed by Martin Beal and his colleagues. If you want to bring together ringing information, colour-ring sightings and tracking data, please read this paper. Eurasian Curlew is an obvious next species to work on.

An omniscience of Black-tailed Godwits - Elis Simpson

Rescuing waders & other birds at Sambhar Lake, India - Rohit Gangwal

Combating Avian Botulism: Coordinated Efforts Bring positive results: Fewer mortalities during 2024

Will it be like what had happened during 2019? The worst ever recorded mortalities of water bird species at Sambhar lake, a Ramsar Site lake in India's Rajasthan state. If the count was correct, 22,983 bird deaths were reported in that tragedy at this lake, which is about 200 sq.km in area. October 2024 marked a similar plight as mortalities of water birds were reported by local people. That raised alarm signals.

1st Alert:

On the 26th of October 2024, the evening team at RAKSHA received the first call for birds found dead, they suspected avian botulism had affected them. RAKSHA is an Indian NGO set up by myself, and of which I am President; *Raksha* means 'saving' in Hindi.

The following day, we were on the ground and set up two centres, one in Meethri Nursery and one in Kachroda Nursery, a joint initiative between RAKSHA , Hope and Beyond, Wildlife Trust of India and Department of Forest, Rajasthan while the Department of Veterinary, Rajasthan, took charge of the science-based support.

Stint affected by botulism - Rohit Gangwal

The affected species, including Ruff *Calidris pugnax* and Black-winged Stilts *Himantopus himantopus*, were exhibiting signs that correlated with avian botulism - a deadly neuromuscular illness caused by toxins of the bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. This bacterium thrives in stagnant, warm waters with decaying organic matter, conditions exacerbated by environmental disruptions.

Live Rescues were carried out for birds showing weakness, difficulty in walking, breathing problems, or an inability to exhibit their typical flight response; they were carefully transported to the rehabilitation facilities.

Deceased birds were systematically collected and incinerated in deep, limestone-lined pits to prevent contamination. The sites were then sealed with layers of soil to discourage access by scavengers or humans.

These measures were implemented to contain the spread of toxins and maintain the ecological balance of the region.

The group of Volunteers and veterinary doctors with boxes full of bird samples to be sent to the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) for testing cause of disease, Sambhar lake water is seen on left - Rohit Gangwal

Housing:

The birds were kept in a well oxygenated chamber with thermal support before handling to alleviate the handling and travelling stress. After stabilizing the patient, the body weight was assessed, a comprehensive physical examination was performed, and the clinical parameters were thoroughly evaluated.

The birds were tagged using the following pattern: *e.g.*, N11-KC2 [N (November) - Date (11) - Rehab Centre (KC - Kachorda treatment and rehab facility) - Serial number of the bird received on a particular day (2)]. Based on the clinical presentation and severity of the disease, an initial triage assessment was performed to determine the appropriate level of care and prioritize further medical management and treatment.

A Ruff is given rest having been treated - Rohit Gangwal

Rescuing waders & other birds at Sambhar Lake, India - cont'd

The findings and the corresponding treatment plan were documented on the triage sheet and first-day treatment sheet.

Sick birds brought to the rehabilitation station were triaged into four categories based on the severity of the signs they exhibited. In descending order of severity, these were categorized as Red, Orange, Yellow, and Green. Such placards were placed at each enclosure to differentiate and identify the birds. Medication and their routes were decided upon based on the severity of each case.

The dose of steroids was tapered gradually to avoid withdrawal symptoms and minimize the risk of adverse effects on the birds' health during the recovery process.

Daily weight checks were conducted.

Feeding:

Species-specific feed was provided to ensure the birds received proper nutrition tailored to their dietary requirements. Gavage [tube] feeding was employed for birds that were not eating independently and were experiencing weight loss. This was done using a crop feeding tube, infant feeding tube, ryles tube, or a syringe to ensure proper nutrition.

As per the general guidelines, 5% of the bird's total body weight was fed, or alternatively, the crop volume for each individual species was calculated based on species-specific references, and feeding was adjusted accordingly.

Emeraid Piscivore, Omnivore, and Carnivore formulas were utilized to align with the feeding habits and nutritional requirements of each individual species, ensuring the diet was appropriate to their natural dietary patterns. Other formulas were added as needed. When commercial formulas were not readily available, homemade gavage feeding was prepared based on the feeding habits and nutritional requirements of the individual species.

Conditions considered favourable for a botulism outbreak in waterfowl include large amounts of protein rich organic matter, little available oxygen, high temperature, and shallow water.

Multiple necropsies were done to collect not only the morpho-metrics and to determine the cause of death.

Sick bird being fed - Rohit Gangwal

Ruff were the worst hit:

The highest percentage of live bird species rescued was the Ruff (42.3%), followed by the Northern Shoveler (21.1%). A similar trend was observed in the dead species found, with the Ruff representing the highest percentage (48.4%), followed by the Northern Shoveler (18.8%).

Ruff in rehabilitation - Rohit Gangwal

The incidence rate increased with a rise in temperature. The postmortem examinations revealed that the birds most likely succumbed to respiratory failure caused by muscle paralysis accompanied by water aspiration, which may have been compounded by secondary infections, including toxico-infection and infestations of endoparasites.

Combined efforts led to the rescue of 529 live birds and 152 birds were released back into the wild after complete recovery. As many as 952 dead birds were found by frontline rescue staff and were effectively disposed of as per protocol

Rescuing waders & other birds at Sambhar Lake, India - cont'd

(November 2024). During November 2019, 1,235 birds were rescued and over 465 birds were released back into the wild as compared to this years 529 birds and 152 releases.

Expert opinion:

The samples were sent to the Centre for Animal Disease Research & Diagnosis, ICAR, Bareilli, Uttar Pradesh, India. It stated: '*Conclusion, based on laboratory investigations; the cause of mortality in [these] migratory birds is Avian botulism caused by toxins of Clostridium botulinum*.'

'*A Postmortem was conducted on Northern Shoveler (1), Ruff (1), and Black-winged Stilt (1). Gross findings recorded said: The body condition of the carcass was good. The rigor mortis has passed. Upon de-skinning the muscles, keel bone and subcutaneous fat were normal in appearance. No abnormal discharges were found in the nostrils. Internally, all the organs appeared normal. The gizzard had less feed content mixed with small stone grits. The intestines had a sparse amount of greenish mucus contents*.' – The IVRI stated.

Thanks:

Most arduous and painful as it had been though this time, we experienced the government machinery to be of great help. We are thankful to Ketan Kumar (DCF Territorial), Jaipur District, and S.P. Singh (CCF Wildlife) for their inspirational support.

Brown-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus being* released - Rohit Gangwal

Arijit Banerjee, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and Head of Forest Force, Rajasthan (5th from left) at Sambhar - Rohit Gangwal

Rohit Gangwal (3rd from left) showing medical support items at RAKSHA camp. On the right is Dinkar Samore, one of the Volunteers, photo by RAKSHA

The working group together at Sambhar, RAKSHA - Rohit Gangwal

Harkirat Singh Sangha (2009) had reported a total 83 species of water birds at Sambhar.

By 2022, this number had increased to 120 species through a series of bird surveys undertaken by Naveen Kumar Singh, Nishant Nath Shukla, Durga Lal Verrma, and Sumit Bari, led by Govind Yadav. All these happen to represent TWSI (Tourism & Wildlife Society of India). TWSI is responsible for some concrete conservation measures over past four decades including holding the Indian Birding Fair at Man Sagar lake, Jaipur, India, since 1997.

[Rohit has been associated for a long time with bird rescue and holds an annual Rescue Camp at Jaipur on 14th of January, when thousands of recreational kites are flown in the sky as a competitive sport. The thread is coated with glass and other stuff which sometimes hits birds and they fall injured. Many are the picked up by volunteers and brought to Rohit's camp for treatment rohit@raksha.org.in.]

Charity launches winter appeal to create wetland lifeline for wading birds - Rebecca Dutton

The Countryside Regeneration Trust (CRT), a national farming charity, has launched a winter appeal to create wetland areas for wading birds to thrive on two of its farms.

The charity, which promotes nature-friendly farming to help reverse biodiversity decline and combat climate change, needs £8,000 to create an ideal habitat for wading birds at Bere Marsh Farm in Dorset and Lark Rise Farm in Cambridgeshire.

This will benefit Northern Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus*, Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa*, Eurasian Curlews *Numenius arquata*, European Golden Plovers, Common Redshanks *Tringa totanus*, Common Snipes *Gallinago gallinago*, Jack Snipes *Lymnocryptes minimus* and other sandpiper species. It will also attract other species, such as Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope*, Gadwall *Mareca strepera,* Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*, and other wildfowl.

At Lark Rise farm, the CRT has seen growing numbers of Northern Lapwings, with a record five pairs at the farm this year. The breeding season saw all five pairs incubate their eggs through the four weeks to reach hatching stage, which is an excellent result as foxes and crows often eat the eggs and bad weather can cause them to fail. All pairs managed at least one chick through to the fledging (flying) stage.

Click image to see details. - CRT lifeline for wading birds in winter appeal.

The CRT's Helena Darragh, Head of Conservation and Land Management, said: '*We're asking for donations to create a simple, yet potentially life saving feature on our farmland - a series of shallow, muddy channels that will make the difference at the toughest time of the year.*

A species like the beautiful and distinctive curlew uses its long, down-curved bill to push into soft, wet ground to find food. Without areas of damp grassland, wading birds struggle to find food over the colder winter months. The curlew is already one of the UK's most rapidly declining breeding bird species, with a 48 per cent drop in numbers from 1995-2015 in England.'

A shallow 'scrape' may look like an unassuming patch of water, but to wading birds like the curlew, it is an oasis.

In these wet areas, they can find an abundance of invertebrates to eat, providing the critical nutrition needed to survive.

*'For centuries, the UK's wetlands, floodplains, and coastal areas have been home to waders. However, these natural habitats are being lost, and while these birds are adaptable, they can't keep pace with the rapid loss of safe spaces to feed and rest undisturbed, '*added Helena.

'Curlews and Lapwings are among the most iconic of our Red-listed wading birds, but the habitat we'll create with your donations will also attract other Amber-listed birds such as Teal, Wigeon, and numerous ducks and geese.'

Work on the wetland habitats at Lark Rise Farm and Bere Marsh farm will start later this year but will cost around £13,000 to carry out the necessary survey work and prepare the land.

'While we can get a partial grant, we are looking for around £8,000 in donations to make this happen,' added Helena.

'We are aiming to have both habitats ready for winter 2025 and will begin work at Bere Marsh Farm in the summer. There is more survey work to be done first at Lark Rise Farm, and, if further assessment of the land is needed, this might take a little longer and be ready for winter 2026.

These areas can be created by creating shallow channels and pools no more than 50cm deep on grassland fields, which typically are soggy in the winter. We then connect these channels to existing watercourses, such as ditches to allow water to flow into them in wet periods, creating muddy puddles which create wet grassland habitat.

In dry months, the water recedes or evaporates, and we can continue to manage the field with livestock and hay cuts. These features are easy to maintain, can be grazed over and driven over by farm machinery in summer months due to their shallow gentle gradients,' said Helena.

Your donations will help support the future of wading birds and will give them a chance to thrive in winter months. Let's give our wading birds a wetter, safer winter. [Wader Quest has donated £1,000 to this project - Ed.]

To donate to the go to the CRT website at www.thecrt.co.uk/appeal/wadingbirds

Leucistic Dunlin – Rick Simpson

Leucistic Dunlin, Coburg Harbour, Ontario, July 2014 - Oswald Tee

This Dunlin *Calidris alpina*, is what is known as leucistic. Leucism is a partial loss of pigmentation in a bird caused by a reduction in melanin in the feathers, leaving them white or at least, in this case pale brown.

It is melanin that gives feathers their distinctive patterns, it is also a rather tough substance. Where it is missing, feathers will wear more quickly, as shown in this bird [above right]. Where birds normally have dark wings with white spots, the white parts wear away first leaving feathers serrated, or toothed. It is also why many birds with white wings, such as Pied Avocets *Recurvirostris avosetta* have dark tips to their wings, where the feathers get the most wear.

Melanistic Lapwing - Rick Simpson

As a counter to the above leucistic bird, this photograph of a melanistic Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus was* taken in southern England.

Unlike the above Dunlin, this bird looks really stunning with all its feathers intact due the strengthening of them by the melanin.

Melanism is the opposite of leucism and is caused by an excess of melanin. Random cases of melanism in birds seems to be less frequently observed than leucism, although some species, such as skuas *Stercorariidae* often have 'dark phase' individuals, which is caused by melanism and is really quite common.

Interestingly melanin is also responsible for the iridescent sheen that some birds, like Northern Lapwings display. In this photograph you can see the sheen clearly on the upper side of the right wing of the bird. This is caused by melanin filled cells known as melanosomes acting as prisms and diffraction white light into individual colour wavelengths.

Among waders melanism caused some early confusion among taxonomists where melanistic Common Snipes *Gallinago gallinago* were erroneously thought to be a new and rare species, Sabine's Snipe *Scolopax sabini.*

Melanistic Lapwing, Little Marlow Gravel Pits, Buckinghamshire - Joe Downing

Waders in poetry: A Day in a Million - Julia Page

We walk behind our shadows now cast long across the midday trail.
Winter time six days away but summer's still beguiling us with balmy Celsius scale.

The noon lagoon falls silent whilst its residents siesta.
They stand amidst the muddy shallows, some on one leg, heads 'neath wings, each bird at peaceful rest now.

Phragmites reeds hide many secrets, avian booms and probing egrets,
Swaying gently, rattling quietly, protecting chattering flocks of many species.

A silhouette so dark appears, sinister and predatory, cruising round its territory.
The powerful harrier sends waves of fear, dipping, diving over shady shallows.

At once a hundred golden plovers rise together from the wader scrape.
We hadn't seen them previously so perfect was their camouflage.

They fly around to flee the raptor. Round the whole lagoon they go.
Higher, higher, ever upwards 'til they reach the bluest blue, the zenith of their safety zone directly overhead.

And then the miracle occurs, a sight to make us gasp in wonder, so dazzling in its cosmic splendour.
Twinkling wings flash blinks of sunlight, nature's ticker tape parade, a spectacle so rarely seen by just a lucky few.

The harrier now drifts away, gliding over distant reedbeds.
Down the golden plovers drop like meteor showers of falling stardust.

Soon they circle once again, drifting round, descending slowly.
Back to land upon their island, fluff their feathers, stand like statues, safe until the raptor's back to wake them from their golden slumbers.

Our cabin in the herb garden greeted us with lavender, scents of sage and rosemary, delightful oregano.
This magic day concluding now, that Indian sun descending low, the sky had turned a golden amber, darker still to vermillion hue.

Mother Nature wasn't finished, one more treat was yet to come.
As I reached to close the blinds my eyes were filled with tears of joy to see so many geese fly by.

At least ten thousand filled the sky with every shape and size of skein.
Homeward bound towards the Wash to rest on sandbanks, shore and shallows.

Two best sights in just one day, such memories to treasure now.
I see them in my daydream moments, vivid, real with untold pleasure.

European Golden Plovers *Pluvialis apricaria* - Elis Simpson

Pink-footed Geese *Anser brachyrhynchus* - Elis Simpson

Who's who in wader nomenclature, fame and obscurity; Baird and Mattingley – Rick Simpson

Fame: Baird, Spencer Fullerton (1823– 1887) American naturalist, ornithologist, ichthyologist, herpetologist, and museum curator.

Baird's interest in natural history began when he self-studied the subject as a young man. His brother William was also interested in birds and taught Spencer much about fieldcraft. He also benefitted from mentoring by John James Audubon, who instructed him on the art of scientific illustration. His father also was influential, taking him on walks and spending time gardening with him.

He taught natural history at Dickinson College commencing in 1845, where he had previously gained both his Batchelors and Masters degrees. During his time at the college, he carried out research, joined collecting trips, made specimen exchanges with other naturalists, and travelled often.

In 1848 he was awarded a grant, by the Smithsonian Institution to explore southeastern Pennsylvania's bone caves and natural history and in 1849 he was awarded $75 by the Smithsonian Institution to collect, pack and transport specimens for them. This led to him meeting the Smithsonian Secretary Joseph Henry, with whom he became a close friend. Throughout the 1840s Baird travelled widely in the northeastern and the central United States.

Baird went on to become the first curator at the Smithsonian Institution. In time he served as assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian from 1850 to 1878, and then as Secretary from 1878 until 1887. He was clearly held in great esteem as in September 1883, he was declared a founding member of the American Ornithologists' Union despite not being able to attend the first convention due to other duties getting in the way.

Spencer Fullerton Baird, as photographed by William Bell, 1867

He was passionate about expanding the natural history collections of the Smithsonian and increased the number of specimens from 6,000 1850 to over 2 million by the time he died. He also served as the U.S. Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries from 1871 to 1887 and published over 1,000 works during his lifetime.

Baird's Sandpipers - Elis Simpson

Of course, we waderologists know him best for the Baird's Sandpiper that was named after him by Elliott Ladd Coues as *Actodromus Bairdii* [sic] in 1861 and now known as *Calidris bairdii.*

Other bird species named after him are; Baird's Sparrow *Ammodramus bairdii* (Audubon, 1844), Baird's Flycatcher *Myiodynastes bairdii* Gambell, 1847 and Baird's Trogon, *Trogon bairdii* Lawrence, 1868. In addition the Cuban population of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker was initially named for him in its scientific species name *Campephilus bairdii* by Cassin, 1863. Now that has been reduced to subspecific rank as *C. principalis bairdii*.

Needless to say, as most eminent ornithologists did in those days, Baird named some wader taxa himself and some were in use right up until recently, namely; the genus *Micropalma* 1858 for the Stilt Sandpiper now *Calidris himantopus* and the genus *Heteroscelus* 1858 that was given to the Tattlers, which are now in the genus *Tringa*.

He is also famous for naming the now infamous non-species Cooper's Sandpiper as *Tringa cooperi,* also in 1858. This he named from a single specimen that has proven to be unique that was collected by W. C. Cooper on Long Island, New York. This we now know to be a hybrid occurring between a female Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* and male Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata.*

Who's who in wader nomenclature, fame and obscurity; Bonaparte and Mattingley – cont'd

Obscurity: Arthur Herbert Evelyn Mattingley (1870–1950) Australian photographer, ornithologist and conservationist.

Mattingley's interest in photography, ornithology and conservation began early and were maintained enthusiastically all his life.

A member of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union from its inception, becoming president from 1913-14. He was elected a corresponding member of the Zoological Society of London in 1907 and a corresponding fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union in 1921.

His greatest impact as a photographer and conservationist came when he published an article in the Emu (October 1907), *'Plundered for their plumes',* exposing the cruelty of slaughtering egrets for the millinery trade. On a trip in 1907 he found the carcasses of at least fifty Great Egrets *Ardea alba* and Plumed Egrets *Egretta plumifera* [formerly Intermediate Egrets *E. intermedia plumifera*] shot off their nests, and the bodies of at least seventy nestlings that had fallen from those nests and drowned, weak from starvation. He wrote;

'What a sickening sight! How my heart ached for them. How could anyone but a cold-blooded, callous monster destroy in this manner such beautiful birds, the embodiment of all that is pure, graceful, and good.'

The disinformation circulated by the fashion industry at the time was that the fashion feathers were those gleaned from the birds' nests and after moult. The feathers used in fashion, it was falsely claimed, were hand made.

Mattingley's photographs revealed the truth. The plume feathers that were collected were only produced during the breeding season, on the adult bird's back and could only be collected by killing the adult, which caused the young birds to starve to death.

Arthur Mattingley of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union, 1905 CC State Library of South Australia, Australia.

Plumed Egret - Arthur Grosset

Mattingley's report outraged Australian ornithologists, and eventually reached Britain, and in 1909 the RSPB published his photographs in *Bird Notes and News*.

The previous year Lord Avebury had brought the first plumage bill into the British House of Lords, but it did not get through the House of Commons. To increase support for the Bill and to convince those that doubted this cruel trade really existed, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in Britain turned Mattingley's images into a mini-campaign *'The Story of the Egret'.* Sending them throughout the UK and also to France and the Netherlands to be displayed in shop windows.

The photographs contributed to the long-running campaign to eliminate the fashion industry's use of bird feathers. The campaign also led to the US 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the UK Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Act 1921 among other prohibitions.

Who's who in wader nomenclature, fame and obscurity; Bonaparte and Mattingley – cont'd

Despite this enormous contribution to conservation, few, if any, would know who he was if asked I suspect.

So what was Mattingley's dubious claim to fame that made him eligible to be considered in this particular Wader Quest newsletter article?

His only claim to fame within the realm of waderology is that a subspecies of Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus longirostris mattingleyi* was named in his honour by Mathews G. M. in 1912. This subspecies is unfortunately invalid as Pied Oystercatcher is currently considered monotypic.

However, his name does live on since he was a founder of the Wyperfeld National Park where the highest point is named after him; Mount Mattingley.

Pied Oystercatcher - Elis Simpson

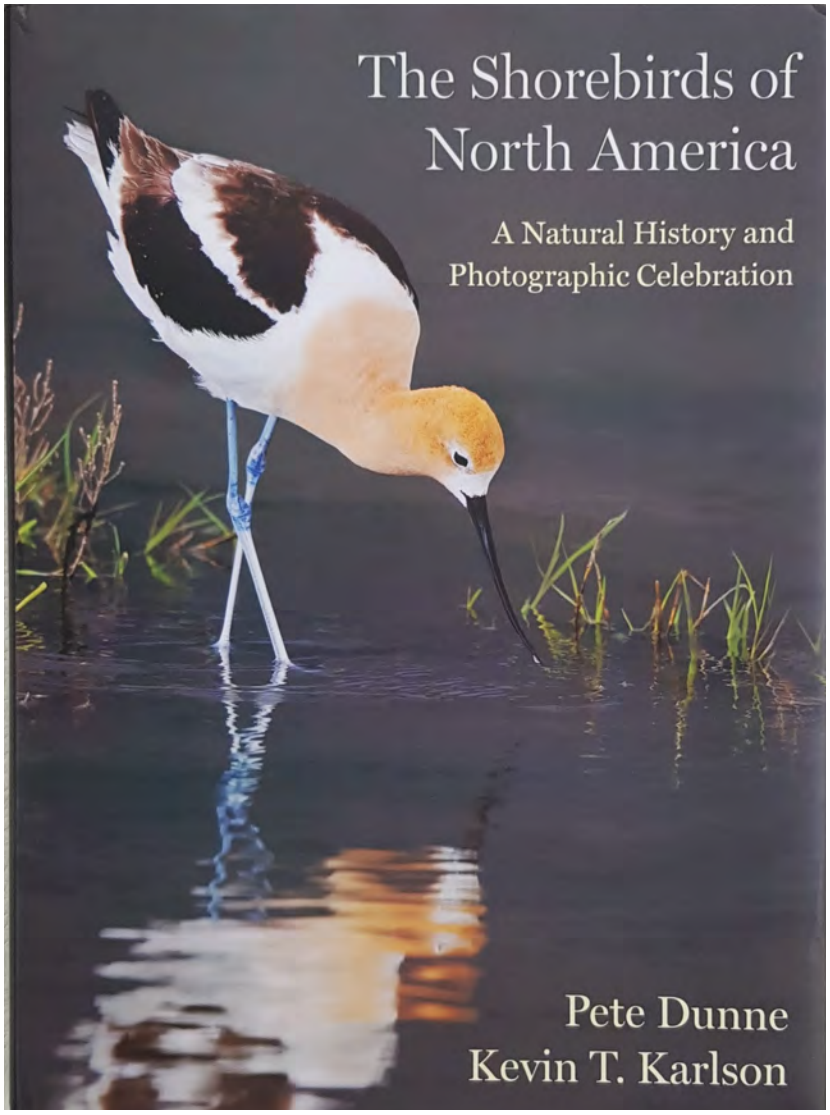
From the library: A Gathering of Shore Birds (1952) - Henry Marion Hall

Yesterday there were no birds; today they are everywhere, some already paired and launched on the business of maintaining the race. Chief among these - for anyone who can see birds smaller than a duck - are the shore birds, from ten to twenty species of them in favorable areas, half a dozen of them common species , others thinly scattered

These long legged sprites have a particular charm for a surprising number of us who count them their favorite bird group. It isn't easy to account for such preferences but whether you call them shore birds, or waders as the British do, there is no mistaking their characteristics. Graceful of form and movement, wild enough to require some care to approach (only propinquity reveals the charm of birds), they are the very embodiment of unfettered freedom, denizens of wide horizons, and almost all accomplished travelers. And they are difficult enough in their varied summer and winter dress, their divergent groupings, to pose a challenge to our powers of discrimination. And, finally, so many of them connote the arctic, the last physical frontier, that an aura of romance mantles their long wings.

Book Review: The Shorebirds of North America: A Natural History and Photographic Celebration By Pete Dunne and Kevin T. Karlson – Phil Hadley

The Shorebirds of North America: A Natural History and Photographic Celebration. Pete Dunne and Kevin T. Karlson
Princeton University Press; 2024
ISBN 9780691220956 (hardback) ISBN 9780691224701 (ebook)



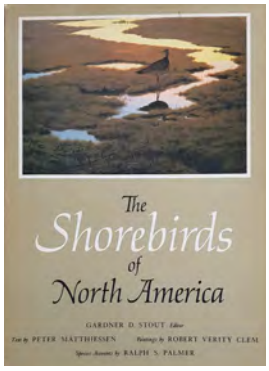
Fantastic front cover photograph of an American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana* sets the very high standard of photographs found throughout the book.

More than 50 years ago a book titled The *Shorebirds of North America* (see below) by Peter Matthiessen was published charting the natural history of this remarkable group of birds. This book is now sadly out of print but it has certainly stood the test of time, combining sumptuous paintings and detailed species accounts for enthusiasts of these birds to enjoy.

The collaboration of co-authors Pete Dunne and Kevin T. Karlson with their diverse knowledge and skill sets have created this fascinating and insightful new publication. This is essentially an updated version of the original book presenting the latest science and knowledge that has been acquired over the intervening years, combining detailed informative text with an extensive glossary of stunning digital photographs.

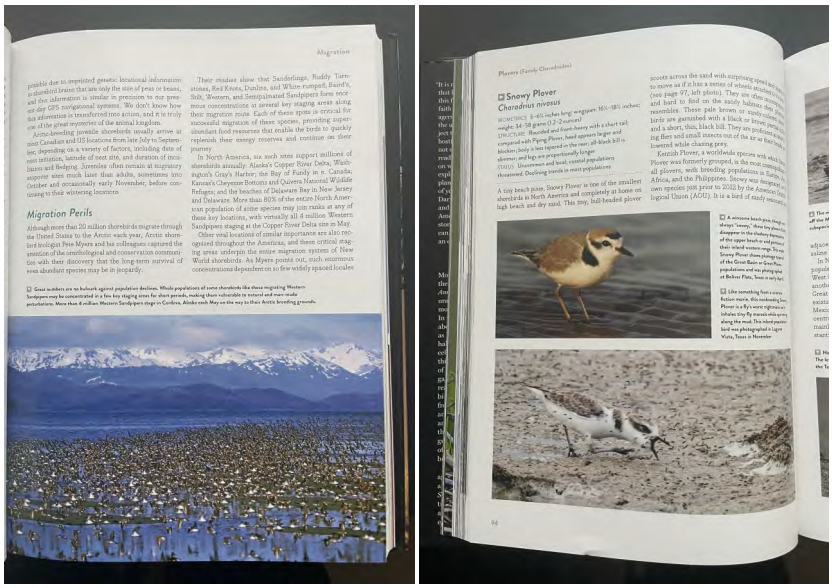
The book itself is extremely well laid out and is divided into two main sections. The first section, titled *Shorebirds Overview* presents the reader with general information about shorebirds including sub-sections focusing on habitat, plumage, breeding, nesting, feeding and a particularly informative section focusing on shorebird migration.

The second section of the book focuses on every one of the 52 species of shorebird which are known to breed in North America being sub-divided into the five family groups, they are; Stilts and Avocets *Recurvirostridae*, Oystercatchers *Haematopodidae*, Plovers *Charadriidae*, Sandpipers and Allies *Scolopacidae* and Jacanas *Jacanidae*. This Species Profiles Section provides the reader with the detail about each species including comprehensive population statistics, breeding biology and migratory movements.



Matthiessen's original book.

This is an outstanding take of the original publication and is found highly recommended for those who have an interest in birds and more specifically an interest in shorebirds, whether they are experienced birders, or relatively new to bird watching, this book is a most valuable resource.



Sample pages from Section 1 [left] and from section 2 [right].

Wader Guru live on our website:

Do you have an unanswered question about some aspect of wader or shorebird life, biology, history, etc. but have no place to find that information? Well look no further, just published on the Wader Quest website is the Wader Guru page.

This is a panel of experts from around the world who have agreed to join the team in attempting to give people the answers they seek regarding the waders of the world.

There will be an expanding series of FAQs and also the opportunity to Submit a question should the FAQs not provide you with the answer you need. So, look out for imminent announcements promoting this new awareness raising tool in the Wader Quest tool kit.

Example FAQ '*What is the difference between waders and shorebirds?*' Sample answer here.

If you have no questions of your own, you can see some of the Recent Questions that have been asked by others and the Guru's answer.

NEW FEATURE: A-Z of the people in wader nomenclature.
Who was Baird after whom Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* was named and who named it? (It was Elliott Ladd Coues in 1861.)

If you have ever wondered who all these people who have named waders are, or thought about the people behind the names given in honour of someone, then this is the place to look for your answers.

How you can help Wader Quest:

Help us raise awareness

Join Wader Conservation World Watch 1st/2nd November 2025

Social media

Help us raise funds to support wader conservation
Charity number; 1193674

Make a donation (**100%** goes to conservation)
Use QR code on the right to make a donation
Become a Friend of Wader Quest (**100%** goes to conservation)
Buy Wader Quest merchandising (**25%** goes to conservation)

Red Dragon Metal Art

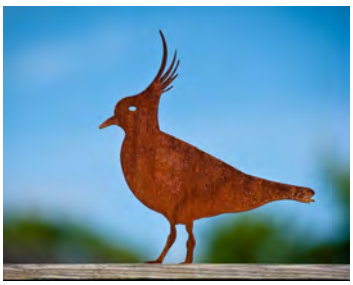
New line in wader motif garden ornaments from Red Dragon Metal Art

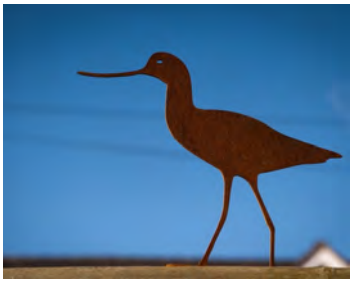
Steel wader shapes designed to rust and look spectacular
As fence toppers or with a spike to place in the ground or flower pot
Supplied rust free, ready to rust,
Place them in your garden and let the weather do the rest.

5 wader designs

Curlew (large)
Curlew (small)
Lapwing
Avocet
Sanderling

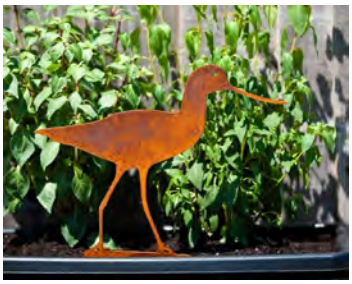
Fence toppers





Large Curlew only available as fence topper

Lawn/pot ornament



[All available from the Red Dragon Metal Art website shop]

For each wader design sold Red Dragon will donate a percentage of the price to Wader Quest

Watch them turn from shiny to rusty over time.

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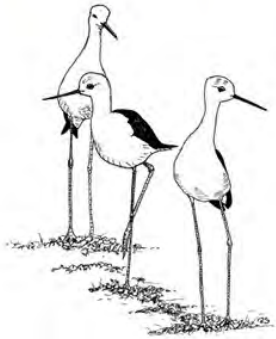
WWW.RedDragonMetalArt.co.uk

Wader Quest merchandising

New Wader Quest book - *A Quest for Waders*
by Rick and Elis Simpson

A new book from Wader Quest Publishing by Rick and Elis Simpson. This book chronicles the journeys they made to see waders around the world, and the parallel journey of Wader Quest from fundraiser to Registered Charity - all proceeds go to Wader Quest.






Foreword by Dominic Couzens

'This is a cracking read whether you're a waderphile or not. Ticking, dipping, ducking, diving, it's all here as Rick and Elis go through their version of a mid-life crisis to set up Wader Quest. A must-read for all birders.'

- **Iolo Williams**: Naturalist and T. V. presenter.

'Rick and Elis' enthusiasm ripples through this book. what they have achieved, bringing waders to the forefront of peoples minds alongside their conservation is second to none. A brilliant read which, like their beloved waders, will have you probing deeper into this amazing family.'

- **Tim Appleton MBE:** Founder of Birdfair Rutland Water and Creator of Rutland Water Nature Reserve.

'I was hooked by the prologue. The tragedy of extinction was brought home to me on seeing, in Morocco in 1990, three of the last few slender-billed curlews to exist. Thanks to the commitment of conservation organisations from around the world and support of people like Rick and Elis the spoon-billed sandpiper has a fighting chance of making it.'

- **Debbie Pain:** Conservationist and scientist.

'Waders are one of the most threatened groups of birds, with several species on the brink of extinction and many more suffering serious declines. This makes Rick and Elis Simpson's Wader Quest – a charity dedicated to protecting waders and highlighting their plight – important and necessary. This fascinating book tells the story of how the organisation grew from their quest to see all the world's waders, before it was too late.'

- **Rebecca Armstrong:** Editor of Birdwatch magazine.

orders - sales@waderquest.net

'Breathtakingly excellent - like a birding Michael Palin. The photographs and drawings are fantastic, and the text is fast-moving and endlessly entertaining and amusing.' Jim Wright.

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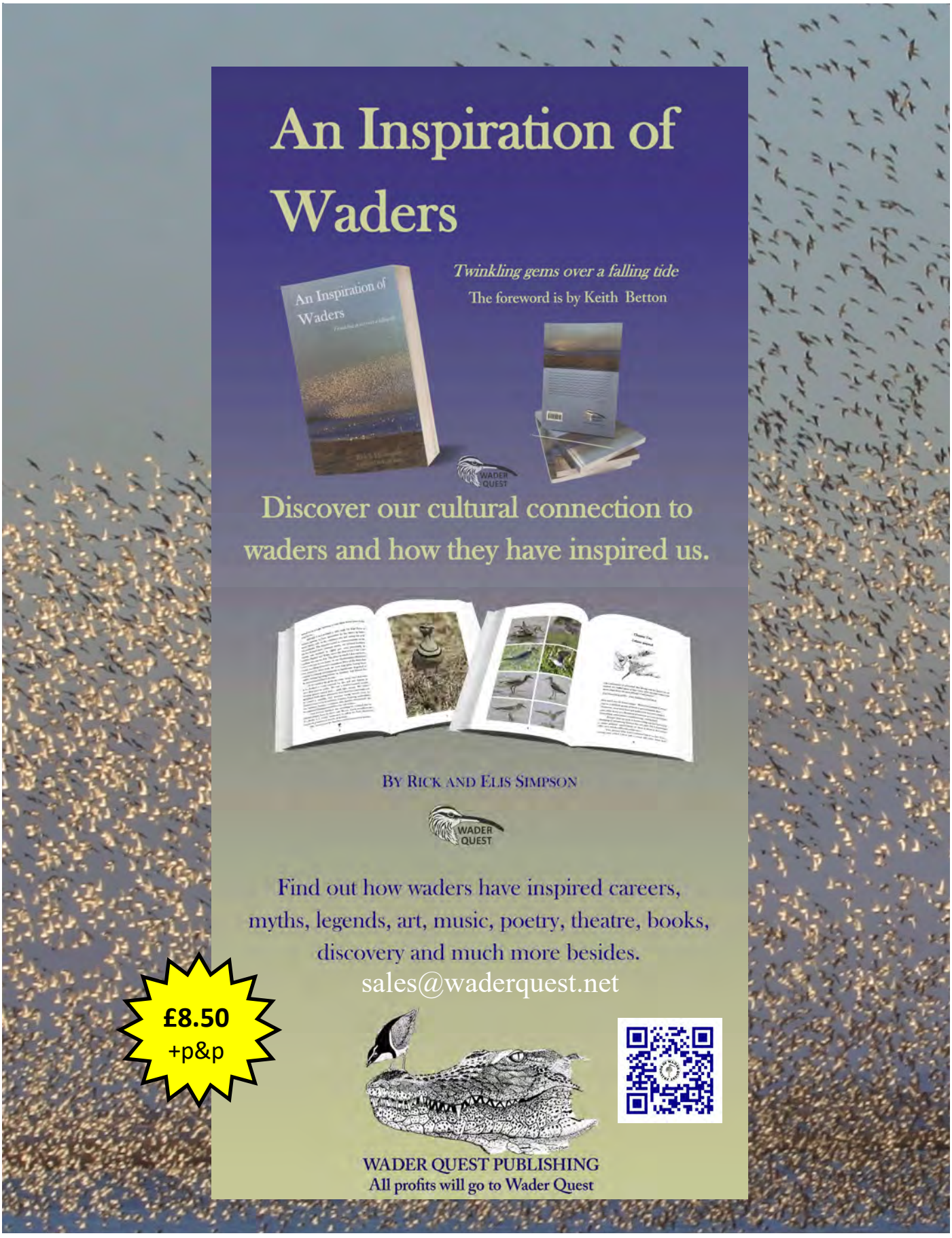
An Inspiration of Waders - A Wader Quest Publishing book By Rick and Elis Simpson



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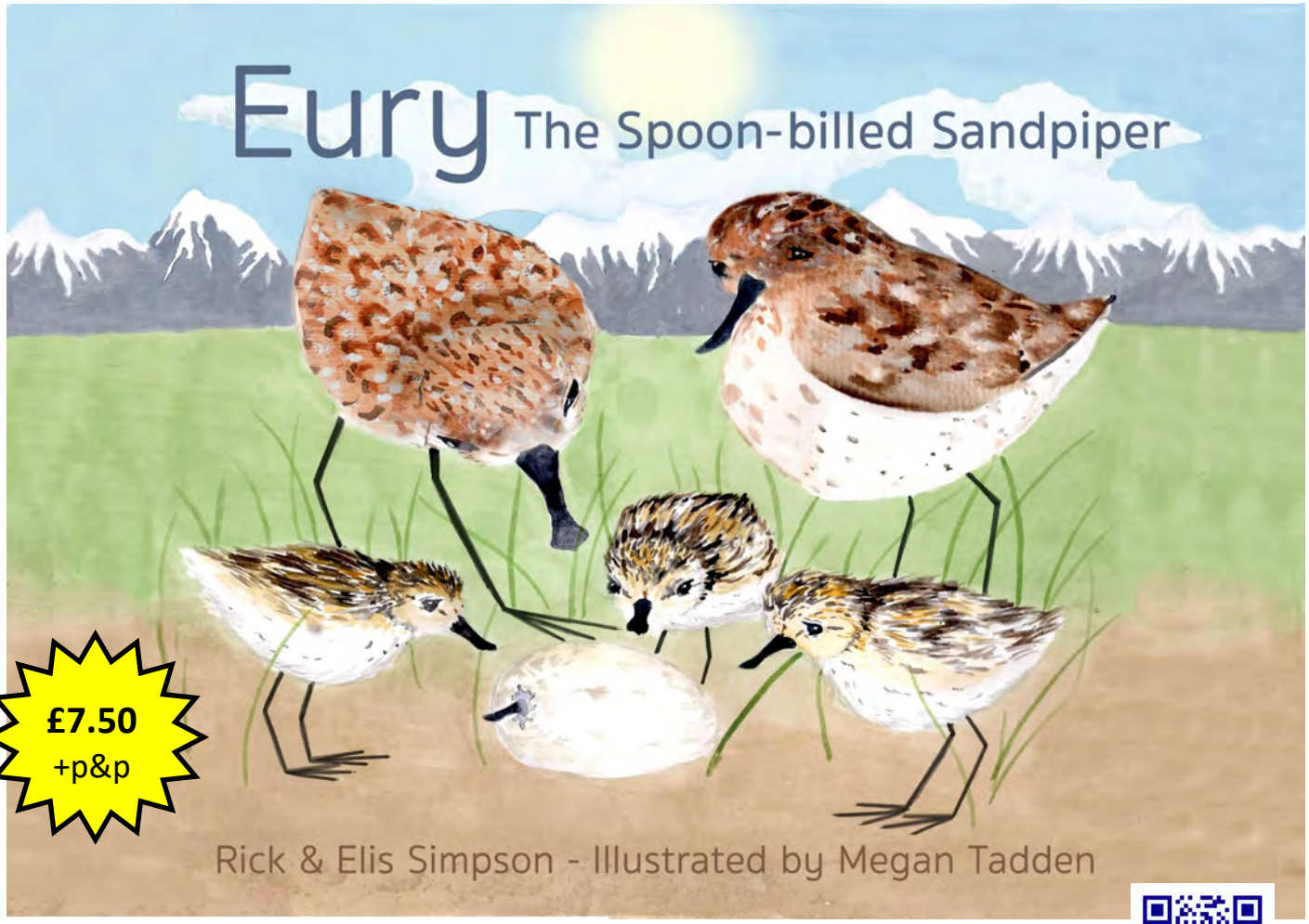

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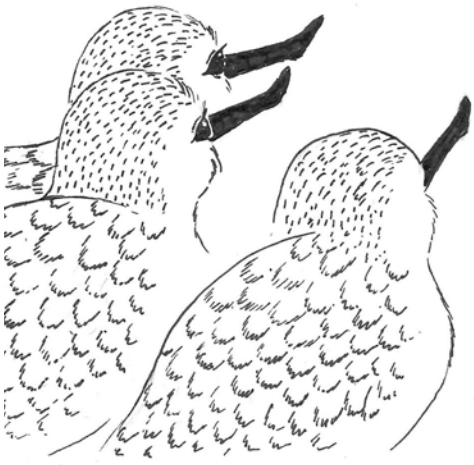

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11. River Lapwing
12. Common Ringed plover
13. Black-fronted Dotterel
14. Eurasian Curlew
15. Spoon-billed Sandpiper

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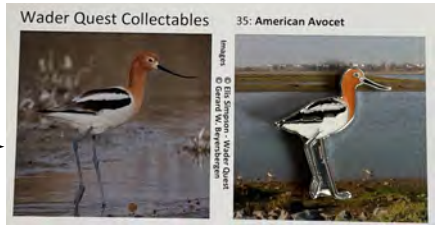

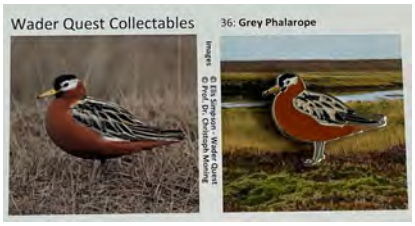

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Wader Quest merchandising

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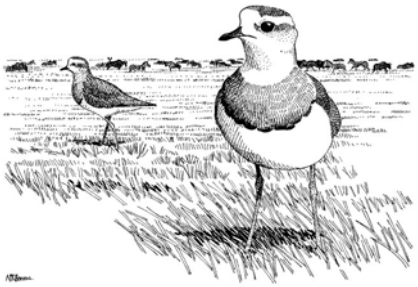

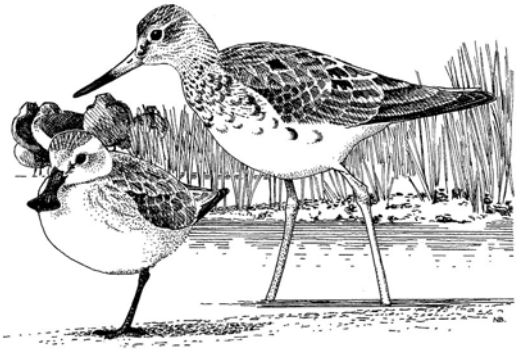
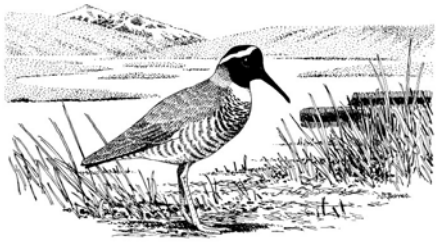
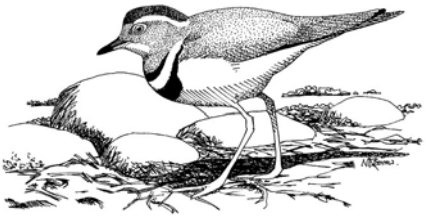
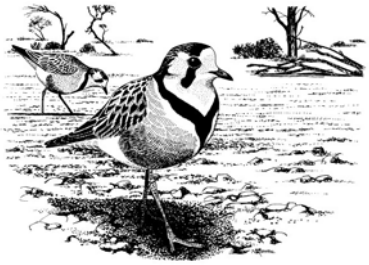


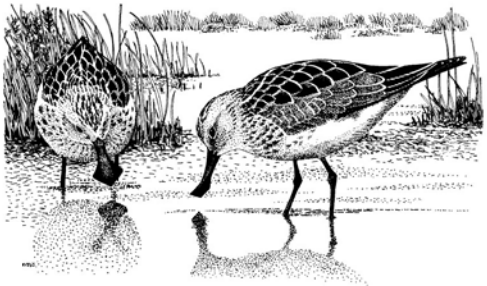



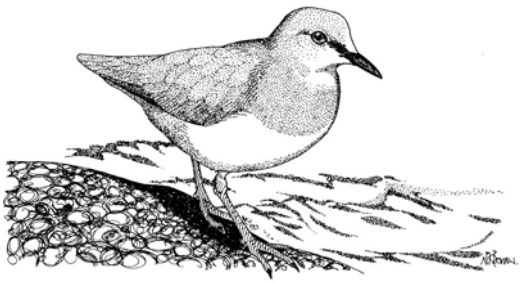

Wader Quest merchandising

Pied Avocets over Titchwell RSPB reserve © Julia Page

See newsletter Vol 7 issue 3 pp11-13 where Julia is the featured artist in Waders In Art.

JULIA PAGE POSTCARDS

100 X 150 MM

£1.00 EACH

+P&P

Eurasian Oystercatchers © Julia Page

Common Snipe © Julia Page

Northern Lapwing, Eurasian Spoonbills , Pied Avocets and Canada Geese at Titchwell RSPB reserve © Julia Page

Eurasian Oystercatchers. Black-tailed Godwit, Common Ringed Plovers and Little Egret © Julia Page

Designs by Julia Page

sales@waderquest.net

Guidelines for applications for Wader Quest grants

Projects should ideally be directed to one or more of the following funding priorities:

· Investigating the status of Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable or Near-threatened wader species
· Attempting to further the knowledge of current Important Bird Areas (IBAs) of significant importance to waders, through breeding surveys and conducting systematic counts
· Investigating potential new IBAs or ornithologically little known areas for waders
· Conducting ecological studies of little-known wader species
· Educational programmes, especially aimed at school children and youth to conserve and protect waders and their habitat

Priority will be given to projects:

· Conducted by Nationals of the country where the activity will take place
· Containing an educational element, that engage with local communities and/or have an element of long-term sustainability of the project, such as training of local counterparts or raising awareness of wader conservation within the wider community
· Providing an improvement in the understand of the conservation needs of a under studied wader species through research

The Wader Quest Grants Committee decision will be final and, unless initiated by Wader Quest, no further correspondence will be entered into regarding the decision.

Download Application form here and send to applications@waderquest.net

Total funds raised and donated since 12/09/2012 (Includes Grants Funds in hand)

£61,523.44

Species supported

African Oystercatcher
American Oystercatcher
Collared Plover
Eurasian Curlew
Great Knot
Hooded Plover
Ibisbill
Jack Snipe
Javan Plover
Magellanic Plover
Nordmann's Greenshank
Purple Sandpiper
Red-necked Phalarope
St Helena Plover
Snowy Plover
Sociable Lapwing
Spoon-billed Sandpiper
White-faced Plover
White-headed Stilt
Wilson's Phalarope
Wilson's Plover
Wood Snipe
Fuegian Snipe

Countries supported

Australia
Azerbaijan
Belarus
Brazil
Chile
China
Hungary
Iceland
Indonesia
Kazakhstan
Malaysia
Nepal
New Zealand
Peru
Russia
South Africa
St Helena
Thailand
Uganda
UK
USA
Venezuela

White-headed Stilt - Elis Simpson