



WADER QUEST

THE NEWSLETTER Volume 12; Issue 3 2025



Pectoral Sandpiper - Elis Simpson

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THE NATURAL HOME FOR WADER LOVERS

Email: info@waderquest.net
Website: www.waderquest.net
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/waderquest>
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<https://www.waderquest.net>

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

Next meetings: Trustees: TBC

Exec. Comm: TBC

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

Merchandising enquiries:

sales@waderquest.net

Membership enquiries:

membership@waderquest.net

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.

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Edited by Rick Simpson




WADER QUEST NEEDS YOU!

We are looking for volunteers to fill the following part time roles on the Wader Quest Executive Committee.

THE POSITION :

Membership Secretary
Merchandising Manager
Newsletter Editor
Website Manager
Social Media Coordinator
Event co-ordinator



 info@waderquest.net

See next page for more details

Wader Quest Needs You!

We are looking for unpaid volunteers to fill the following part time roles on the Wader Quest Executive Committee.

Membership Secretary
Merchandising Manager
Newsletter Editor
Website Manager
Communications Officer
Event co-ordinator

Wader Quest has been run, predominantly, from its inception in 2012, by the founders Rick and Elis Simpson. They are finding it increasingly difficult to continue at the same level of input to fulfill all the above roles.

'Wader Quest has been very successful in filling a niche for supporting wader conservation for 13 years and many people have given their time as trustees and also ExCo members along the way, including a very strong team currently in place, for which we are very grateful. However, members of the current team are unable to take on more than they have already committed to, so the long term survival of Wader Quest depends on fresh blood, ideas and enthusiasm being injected into the project.

The horrifying alternative is that Wader Quest will fail to survive in these increasingly difficult times if we are unable to spread the workload to a wider team of capable, dedicated, and enthusiastic volunteers.' - Rick and Elis Simpson.

Please consider taking on one of these roles to ensure the longevity of Wader Quest and the support that it provides to wader conservationists around the world.

For more details of any of the above roles, in the first instance, email info@waderquest.net.

Wader Quest news - cont'd

Chair's Comment

As the previous page's appeal for volunteers suggests, Wader Quest is at a turning point and we are seeking to recruit new blood into the organisation's administrative team. All of these positions are part time, requiring from a few hours a week to a few a month and a willingness to attend Executive Committee meetings, perhaps every two to three months, to discuss progress and ideas (usually weekday evenings).

A love of waders is clearly an advantage in terms of motivation, but a desire to help save the dwindling populations and support those who are at the sharp end of their conservation, is clearly a strong motivator too. Elis and I have been muddling along doing what we can as we can, taking up the greater part of each day in order to maintain the level of output, however modest that has been. We are currently supported by a good team, but they are also stretched, with busy lives and other commitments meaning they can take on no more. The demand of running a small charity in today's economic climate is increasingly tough and our skill set has reached its limit, in order for the charity to survive and thrive today, we need to step up our game, and the governance we have in place at this time is working to its capacity, so, despite their dedication, hard work and goodwill. Wader Quest needs more help.

This sort of volunteering would best suit people with a passion for wildlife, birds and in particular waders, who would be able to commit to some time to take on a role. That may involve some physical tasks, such as packing and posting stock to meet orders, or inputting data into a database in a timely fashion. The current team are in the process of perfecting much automation into the administration and financial responsibilities of the charity, but there are some tasks that still require a person to undertake them; editing and producing this newsletter for example, keeping the website fresh and up to date, or the aforementioned online sales shipping.

Elis and I are not going anywhere, Wader Quest is still 'our baby', we could never abandon it, but we do recognise our limits, which recently have become overwhelming and we do not want to allow the charity fall into a decline that would let our devoted supporters down, some of whom have been with us since the start and others who have committed to lifelong membership.

Wader Quest is not a sinking ship, it is a vessel encountering heavy seas, the able crew on board is doing as much as they can, so we are looking to add new crew members to help us steady the ship and enable her to cruise smoothly in the days, months and years to come.

Remember; waders need love too!

Board of Trustees update

No updates.

Executive Committee updates and news

No updates.

Events attended

11-13th July Global Birdfair; Lyndon Top, Oakham, Rutland LE15 8RN. Another successful and very enjoyable event. See page 6 for more details

Further events we will be attending in 2025

- **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. This year Rick Simpson will also be giving a talk; *Marathons, slides and leapfrogs - The fascinating diversity of wader migration strategies*. Saturday 12pm [Event Details here](#).
- **16th September Plover Appreciation Day;** We'll be showing our appreciation of plovers by going out and looking for some in our local area, why don't you do the same?
- **18th-19th October Northwest Birdwatching Festival;** We will be giving a talk on both days and look forward to seeing many of the regulars again at this friendly event. Rick Simpson will be giving a talk 1-1.45pm on both days; *Defining Waders - a look at what is, and what isn't, a wader and why; both currently and historically*. [Event details here](#).
- **1st-2nd November Wader Conservation World Watch -** Wherever you happen to be in the world, why not join our

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

The grants panel continues to assess applications for financial support from projects wishing to promote wader species conservation by research and outreach work.

We have recently received an interesting application from South India, to fund rings and satellite tags for a study of the Great Knot *Calidris tenuirostris*. The study will be carried out at Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu.

Grants Panel updates and news - cont'd

Point Calimere is an important coastal area consisting of several habitat types e.g. mangroves, tidal beach, mud flats, and sand dunes, salt pan, 'dry' grassland, and evergreen forest. The sanctuary was originally set up to conserve what had become an isolated population of Black Buck *Antelope cervicapra* an iconic and very beautiful Indian antelope where the males have long spiral horns. Due to the variety of habitats there is a good faunal assemblage including a good species list of resident and especially migrant birds.

Calimere Point holds the second largest congregation of migratory water birds in India, upwards of 100,000 from 103 species. Endangered and Critically Endangered wader species such as Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer* and Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea* are known to use the area. By outreach and education work the study will hope to raise local community understanding of the ecological and conservation needs of migratory shorebirds.

This study will be within the Central Asian Flyway CAF and the East Australasian Flyway EAAF. Through the study there is hope and ambition to identify and map 'vital but understudied stop over sites' and to gain 'additional ecological insights' which can inform regional management. This is certainly a very important site and one to watch.

The panel are also looking at how we can best help other studies such as a regional collaboration on Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* and a long term ongoing study of American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus*.

Global Birdfair 2025

Another wonderful event that was a resounding success all round, despite being impossibly hot on the set up day and Friday, but cooling slightly Saturday and actually quite pleasant in Robin marquee (stand 15) on Sunday.

Rick Simpson gave a talk on Saturday called *Wader Questing Down Under Pt2; New Zealand - Skylarks and Black Stilts* in the Curlew lecture theatre. The talk was attended by some 40 odd people (that is to say around 40 people, not that the people were odd) and it seemed to go down well with plenty of those 'odd people' coming to the stand afterwards to chat, ask questions and tell us about their own experiences in New Zealand.

One of the main attractions on the stand that brought people over and created a great deal of discussion were the British breeding wader eggs we had on display. Most people assumed them to be genuine eggs and questioned the legality of having them all, which gave testimony to the quality of the craftwork that went into turning them on a lathe and then hand painting them, but Astrid Kant (grutto.astrid@xs4all.nl), a friend of Wader Quest in the Netherlands.

Once again we were very grateful to [Limosa / Wildwings](#) who sponsored the stand, making our profit margin, and therefore our ability to help wader projects around the world, stronger.

The stand was set up on Thursday and run all weekend by Rick and Elis, ably assisted by volunteers Ray Heaton, who attended all three days, and James Cutting, who attended on Sunday.

As is now customary we launched our 2025 wader pins. This year they featured Pied Avocet *Avocetta recurvirostra*, Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*, Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*, and Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*. The 2025 Friends of Wader Quest members' badge featured a Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* head drawn by Rick Simpson.



Wader Quest Collectables

44: Pied Avocet



Wader Quest Collectables

45: Greater Painted-snipe



Wader Quest Collectables

46: Black-tailed Godwit



Wader Quest Collectables

47: Grey-headed Lapwing



Wader Quest Collectables

48: FOWQ 2025



Wader Conservation World Watch

November 1st and/or 2nd 2025



[Details of how to take part](#)
Wherever you happen to be in
the world.

Details of how to share your eBird checklist.

The image shows a screenshot of an eBird checklist interface with several red callout boxes and arrows pointing to specific elements. The checklist is for 'Danby Beacon' on 'Sat 11 May 2024' at '4:15 PM'. The user is 'Rick Simpson' from the 'Wader Quest Team'. The checklist shows 17 species observed, including Red Grouse, Common Woodpigeon, Northern Lapwing, Eurasian Curlew, Common Kestrel, Merlin, Carrion Crow, Eurasian Skylark, Barn Swallow, and Common Chiffchaff. The 'Share' button is highlighted with a red box. A callout box says: 'After submitting your checklist, click the share button that appears next to your name on the screen.' Below the checklist, there are instructions for sharing. A green callout box says: 'If you have never shared with us before...'. A blue callout box says: 'Type WaderQuestTeam as written here into this box, ... or, if you have shared with us before and saved the contact...'. A blue callout box says: 'find our team name on your list of contacts and click it.' A red callout box says: 'Click on Share Checklist...'. A red callout box says: '... and receive this cheery confirmation of success from those nice people at eBird.' A red callout box at the bottom says: 'Yay! This checklist has been shared!'.

Global Big Day 11th October 2025

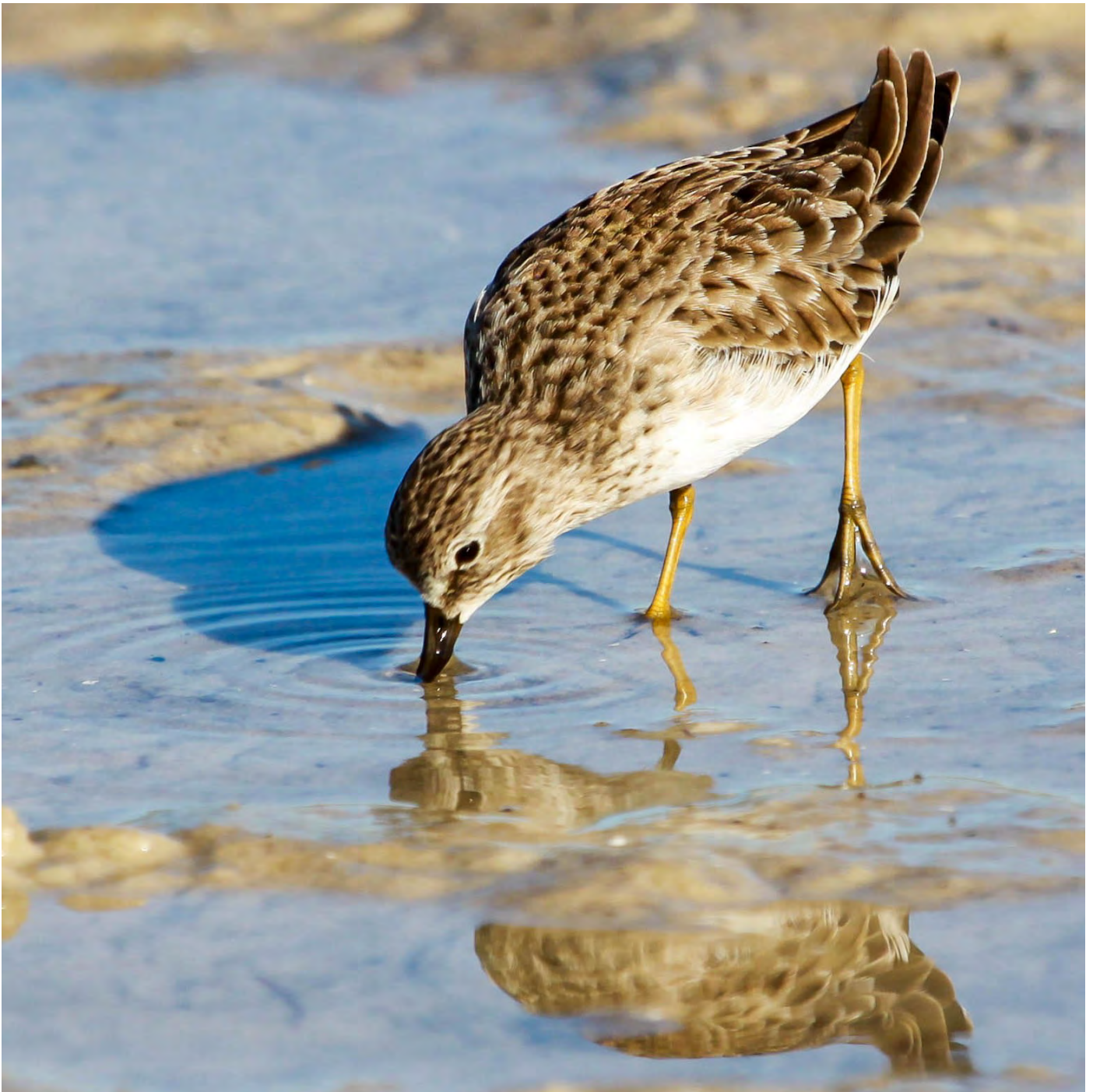
- Wader Quest team

Announcement: Whilst we will be happy to receive lists from our members, friends, colleagues and supporters, we will not be concentrating our efforts in order to top the list on the Global Birding lists for this event.

In keeping with previous years we concentrate on the Global Big Day spring event as, at that time of year, we have few other events that we are preparing for. In October we will be attending the wonderful Northwest Birdwatching Festival at Martin Mere and fervently preparing for our own Wader Conservation World Watch event (1st and 2nd of November). This involves concentrating our efforts on contacting people to encourage them to participate in our big annual global event and making that a success; after all, we don't want to overburden our field participants with multiple requests on their time.

If you do participate, and would like to add your list to the Wader Quest team list, simply share your eBird list with WaderQuestTeam. If you are unsure of how to do that there is a reminder on page 7 in the Wader Conservation World Watch poster.

We do however look forward to next May and hope that we will be able to count on your support once again, to show those bird tour people how it's done!



Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* - Elis Simpson

Wader Quest funding appeal



Great news for
Wader Quest

Your cause has raised
535
donations

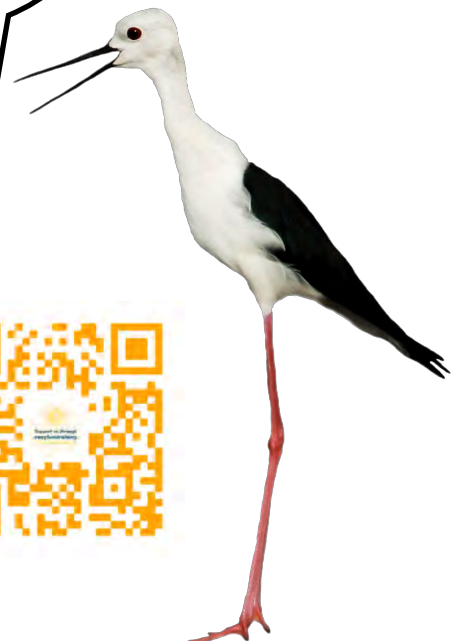
Your supporters have shopped **535** times via easyfundraising, raising **£658.00** for Wader Quest so far.

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*.



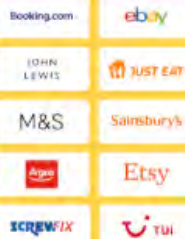
Sign up here!
Click on the
Sign up button or bar!



535.0
shops have supported
Wader Quest



Sign up



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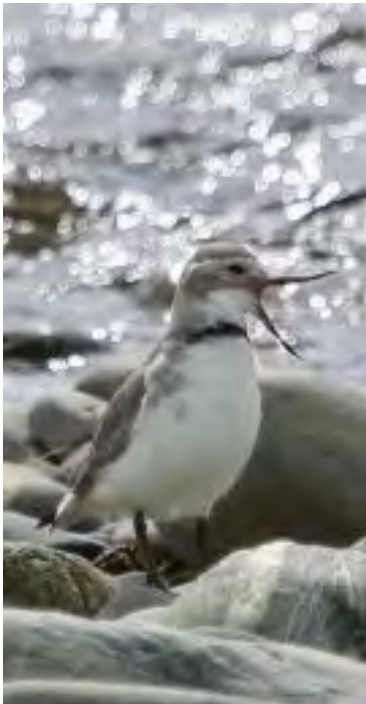
Sign up today and make a difference!



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>

Taxonomic tidy up; as it affects waders

- Rick Simpson



Wrybill *Anarhynchus frontalis*
- Elis Simpson

Recently, most of the influential list-keepers of the world's birds got together and, between them, created a definitive, universal, taxonomic list of the birds of the world and they called it [AviList – The Global Avian Checklist](#). This may come as good news to those who like things neat and tidy, but others will find that they will be gaining and losing some species, the latter much to their chagrin.

Well, for a start it helps us with our struggles to define waders. Hitherto, we have tried to stick to scientific norms, meaning that waders were to be all those species in the sub-orders Charadrii and Scolopaci within the order Charadriiformes. Then things got complicated. The powers that be decided that the family Turnicidae (Buttonquails) were in Scolopaci. Buttonquails are clearly not waders, but we needed to include them according to our own rules. Then it was decided that the Glareolidae (Pratincoles and Coursers) and Dromadidae (Crab Plover) were now in the sub order within Charadriiformes not considered waders, i.e. Lari. These two families are traditionally thought of as waders, and, although we stuck to the rules officially, we never really thought of them as anything but waders. So it was complicated.

In this new shake-up, they have, for now at least, stuck to the 'classic Linnaean ranks of order, family, genus, and species' plus of course subspecies, so no suborders to complicate matters. We can now, therefore, forget about the suborders and simply name the families we think of as waders and, hey presto, we are back to square one!



Crab Plover *Dromas ardeola* - Aditya Roy



White-backed Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus melanurus* - Elis Simpson

So how many waders are there now? Well, we make it 235 species in the families included in the Hayman, Marchant and Prater's seminal work; Shorebirds, plus the Pedionomidae (Plains-wanderer) and the Chionidae (Sheathbills), which they didn't include, but we do.

In the new order of things some species that we have counted have now officially reverted to subspecies;

- White-backed Stilt *Himantopus melanurus* is back as a subspecies of Mexican Stilt as *Himantopus mexicanus melanurus*.
- Black-shouldered Lapwing *Vanellus novaehollandiae* is back as a subspecies of Masked Lapwing as *Vanellus miles novaehollandiae*.
- Northern Red-breasted Plover *Anarhynchus aquilonius* is lumped back with the Southern Red-breasted Plover as *Anarhynchus obscurus aquilonius* and the species' English name reverts to New Zealand Plover.



Little Ringed Plover *Thinornis dubius* - Elis Simpson

- The genus *Thinornis* has been resurrected and the following species included in it;

Hooded Plover becomes *T. cucullatus*.
Shore Plover becomes *T. novaeseelandiae*.
Black-fronted Dotterel becomes *T. melanops*.
Forbes' Plover becomes *T. forbesi*.
Three-banded Plover becomes *T. tricoloris*.
Long-billed Plover *T. placidus*.
Little Ringed Plover *T. dubius*.

It can be expected that the situation will change over time, but it is to be welcomed, we think, that there is now a single world taxonomy of birds, so we neither have to ask, nor explain, which authority is being adhered to. We will be amending the website to reflect this over the next few weeks.

Species Focus for 2025; Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*



Common Redshank © Phil Hadley



The Wader Guru's fun facts about... Common Redshank!

The **typical lifespan** of a Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* is 4 to 6 years. However, the maximum recorded lifespan for a Common Redshank is 26.9 years.

A **Common Redshank egg** typically weighs around 22.3 grams. The eggs are typically 45mm in length and 31mm in width, according to the BTO. Redshanks lay a clutch of typically 4 eggs.

Common Redshanks construct their nests in shallow depressions on the ground, often within wet grassland or saltmarsh environments. These nests are usually concealed by vegetation, such as grass tussocks, and lined with dry grass, leaves, and sometimes feathers. The female redshank lays 3-5 eggs, which are incubated by both parents for approximately 23-24 days.



Typical Common Redshank nest © Elis Simpson



Common Redshank facsimile created by painting turned wood by Astrid Kant.

Cover photo; Purple Sandpiper - Elis Simpson



Pectoral Sandpiper - Elis Simpson

The wonders of nature meet the worst of humanity in this shot. It never ceases to amaze me how nature can survive and find a way to exist, even where we human beings have fundamentally made their environment worse. Here a Pectoral Sandpiper is finding worms in the ooze next to a discarded tyre. Both the ooze and the tyre have been exposed by the long dry spell we have been experiencing here in the UK recently.

It is not often that the opportunity to see rare birds like this crop up close to home, so we were especially pleased to hear about this individual just a few minutes drive away. The first day we went to see it, it remained distant, but upon returning at a later date it had taken to feeding around some rocks very close to the viewing area, and it was here that this picture was taken.

Pectoral Sandpiper - Rick Simpson

Pectoral Sandpiper

Calidris melanotos

Vieillot 1819

IUCN Least Concern

Scientific name explained: The genus *Calidris* is from the the Greek *kalidris* sometimes *skalidris* which refers to a grey -coloured waterside bird mentioned by Aristotle. The specific *melanotos* comes from the Greek *melas* meaning black and *-notos* meaning -backed from *noton* meaning back. An odd description given that the bird is not black-backed in this plumage, however the dark centred feathers of the scapulars and coverts have a thin ale edge to them and when there wear especially from a distance, the bird can look extremely dark on the upperparts.

Alternative English names: American Pectoral Sandpiper separating it from the Siberian Pectoral Sandpiper *Tringa acuminata pectoralis* (Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*) with which it was thought to be conspecific by some. Local names in North America include; Krieker; Cow, Grass Jack and Meadow Snipe; Brown Bird; Short Neck; Hay Bird.

American language names:

Arawak; Duria **Emerillon;** Batui **French;** *Bécassine à poitrine noire* (Haiti)

Greenlandic; *Shigeriakjuk*, *Tweetwee-nyuak* **Guadeloupean Creole**

French; *Dos rouge* **Guarani:** *Carachila*, *Chululu'i* **Guianese Creole French;**



Pectoral Sandpiper - Elis Simpson

Pectoral Sandpiper - cont'd

Zalwèt-lanmè **Haitian Creole French**; *Bekasin fal nwa* **Inuktitut**; *Shigeriakjuk*, *Tweetwee-nyuak* **Spanish**; *Alzacolita pectoral* (Honduras) *Chorlo Pecho Gris* (Uruguay) *Correlimnos Pechirrayado* (Costa Rica, Nicaragua) *Playerito Pecho Gris* (Uruguay) *Playerito Pectoral* (Argentina, Dominican Republic, Paraguay), *Playero Pechirrayado* (Panama) *Playero Pectoral* (Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico) *Tin-güin*, *Tin-Güin* (Venezuela) *Zarapico moteado* (Cuba) **Portuguese**; *batuíra-de-peito-listrado*, *macarico-de-colete*, *Maçarico-de-colete* **Saramaccan**; *Maatwítwi* **Sranan**; *Snepi*, *Snip*

Asian language names:

Russian: *Dutysh*, Дутыш, Кулик-дutyш - Дутыш **Yakut**: дудукаан, дуллукаан инииэрэм

Collective nouns: A number of collective nouns pertain to sandpipers in general, including a cluster, a contradiction, a fling and a time-step, but there is none specifically for Pectoral Sandpiper.

Order: SCOLOPACIDAE **Rafinesque** 1815

Suborder: Scolpaciai **Huxley** 1867

Family: Scolopacidae **Rafinesque** 1815

Subfamily: Calidrinae (Reichenbach 1849)

Synonymy of genus:

Actodromus Gray, GR 1845

Arquatella Baird 1858

Ereunetes Illiger 1811

Erolia Merrem 1804

Limnocinclus Gould 1865

Pelidna Cuvier 1816

Pisobia Billberg 1828

Schoenicola Blyth 1844

Totanus Bechstein, 1803

Tringa Linnaeus 1758

Protonym:

Tringa melanotos Vieillot 1819

Synonymy of species:

Tringa cinclus dominicensis Brisson 1760

Tringa maculata Vieillot 1819

Totanus acuminata Horsfield 1820

Pelidna pectoralis Say 1823

Tringa dominicensis Degland 1849

Taxonomy:

Monotypic, no subspecies recognised.

Synonymy of subspecies:

No current subspecies recognised.

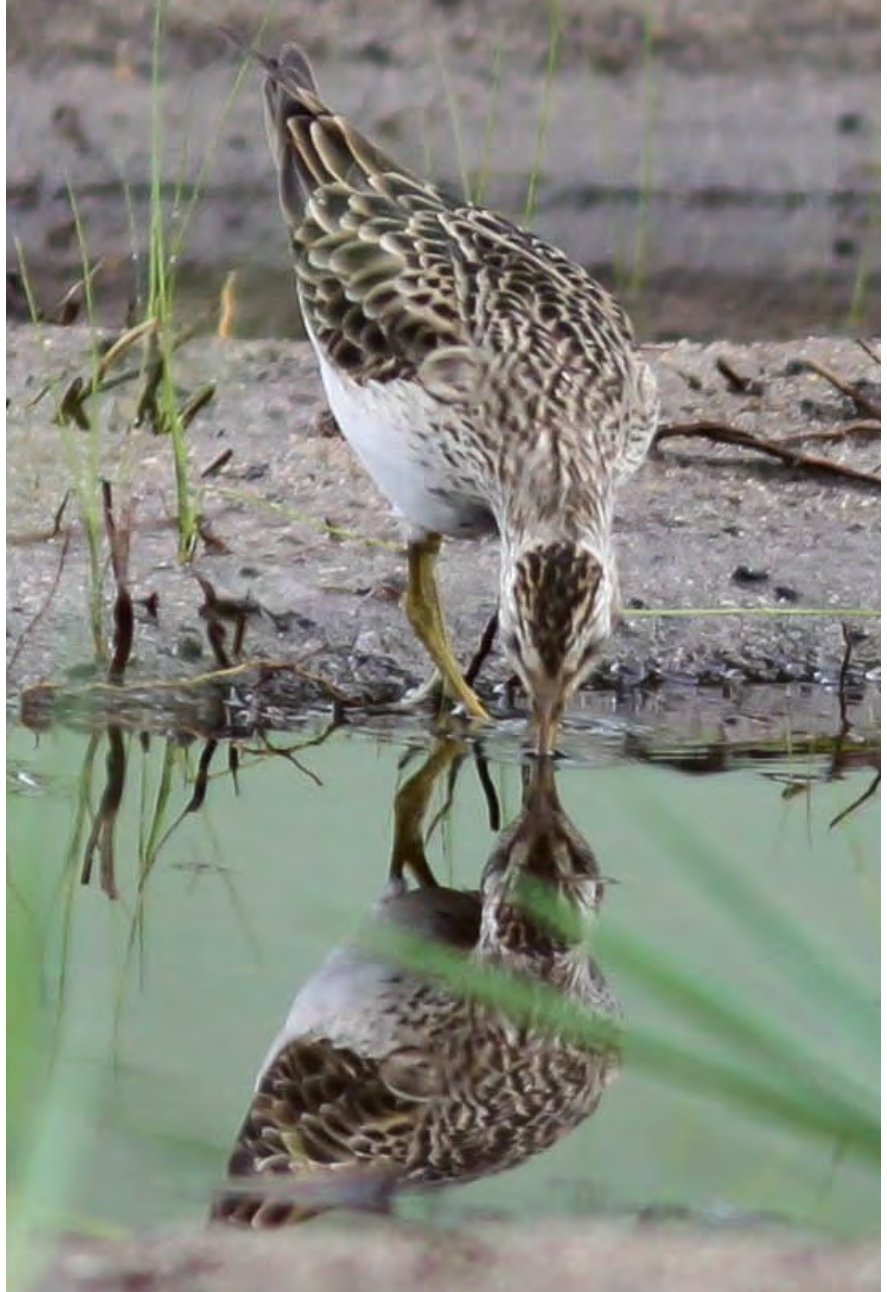
Systematic / Taxonomic history:

Formerly thought to be a subspecies of Sharp-tailed Sandpiper.

Conservation status - IUCN Least Concern; UK Scarce migrant.

Threats: In North America, the expansion in the range of the Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes* into the Arctic breeding grounds of Pectoral Sandpipers, has created an increasing risk of predation. In some projects nest protection fences are being tested to see if they are effective to try to counteract this change. There has also been an expansion of the breeding range of Ross' Anser *rossii* and Snow Geese *Anser caerulescens*. *The presence of the geese pose two threats, one of nest destruction and the other of attracting more predators, foxes, bears, skuas and so on, to a given region due to the abundance of prey.* In Russia however it is thought that the changing climate is actually benefiting the species.

Population: Best estimate of 8,000,000-15,000,000. Trend unknown.



Pectoral Sandpiper - Elis Simpson

Pectoral Sandpiper - cont'd

Curiosities:

The Pectoral Sandpiper has an inflatable throat sac, which it uses in display, as described here in this **From the Library Special** featuring a section from *North American Shore Birds* by Daniel Giraud Elliot where he reports Nelson's description.

'At this time they have a habit unique among waders, but often observed in members of the Grouse family, of inflating the throat until it becomes as large as the body, and uttering a note that is "hollow and resonant, but at the same time liquid and musical, and may be represented by a repetition of the syllable tōō-ū, tōō-ū, tōō-ū.'" Nelson further states that "the skin of the throat and breast becomes very flabby and loose at this season, and its inner surface is covered with small globular masses of fat." "The bird may frequently be seen running along the ground close to the female, its enormous sac inflated and its head drawn back, and the bill pointing directly forward, or filled with springtime vigor, the bird flits with slow but energetic wing-strokes close to the ground, its head raised high over the shoulders and the tail hanging almost directly down, As it thus flies it utters a succession of the hollow booming note, which have a strange and ventriloquial quality. At times the male rises twenty or thirty yards in the air, and, inflating its throat, glides down to the ground with its sac hanging below. Again he crosses back and forth in front of the female, puffing his breast out and bowing from side to side, running here and there as if intoxicated with passion.'



A species of sandpiper that never was, came from the mating of a male Pectoral Sandpiper and a female Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*. When it was first noted it was thought to be a new species, Cox's Sasndpiper *Calidris paramelanotos*, closely related to the Pectoral Sandpiper. Very few examples were ever found and, when DNA testing became available, it soon came to light just how closely related it was to a Pectoral Sandpiper, being the hybrid offspring of one.

The Pectoral Sandpiper has appeared on stamps from both Kiribati and also the Marshall Islands. Curiously both of these are in Oceania and none have been produced anywhere from South or North America where the bird is most common as a migrant or Russian Siberia and Arctic America where it breeds.



Pectoral Sandpiper on postage stamps - [Kjell Scharning](#)



Pectoral Sandpipers - Elis Simpson

Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust working to bring Ringed Plovers back from the brink - Jay Cowen

Common Ringed Plovers *Charadrius hiaticula* are short wading birds with orange legs and distinctive black 'ring' markings on the face and neck, earning them their name. They forage across beaches in search of insects and small crustaceans. Every year they gather at their breeding sites and pair off for the season, occupying a territory while they incubate their eggs.

Beach-nesting Ringed Plovers were once a common feature around Cornish coastlines, defending their precious eggs against anything getting too close. Sadly, this bravery and determination to protect their offspring is the very thing that has led to their decline. With beaches becoming popular holiday destinations, the Ringed Plovers have suffered more instances of disturbance, the consequences being that undefended eggs are at a greater risk of predation and unhatched chicks are also very vulnerable.

Today the next closest nesting site is 170 miles away in Dorset, making the Isles of Scilly a crucial site for Ringed Plovers in the South West. The Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust is taking steps to ensure that beaches across the islands can continue to be a haven for this iconic bird. The unique tranquillity of Scilly is perhaps one of the features that has allowed Ringed Plovers to persist here for this long.

Sarita Whitehead, Conservation Officer at Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust, said:

"Since starting the project in the spring/summer of 2024 we have started to build a foundational understanding of breeding sites, productivity and the factors affecting breeding success. Whilst Scilly is a favourite staycation destination for many people, our beaches remain less busy than those along the South West coastline presenting us with the unique opportunity to make real change for Ringed Plover. Whilst recreational disturbance remains a key concern for the success of this species on our shores, with the success of our Plover Lover campaign we have been able to engage with a wide range of people both local and visiting. Looking to the future, we would love to see an increase in the number of breeding pairs across our islands as well as being able to host more volunteers and educate people on just how important this work is."



Common Ringed Plover - Jonty Ward



Isles of Scilly
Wildlife Trust



Tiny, vulnerable Ringed Plover chick - Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust

Beach-nesting birds are often overlooked as a conservation priority. However Ringed Plovers have been in long-term decline and are on the UK Red List. We are lucky to have no shortage of potentially suitable habitat across Scilly, with an abundance of beaches with dune features and sheltered bays. The challenge comes with minimising accidental disturbance from recreation.

Our understanding of our plovers is growing every year, which helps us in working out how we can best protect these birds. We are part of a community which can be very proud that these birds are still sharing our beaches with us."

Julian Branscombe, CEO of Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust, said:

"Ringed Plovers are a striking feature of how special the Isles of Scilly are for rare and threatened wildlife. We must all save our breeding plovers – we can't let this precious species become extinct here, as has already tragically happened around most parts of the UK's coastline."

This summer we are raising money to support this important work through our Protect our Plovers appeal. We are proud to share that we have received the endorsement of actor Samuel West, who shared his fondness for Scilly and is pleased to support our goal."

Samuel West, Actor and Ringed Plover Ambassador with Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust, said:

"This charismatic little bird used to breed all round Britain's coasts. But as beaches have got busier, they've run out of safe places to raise their chicks. The Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust is working hard to protect this at-risk and site-faithful bird, so they can have lots of babies and bring their numbers back from the brink."

To donate and support the Protect our Plovers appeal, visit:

<https://www.ios-wildlifetrust.org.uk/appeals/protect-our-plovers>

Training New Bird Protectors in Peruíbe, Brazil.

- Karina Ávila and Bruno Lima

This month, [Projeto Aves Limícolas](#) (The Shorebird Project) visited the Professor Adriana Aparecida Municipal School in Peruíbe to share a little about the incredible bird life with children from the rural area.

We talked about shorebirds, their habits, and the places in which they live. When we asked how many of them the children already knew, we discovered something special: since they had grown up surrounded by nature, almost all of them already had stories and memories of these birds. It was a joy to realise that our work not only brings new information, but also enhances what is already part of their lives!

After the conversation, we all went to the school's yard to observe the birds up close. In just over half an hour, we saw 30 species!

Among the highlights, a pair of Red-tailed Parrots *Amazona brasiliensis* stole the show with their striking colours, and the surprise winner was a Southern Lapwing *Vanellus chilensis* building a nest right inside the school grounds.

This is a very special school for us, as the children live in our neighborhood and actively participate in our municipal events. Our idea is to continue making birdwatching more inclusive and to train future birdwatchers in Peruíbe.

Formando novos protetores das aves

Neste mês, o Projeto Aves Limícolas visitou a Escola Municipal Professora Adriana Aparecida, em Peruíbe, para compartilhar um pouco da incrível vida das aves com as crianças da zona rural.



Versão Brasileiro

Falamos sobre as aves limícolas, seus hábitos e os lugares onde vivem. Quando perguntamos quantas delas as crianças já conheciam, descobrimos algo especial: como elas crescem rodeadas de natureza, quase todas já tinham histórias e lembranças com essas aves. Foi uma alegria perceber que nosso trabalho não traz apenas novidades, mas também valoriza o que já faz parte da vida delas!

Depois da conversa, fomos todos para o quintal da escola observar as aves de perto. Em pouco mais de meia hora, vimos 30 espécies!

Entre os destaques, um casal de papagaio-de-cara-roxa roubou a cena com seu colorido, e o campeão da surpresa foi um quero-quero construindo ninho dentro da própria escola.

Essa é uma escola muito especial para nós, pois as crianças vivem em nossa vizinhança e participam ativamente das nossas atividades no município. Nossa ideia é continuar tornando a observação de aves mais inclusiva, e formar futuros protetores das aves em Peruíbe.



Visiting local children at school - Projeto Aves Limícolas

Luannan Coast 2025 Part 3 - Chris Hassell, Katherine Leung, and Yang Liu.

“The Luannan Coast is an important staging site of international significance for two subspecies of Red Knot in the EAAF.” This is the statement we emphasize in our report every year. It probably sounds like the “same old story” when you just read the sentence, scanning in the field everyday we feel this statement is so true. Not only for the fact that we can find marked Red Knot of the two subspecies from at least 15 banding sites along the EAAF (plus India in the Central Asian Flyway), as the season goes by, we see both subspecies of the Knots become fatter and prettier (also more “vocal”, all getting ready for their next leg of migration.



Happy, pretty and fat Red Knots in telescope view. 2025 06 02 - K. Leung

In the last week of this field season, Katherine and Liu Yang were holding the fort as Chris had to depart China within the 30-day visa free period (just like some of the Red Knots, some stay longer, some for a shorter period!).

Since 10-May, we have had 20,000 to 30,000 Red Knots on the Nanpu mudflats every day, which is a good proof of our colleague, Dr. Hebo Peng’s finding that the food of the Red Knots (*Potamocorbula laevis*) on the Nanpu mudflat has further recovered this year. Many of these birds were also spreading along and feeding close by the seawall after the tide fell, so that we can spend up to 6 hours scanning many small flocks along the 7km seawall (see [Update 2](#)).

Usually at the end of the season we will have to spend more time scanning in the ponds rather than on the seawall (mudflat) because the birds often stay in one big flock away from the seawall, making it impossible to scan for marked birds. Our theories (pure guessing!!!) are that the “late-arriving, new comers”, which tend to stay for short periods, are more “nervous”, they feel safer feeding in one big flock and do not want to spend time exploring other feeding areas on the mud. Or maybe there is some subtle change in the food with *Potamocorbula* getting less abundant and easy to access on the mudflats and the food availability in the ponds increasing so, this is when we have to move to the ponds to look for closer birds to scan.



“Un-scan-able” flock on the Nanpu mudflats. 2025 06 02 - K Leung

Luannan Coast 2025 Part 3- cont'd.

Me and Yang had two very successful afternoon scanning at the roost in the salt ponds behind the seawall with about 10,000 Red Knot around and recorded quite a few newly-arrived colour banded birds from NW Australia each day. On 29-May, we were shocked to find only 800 Red Knot in the same area. It seemed that the majority of the birds had departed on 28-May evening with the strong easterly wind.

Fortunately, we had a “spy” in the flock, 4BYLR, a satellite tagged Red Knot from NWA (see Report 2024) which gave us some hints where to find the roosting flocks. This year something different happened, compared to the previous few years, in that at the end of May, some of the ponds began to drop their water level. This creates good roosting and feeding opportunities for the birds. From studying 4BYLR’s track, Katherine and Yang successfully found small flocks of hundreds to 1,400 Red Knot in various ponds. Some of them were too far to scan, some were close and “scannable.”



A few inches difference in water level makes life much easier for the Knots and for us! Yang’s scanning a flock by the road 2025 06 03 - K. Leung

Even though the number of Red Knot had dropped significantly (see the table below for the counts of this season), we were still recording new arrivals each day, with around 50% of the colour band Red Knot individuals we recorded each day being new for the season. So, around this last week of the season, our field observations continue to support the hardcore analysis of (Lok et al 2019) that the Luannan coast is, for late arriving piersmai, a quick “pit stop” on the Red Knot highway to the Arctic.

Daily count/estimate of Red Knots in Nanpu spring 2025:

WEEK 1		WEEK 2		WEEK 3		WEEK 4		WEEK 5	
30-Apr	6000	7-May	10000	14-May	25000	21-May	30000	28-May	21000
1-May	7000	8-May	n/c	15-May	20000	22-May	25000	29-May	2332
2-May	6000	9-May	n/c	16-May	20300	23-May	17000	30-May	3950
3-May	8000	10-May	25000	17-May	20000	24-May	21000	31-May	3749
4-May	8000	11-May	n/c	18-May	20707	25-May	22000	1-Jun	2072
5-May	8000	12-May	25000	19-May	20000	26-May	15500	2-Jun	2050
6-May	12000	13-May	25000	20-May	27000	27-May	22000	3-Jun	2355
								4-Jun	2200

*n/c = not counted

It is always a hard feeling to wave Nanpu goodbye. We love the birds, the people, and this place! There were still 2,200 Red Knots counted on the last morning of our field work but of course we cannot keep going until the last bird is gone. Already we are seeing some returning Black-tailed Godwits (bohii subspecies) and Asian Dowitcher which may have failed to breed, so it won’t be too long until we see the Red Knots again after they return from their breeding grounds. Until then, please still stay tuned as we will present more of this year’s finding in our final report.

Thanks, as ever, to a range of people who were highlighted at the start of Update 1. And to a private donor who funded the flights for Chris. And once more particular thanks to the Liu family, who make us feel like Nanpu is our second home.

Luannan Coast 2025 Part 3 - cont'd



Happy scanning team on the Nanpu Seawall. 2025 05 22

For full 2025 GFN report from Luanan Coast 2025 click on image below.



SHOREBIRD NORTHWARD MIGRATION THROUGH THE LUANNAN COAST, BOHAI BAY, CHINA, APRIL – JUNE 2025

Katherine Leung, Chris Hassell,
Weipan Lei, Zhengwang Zhang and Theunis Piersma



Red Knots and other shorebirds landing, Nanpu mudflats, 1 May 2025.

© Katherine Leung

Colour-ringed Whimbrel - Rebecca Dickson

A Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*, which I ringed at Gott Bay on the island of Tiree, the most westerly island in the Inner Hebrides of Scotland, on the 13th of May 2024, has been spotted and reported as wintering at Ebek d'Aiznaya in Mauritania in western Africa .

The bird, which was adorned with a British Trust for Ornithology metal ring EZ13597 and a yellow flag with E1 inscribed in black, was seen a total of five times at the same location by Bob Loss, a keen Dutch ring resighting reader, from the 25th of November until the 11th of December.

Amazingly this constitutes only the second time a Scottish ringed Eurasian Whimbrel has been proven to find its way to Mauritania! In total we have ringed six Eurasian Whimbrels so far on Tiree, and we assume, although we cannot be sure yet, that all of these individuals are Icelandic birds. Time will tell, but hopefully they will be seen on or near their breeding grounds to confirm this as a fact.

Colour ringing is extremely important for increasing live ringing returns like this one. These darvic rings are much easier to read for photographers, birdwatchers, and ring readers, which significantly improves ringing returns. If you see one, on any species of bird, please report it as your sighting may be significant in discovering new information or confirming information already known.



Rebecca Dickson with E1 - Clyde Ringing Group



Eraisian Whimbrels - Elis Simpson

From the library: Waders their breeding, haunts and watchers (1986) - Desmond and Maimie Nethersole-Thompson

'There are pipe-dream waders, mouth-watering birds of which we have read much and talked about with those who have hunted and tried to understand them. In the forest marshes we particularly think of dusky redshank, bar-tailed godwit, jack and great snipe and broad-billed sandpiper. In the Canadian muskegs the greater and lesser yellowlegs and solitary sandpipers are intriguing. We should love to have the comparative studies of these with greenshank, redshank, dusky redshank and green sandpiper. The barrens of the high arctic, so challenging to work but now more accessible, have superb waders. The knot will always be a blue riband bird to the searcher. Sanderling, black-bellied plover and buff-breasted sandpiper are now also slowly yielding their secrets.

With their intriguing displays and their haunting voices the waders have always attracted dedicated enthusiasts. Over the years they have drawn the watcher to many of the wild places of the world as well as to softer haunts close to towns and cities.'



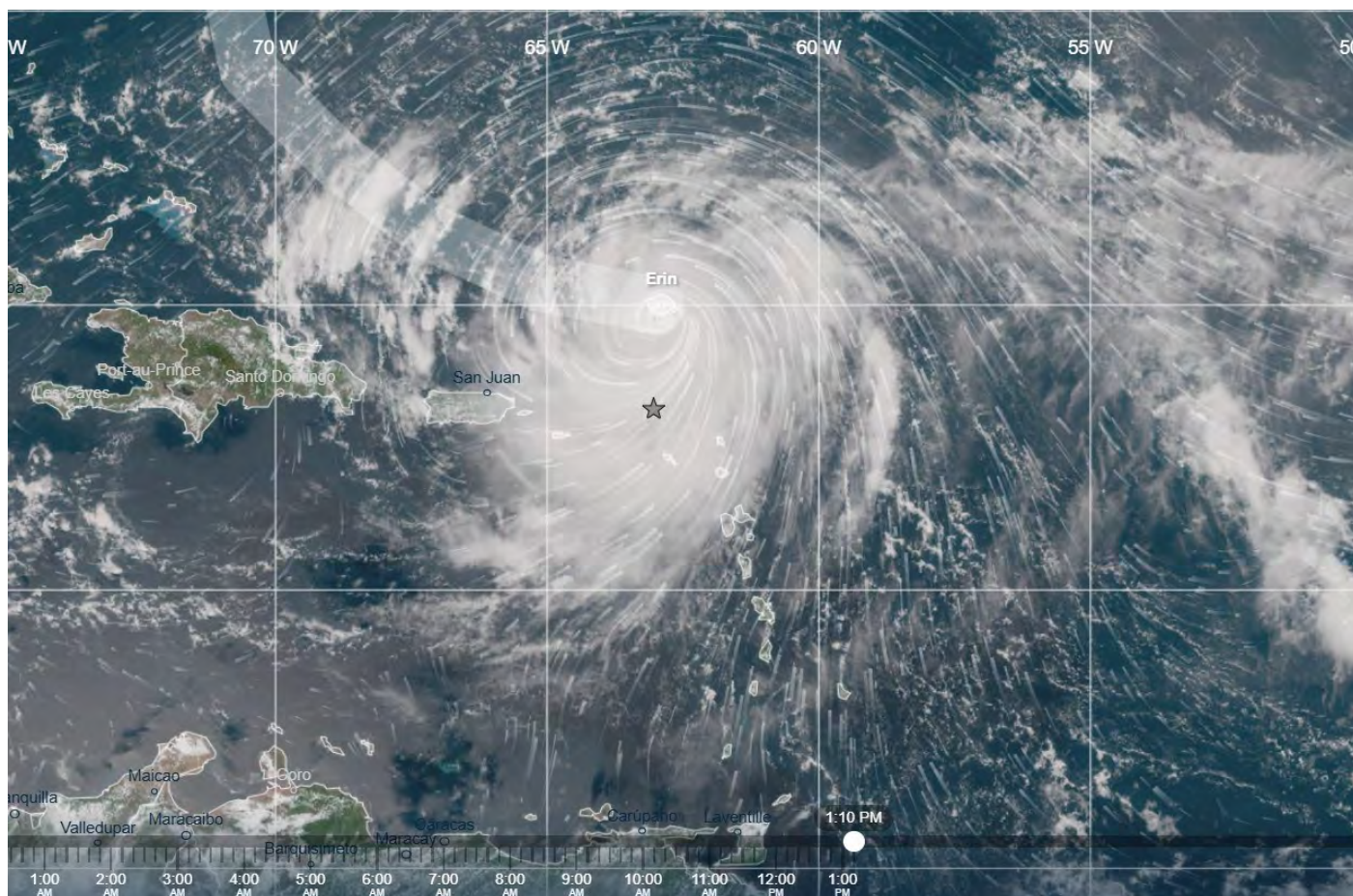
Hurricane Erin: a close call for Anguilla's avian wildlife - Jackie Cestero



Killdeers *Charadrius vociferus*, Island Harbour Ball Field, Post Hurricane Erin - Jackie Cestero

It's that time of year when the "bowling balls" start to roll off the coast of Africa. By "bowling balls," I mean tropical waves. As the waves move eastward, they have the potential to develop into depressions, storms, and hurricanes that aim, like bowling balls, for the Caribbean region.

This past week was no exception, when Tropical Storm Erin quickly jumped to hurricane status. At 5 AM on August 16, it was designated a Category 3 Hurricane. By 11 AM that morning, it intensified to a Category 5 storm with winds of 160 mph!



Category 5 Hurricane Erin as it passed north of Anguilla on August 16, 2025, at 1:00 pm. (The * on the map indicates Anguilla's position related to the eye of Hurricane Erin.) - Jackie Cestero.

At 1:00 pm on August 16, 2025, Hurricane Erin passed some 105 miles north of Anguilla. The map shows the outer bands of Erin extending far south of the island. Those bands brought approximately four inches of rain and 45 mph winds. In the aftermath, social media posts showed extensive erosion of the beaches along our southern coast.

Hurricane Erin: a close call for Anguilla's avian wildlife - cont'd



Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens* and potted Sandpiper *Actitis maculatus*, waterfront Birds, during Hurricane Erin August 16, 2025 - Jackie Cestero.

If there is one thing I have learned about hurricanes during the past 25 years of living on Anguilla, it's to keep an eye on the birds. If they leave, we're in big trouble.

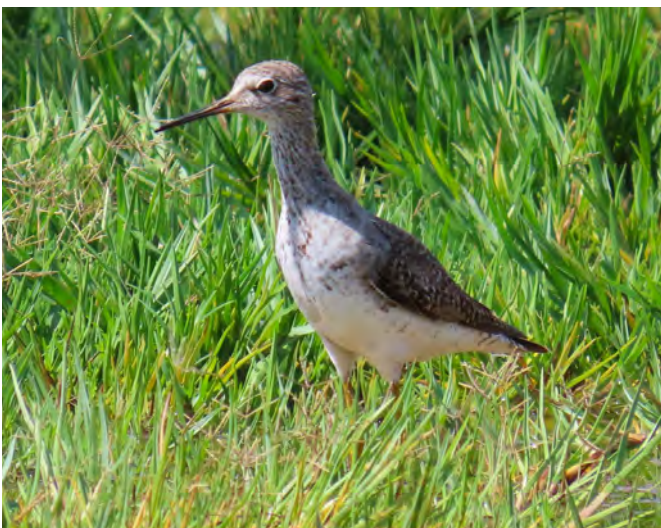
Fortunately, during this storm, several birds were feeding in the Sargassum on the waterfront. Their presence provided a great deal of comfort to this seaside resident.



Laughing Gulls *Leucophaeus atricilla* feeding in Sargassum, during Hurricane Erin August 16, 2025 - Jackie Cestero.

Hurricane Season in the Caribbean coincides with Fall Migration along the Atlantic Flyway, a critical route for birds making their way from their breeding grounds in North America to their overwintering sites in the Caribbean and South America.

[BirdCast](#) maps estimated millions of birds on their migration route during the days leading up to, during, and after Erin.



Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* and Solitary Sandpiper *Tinga solitaria*, Island Harbour Ball Field, post Hurricane Erin - Jackie Cestero.

Hurricane Erin: a close call for Anguilla's avian wildlife - cont'd

As the northernmost island in the Lesser Antilles, Anguilla's wetlands are important stopping points for migratory birds traveling along the Atlantic Flyway. In many cases, Anguilla is the first land these birds hit after travelling non-stop hundreds of miles over the ocean.

After the storm passed, I headed out to see what birds, if any, reached our shores.

The Island Harbour Ball Field flooded, providing refuge for hungry and tired migrants.

At this site, I found one of Anguilla's special visitors, the Solitary Sandpiper. This is a go-to spot to see this species, as it "prefers small, stagnant pools of water, ditches that cut through marshes, and wet depressions in meadows." Solitary Sandpipers dine on "insects, supplemented by small crustaceans, mollusks, and frogs."



Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos* and Laughing Gull, Island Harbour Ball Field, post Hurricane Erin - Jackie Cestero.

The Pectoral Sandpiper is another Fall favorite seen happily feeding alongside Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*, Killdeer, Semipalmated Plovers *Charadrius semipalmatus*, and Semipalmated Sandpipers *Calidris pusilla*.

Thirteen species of birds were recorded feeding and recuperating on this "pop-up" oasis.



Shorebirds feeding in Sargassum, Long Pond Bay, post Hurricane Erin - Jackie Cestero.

Hurricane Erin: a close call for Anguilla's avian wildlife - cont'd

Meanwhile, on Long Pond Bay, a small flock of migratory shorebirds was found foraging in the nutrient-rich sargassum. The brown, pungent carpet provided the illusion that the birds were walking on water. I always marvel at how they roll with the waves so seamlessly. Notably, a few Short-billed Dowitchers *Limnodromus griseus* were present among a diverse group of sandpipers and plovers.



Shorebirds Feeding in Sargassum on Long Pond Bay Post Hurricane Erin - Jackie Cestero.

Anguilla dodged a bullet with Hurricane Erin, as it did not make direct landfall. This spared our birds' habitats and food sources. It could have been a lot worse. A small nudge of Erin to the south, and we would have been in its direct path. After experiencing a direct hit from Category 5 Hurricane Irma in 2017, I can firmly say, "Let's not go there!"

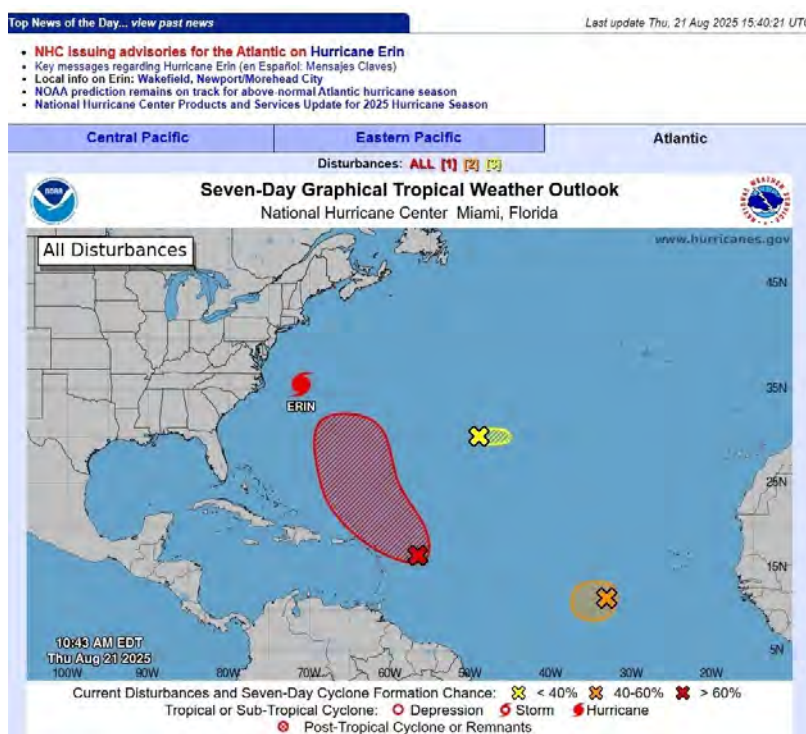
Several birds found refuge on our shores, and I expect many more will return to Anguilla in the coming days and weeks. The erosion on our southern beaches will impact resident plover and other shorebird species that utilize those habitats in the short term.

With September being the peak of the hurricane season in the Caribbean, I know we are not out of the woods yet. There is a lot of activity in the Atlantic now, and much more to come. The region's above-average water temperatures make storms stronger and more dangerous each year.

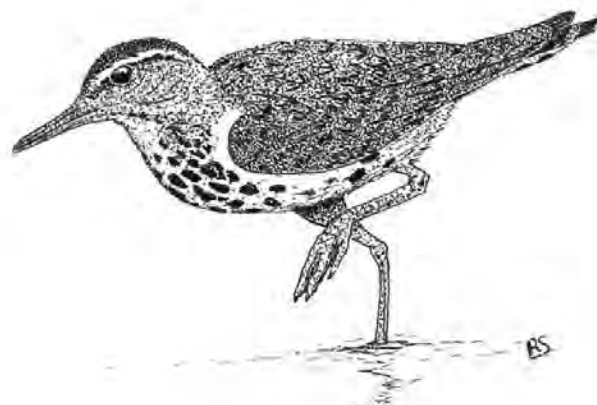
As Hurricane Erin continues to impact the United States East Coast, migratory birds will have to avoid her treachery to reach our wetlands.

Let's hope Anguilla continues to escape major storm impacts, and we will be able to welcome our feathered friends without incident.

[For more fascinating insights into the wildlife of Anguilla visit Jackie's substack. [Wildside News Substack](#) Ed.]



National Hurricane Center Map August 21, 2025



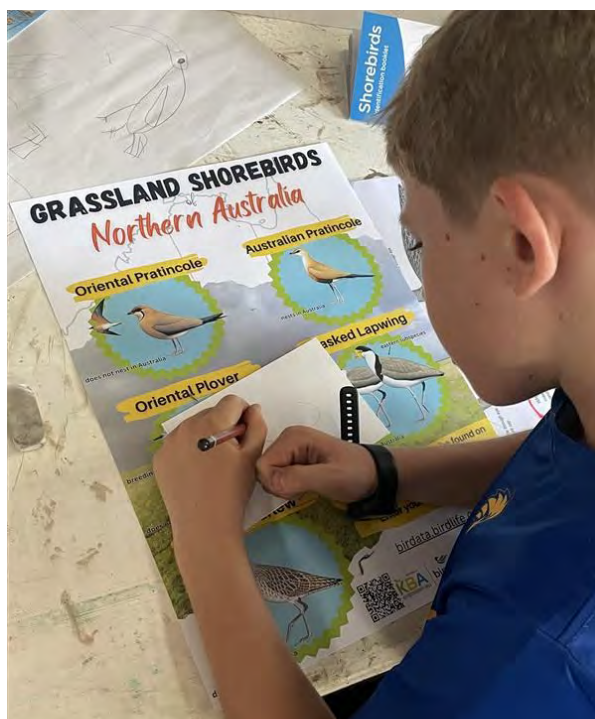
Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis maculatus* - Rick Simpson

Rangeland NRM Shorebird Postcard Project – the journey of the postcards:



This project is funded by the Australian Government and is proudly supported and delivered by Rangelands NRM in partnership with; Kimberley Arts Network, Birdlife Australia and Nyamba Buru Yawuru

Rangeland NRM Shorebird Postcard Project – The Journey of the Postcards:



Student designing a shorebird postcard. Credit: Rangelands NRM

To mark the 35th anniversary of Roebuck Bay's listing as a Ramsar site in far North-western Australia, a creative and educational initiative is putting the Kimberley's migratory shorebirds on the global map — through postcards.

School holiday workshops were run at the Kimberley Arts Network Shed in Broome as part of the 2024 Australia's Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation Shorebirds Competition themed 'Flight for Survival'. Local children who attended, were taught about the importance of Roebuck Bay's shorebirds by Rangelands NRM's shorebird expert, Grace Maglio, and Joseph Kotlar, before working with local artists to create vibrant hand-drawn postcards, showcasing various migratory and resident shorebirds found at Australia's shorebird capital, Roebuck Bay. Some of the featured birds include the Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*, Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus longirostris*, and the Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*.

Each child chose a bird and drew it in their own style, some imaginatively, others with remarkable detail. On the back of each card, they wrote a brief message or fact about their chosen species. Grace admits she may have influenced a few too many students to choose the Oriental Pratincole — five children picked that bird for their postcard drawing, possibly swayed by her enthusiasm for this remarkable species.

Recognising the charm and value of the drawings, the project team decided to produce the postcards professionally.

Rangeland NRM Shorebird Postcard Project – the journey of the postcards: cont'd

With support from Rangelands NRM in partnership with the Australian Government, Kimberley Arts Network, BirdLife Australia, Nyamba Buru Yawuru and the Shire of Broome School Holiday Program, sets of the cards were printed to distribute both locally and internationally. Around 70 postcard gift packs have since been mailed out to around 25 countries — deliberately targeting contacts along the East Asian–Australasian Flyway (EAAF), which is the migratory path used by the shorebirds annually.

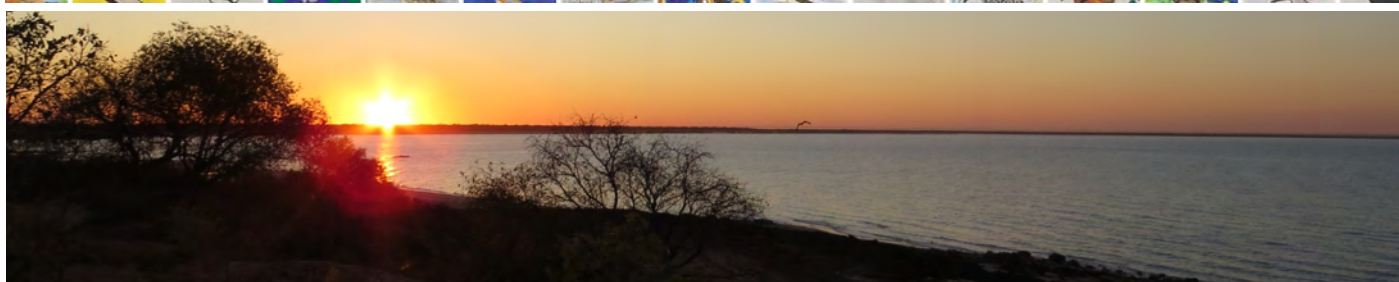
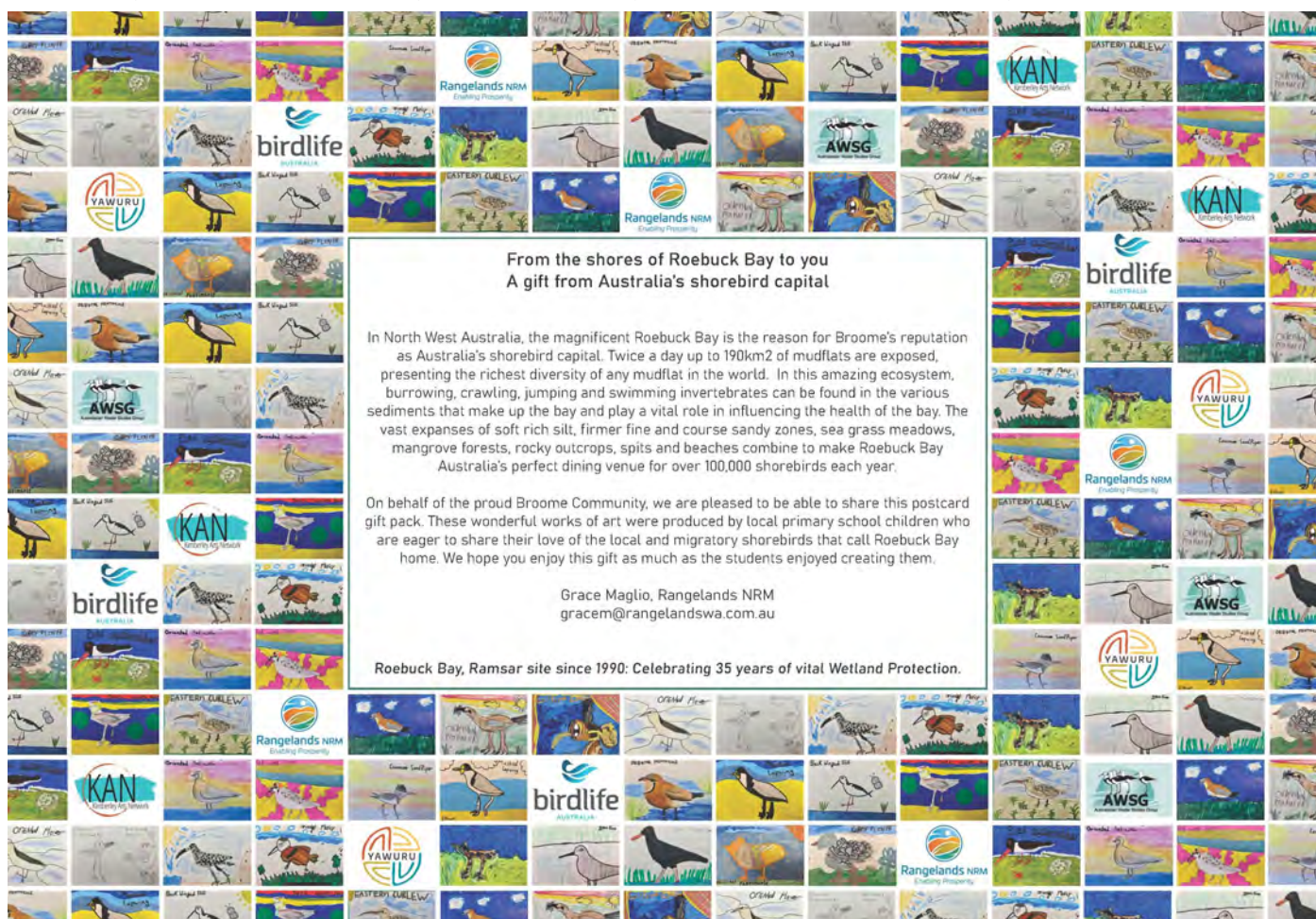
These colourful postcard packs were sent to scientists, researchers, and conservation groups working on Ramsar-listed wetlands and migratory bird conservation around the world. Countries reached included Alaska (USA), Cambodia, Mongolia, Singapore, Japan, Indonesia, Myanmar and India [and the UK where Wader Quest was proud to have received a pack]. There are even hopes to get postcards into North Korea, which lies on the shorebird EAAF Flyway through colleagues in New Zealand. India received postcards specifically because of its role in monitoring Oriental Pratincole.

Locally, in Broome, the postcards have been available at the Visitor Centre, Broome Public Library and Yane Sotiroski's Photographic Gallery. Residents and visitors are encouraged to pick their favourite card and send it to friends or family nationally or overseas — helping to share the beauty and significance of Roebuck Bay's shorebirds far and wide.

The journey of these postcards is likened to that of the migratory shorebirds themselves — criss-crossing the continents around the world as messengers of environmental connection and care for the Ramsar wetlands and habitats.

For Grace, this project has become one of her most cherished efforts in her 12 years working in Broome. She describes the postcards as joyful, heartfelt, and a powerful reminder of both the cultural and ecological richness of the values of the Kimberley's Roebuck Bay and its connection and importance for the world.

"They make me smile," Grace says, "each card is a way to connect someone to Roebuck Bay."



A sunset in Roebuck Bay - Elis Simpson

Severn & Avon Vales Curlew Project circular #5

- Mike Smart

The Curlew breeding season in the Severn and Avon Vales has come to a more rapid conclusion than the WWT team had expected. The previous Curlew Circular noted that by mid-June five broods of chicks were known to be still surviving. It was thought that other broods which had until then escaped attention might appear, particularly as hay cutting advanced, and attendant males began their alarm calls, thus betraying the presence of chicks; no such new broods materialised however, so late June and early July have been devoted to following the fate of these broods - this, of course in conjunction with local farmers and landowners who without exception have shown great interest in the progress of these broods and adapted their hay cutting operations to accommodate the Curlews.

One of these broods along the Severn, which had been followed for a long time (its nest fitted with an electric fence to provide protection from mammalian predators) hatched successfully on 10 June, and (rather to the team's surprise) the guardian male and three chicks wandered more than a mile from the nest site, moving to another farm. These movements could be followed because the chicks had been fitted with small radio tags so that they could be found again in the hayfields, but the male often gave away the location of the family by his noisy alarm calls. The farmer did not proceed as had been planned with haymaking on the fields where the chicks were located but, even so, by 2 July all three chicks had perished. Thanks to the tags it was possible to record their fate: plucked feathers from the first were found in a hayfield,



Chick almost ready to fly – Dan Gornall.



Chick White 43 ringed just before fledging – Dan Gornall.

one tag was found in a pellet below a Buzzard's nest, and the third tag was found (with the remains of the chick) buried in a maize field, probably by a Fox, or perhaps a Badger, both of which were present in the vicinity.

Another Severn brood was more successful. One of the parents (the female) was of particular interest, since she had been raised from eggs ("head-started"), then released (with flag Yellow J5) as a chick in 2022 on Dartmoor in order to strengthen the local breeding population. As noted in previous circulars, this female, notable for her very long bill, attempted to nest at the age of two in the Severn and Avon Vales in 2024 and this year nested successfully; as usual, the male remained with the growing chick and, at the height of one heatwave on 30 June, was seen to fly to the river, dip his belly in the water, then fly back to the meadow; this behaviour does not seem to have been observed before in Curlews, and must have been carried out to bring water to a thirsty chick. The chick that survived was duly ringed White 48 on 30 June, and both father and chick were seen flying on 3 July. Hay cutting began at this site on 7 July and again we are most grateful to the farmer for keeping us informed of his plans and making sure that the agricultural machinery did not harm the young bird.

The remaining three broods (all of which had hatched from nests fitted with electric fences) were along the Avon. Two chicks from the same brood had been ringed White 45 on

Severn & Avon Vales Curlew Project Circular #5 - cont'd

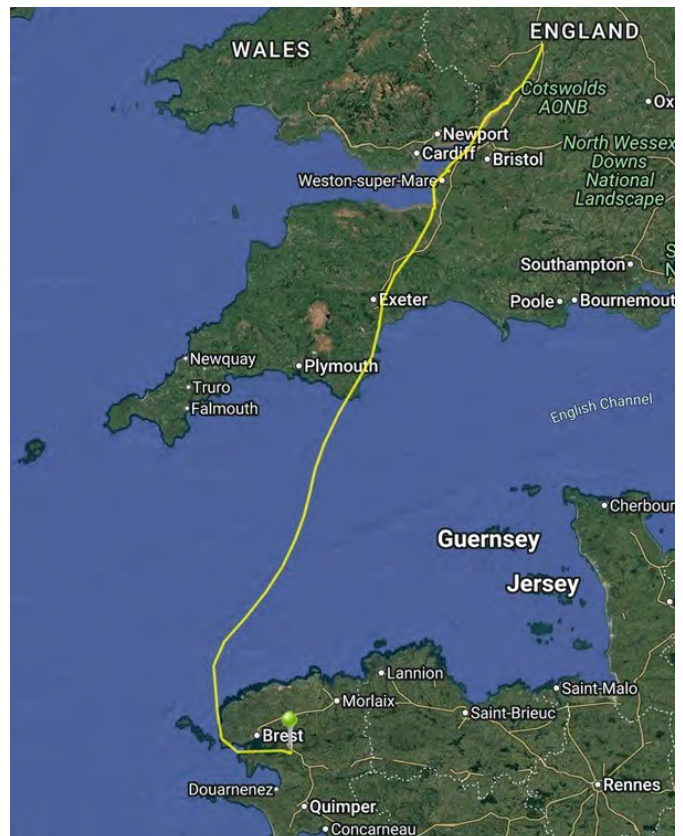


The site of a communal roost, completely dry in July – Mike Smart.

17 June and White 43 on 18 June, while one from another brood was ringed White 46 on 18 June; all were on a farm where hay cutting did not begin until 15 July to allow chicks to fledge safely. A fourth chick was in a field where, once again, the farmer delayed hay making until the chicks had flown. This chick, last seen on 9 July in strong flight with its accompanying father (who was still attacking passing Buzzards) had been ringed White 49 on 2 July. Sad to say, we have already heard that White 45 was killed when it flew into high voltage power lines near a farm in Shropshire, 49 kilometres northwest of the ringing site; northwest is, incidentally, not the direction that departing chicks might be expected to take.

Thus the final tally for fledged chicks in the very dry summer of 2025 was a meagre six from 30 monitored nests, admittedly an improvement on the very wet year of 2024 when only two chicks fledged, but still well short of the fifteen or more that would be needed to maintain the population. More analysis will be carried out in the coming weeks in an attempt to find why the productivity was so poor. Predation (by Foxes, Badgers, Carrion Crows, Ravens and Buzzards) certainly played a part. But what effect did the dry conditions have? They may have been favourable during the egg stage: it was a good year (with no floods) for hatching, and more chicks than ever before were ringed; but perhaps they made young easier to see by predators in the poor grass growth. Did the dry conditions have some effect on the production of invertebrates on which the Curlew chicks feed?

The Curlews, both adults and chicks, certainly departed from the breeding areas much earlier than usual. In most previous years male parents have stayed with the fledged chicks into late July and August, accompanying them by day when feeding in the hay meadows, often taking them at night to communal roosts on suitable pools. This year we have not observed any cases of males staying with fledged chicks; the odd GPS tagged bird has appeared at a roost, but there has been no sign of adults bringing their flying chicks to evening roosts – most of the pools where they roost are in any case dry. And there have been no little groups of juveniles, flocking together before departure. The rain forecast in June made little impact



White 77 shown by its GPS tag to be in Brittany by 2 July 2025.

Severn & Avon Vales Curlew Project Circular #5 - cont'd

(total monthly rainfall in Gloucester only half of the average at 33mm), and there have been three heatwaves; rain in the Severn and Avon Vales was almost absent in the first half of July, and when the weather broke, the storms and thunder largely avoided the area. Many farmers have told us that they are getting only a third or a quarter of the number of bales of hay produced last year.

As noted in the previous circular, failed breeding adults were already leaving for the coast from early June. The absence of observations of chicks and adults since early July makes it clear that this tendency has continued, and this is confirmed by records from the GPS tags attached to many of the breeding adults. Many of the adults that bred in the vales are known to be back in their regular wintering grounds in Ireland or along the Bristol Channel; however, adult male White 77, ringed in the Severn Vale only recently in April 2025 (so there were no previous observations outside the breeding season to indicate his wintering area) proves to be one that winters in France and was already in Brittany by 2 July. Early observations from the Severn estuary in Gloucestershire suggest that high numbers of Curlews are already back there, well into their annual moult (which they only carry out once they have finished breeding). The focus of observations in the coming months will be on these wintering grounds, where we shall hope to read ring numbers and locate GPS tags.

Not all adult Curlews move straight to the coast however: Yellow AT which nested unsuccessfully along the Avon in 2025 has moved a few miles north in July 2025 (as he did in July 2023 and 2024) to the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust reserve at Upton Warren. It will be interesting to see how long he stays there.

A mention here for an absent friend: the male Curlew ringed (with a blue ring on his left tibia and two red rings on his right tibia, hence Blue Red Red) as an adult on the Severn estuary near Lydney back in September 2010, has returned to the Severn Vale every spring and summer since 2011, and has been observed back on the estuary every winter since 2011/12. He has presumably attempted to nest in the vales every year since 2011, though his nest was never found and we have no record of him ever producing chicks. He would have been at least seventeen years old this year (assuming that he was at least two years old when ringed), maybe considerably more. In spring and summer 2025 there has been no record of his presence in his usual breeding grounds in the Severn Vale. It had been feared that he was no more, but - lo and behold! - he has been observed back on his usual wintering ground on the Severn estuary in late July. Where did he spend spring and summer 2025??



Blue Red Red – John Fletcher.

It is planned that studies of breeding Curlews will continue in 2026 and, though the exact format has yet to be defined, they will certainly involve fieldwork by volunteers. We have already appealed for volunteer observers, and some have already come forward. We encourage anyone who would like to take part in these activities to contact us.

Many thanks once again to all those who have supported the WWT project (above all to the farmers) or who have provided information on Curlews. Please keep submitting your information. And do think about volunteering! As always, if you don't want to receive these circulars in future, just let me know.

Best wishes from the WWT Severn and Avon Vales team (Kane Brides, Dan Gornall, Andy Scott, Alex Nicol-Harper, Ellie Martin and Mike Smart).

The Severn & Avon Vales Curlew project is funded by the WWT with contributions from the Curlew Solutions Trail (CST), funded by the Natural England Species Recovery Fund.

Curlew Country headstarting update - Amanda Perkins

Curlew Country Headstarting Updates August 2025



Curlew Country

Curlew Country (nearly) end of season headstarting update – Lead
Amanda Perkins

The mood in Curlew Country is happy after an unusually good season for natural nesting in 2025 and a successful year for headstarting too.

Our headstarted chicks faced a few challenges with feather development issues. The fantastic team of staff and volunteers led by Rosie and Elspeth have worked tirelessly to get them into best health and ready to release back into their natural environment. So far, in two small cohort releases, 21 fine-looking juveniles have been released and flew strongly onto the next part of their life cycle.

Two more cohorts of juvenile Curlews already lifting off the ground (we call it 'helicoptering') and practicing flying along the pens will be released shortly.

Based in the Shropshire Hills and Welsh Border, Curlew Country has been working closely with local land managers, volunteers, as well as the wider community to deliver real landscape-scale conservation in a short time frame.

<https://curlewcountry.org/>



Headstarted Curlews - Curlew Country

A decade in the making: the return of the Piping Plovers to Cape Freels - Jessica Vincent

In May 2025, a routine shorebird survey by Indian Bay Ecosystem Corporation's (IBEC) I led as Project Coordinator, turned into a moment of historic significance for Cape Freels and the Piping Plover population on the east coast of Newfoundland. While surveying an area known locally as Cape Island Beach or Main Beach, I spotted a small shorebird scurrying along the shoreline. Upon closer inspection, I was able to confirm something that had not been seen in over a decade in this area: a Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus*!

The discovery was met with overwhelming excitement throughout the bird community and locals! The bird was quickly given a name, "Popsicle Pete", to help raise awareness of this special return. His presence became a talking point across the island, symbolizing hope for the recovery of a species once thought absent from the area forever.

However, the joy was tempered with concern. Popsicle Pete, the first male Piping Plover sighted in over a decade, was seen moving from beach to beach in the immediate vicinity in search of a mate. Given the species' long absence, expectations for him finding such a companion were low. But Pete proved determined.



Piping Plover 'Popsicle Pete' - Jessica Vincent

A decade in the making: the return of the Piping Plovers to Cape Freels - cont'd

Just one week later, another shorebird survey revealed a heartwarming sight. Pete was no longer alone! Accompanying him was another Piping Plover, later named “Penelope Peach”.

While it was unclear at first whether they were a breeding couple, their consistent presence together sparked hope among conservation staff and local residents.

Then, without warning, sightings shifted. Only one Piping Plover was seen at a time, prompting fears that Penelope might have been injured or had left the area. The team searched extensively for a nest, tracking the lone bird in hopes it would lead them to answers, but weeks passed without confirmation.

That changed on July 8, when IBEC’s Environmental Field Technician Tim Juvonen spotted Penelope alive and well. Just two days later, Tim made the discovery that confirmed everyone’s hopes. Popsicle Pete and Penelope Peach were indeed a breeding pair, and they had a chick!

Excitement spread quickly across Cape Freels, but the good news didn’t end there. Using my experience in Piping Plover surveys, I, accompanied by Environmental Field Technician Katie Miller, conducted a detailed count of the family. The results exceeded all expectations: not one, not two, not three, but four healthy chicks, a full clutch successfully hatched.

This achievement is especially remarkable given the challenges Piping Plovers face in busy coastal areas, such as Cape Freels, during the summertime. Yet, the Cape Freels family has thrived, with the chicks now in their “teen” stage and seen exploring multiple beaches in the area.

From one lone bird to a thriving family of six, this story marks a major milestone for local conservation efforts. It stands as proof that the habitat restoration and stewardship initiatives led by the Indian Bay Ecosystem Corporation are making a real difference in the recovery of coastal wildlife.

As the Piping Plovers continue their journey, the community looks forward to future successes and remains committed to protecting the fragile ecosystems that make stories like Popsicle Pete’s possible.

[STOP PRESS: Great news! Against all odds, probability and realistic expectation, all four chicks have fledged. Ed.]



Piping Plover Penelope Peach - Jessica Vincent



The four Piping Plover chicks - Jessica Vincent

Superbird, Mr. Necker, the Pacific Golden Plover returns - Susan Scott



Mr. Necker on October 20, 2022 - Susan Scott

We Hawai'i plover fans have been happily welcoming our *kōlea* *Pluvialis fulva* back from their summer jobs in Alaska. As of this writing, the kōlea REPORT database has 355 entries of birds returned totaling 807 individuals.

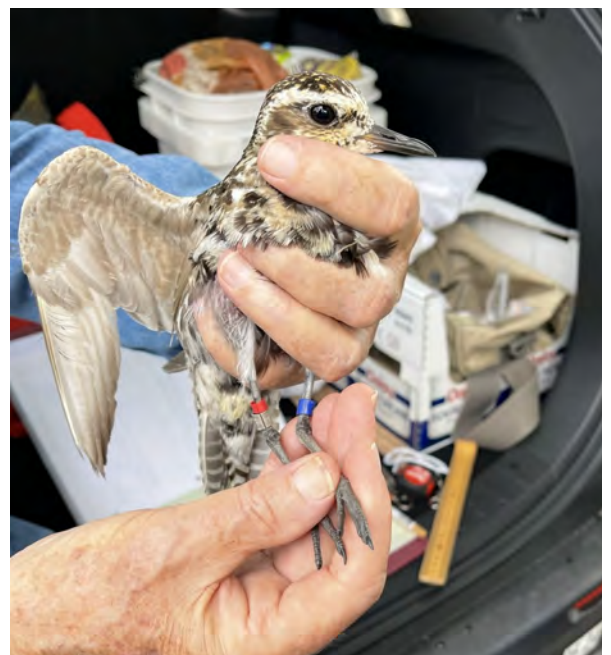
It's thrilling to see a bird that we recognize in a yard, field, or park, and I personally say hello and congratulations to the ones I know. These birds have flown an astonishing 6,000 miles round-trip in about 4 months, and each deserves a verbal pat on the back.

My Jake got one. He arrived August 20th on his grassy space around a sprawling monkeypod tree. My first photo of Jake is dated 2016, making this male at least nine years old.

Another plover that gets a gold star on its gold back is Mr. Necker, the bird banded and tagged in Punchbowl Cemetery by plover researcher Wally Johnson in a March, 2022 study. Mr. Necker flew to Alaska, then Russia, then Mokumanamana, formerly known as Necker Island, in Hawai'i's Northwest Chain.

Because the bird's battery went dead there, no one knew where the bird flew next. To our delight, Mr. Necker showed up in his precise place in Punchbowl Cemetery on October 20, 2022. Late for an adult, but that he made it back at all is a miracle.

Mr. Necker gave me the honor of flying into the mist net I was monitoring at Punchbowl Cemetery. We Hawai'i Audubon volunteers

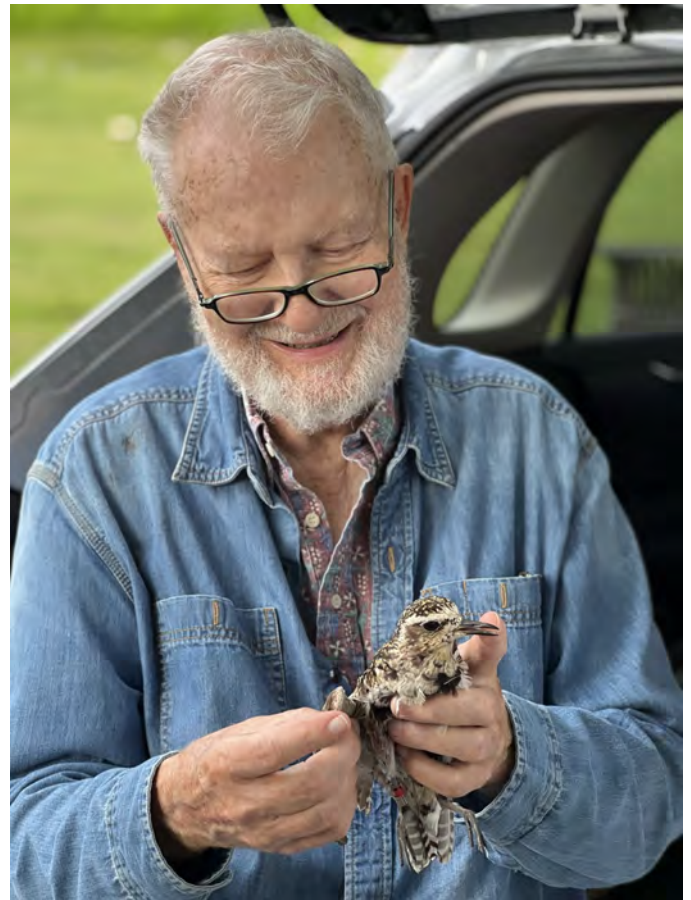


Mr. Necker in Wally Johnson's loving hands, October 22, 2022 - Susan Scott

Superbird, Mr. Necker, the Pacific Golden Plover returns - cont'd



I was so excited that Mr. Necker had made it back that I asked another volunteer to take this picture with my phone.



A happy Wally Johnson checking on Mr. Necker's feathers. The bird's tiny backpack did not show any ill effects on the bird's back or legs - Susan Scott

were there to recapture the study birds and relieve them of their satellite-tag backpacks.

We can continue our admiration of this roving bird. Bird fan and extraordinary photographer, Tom Fake, got photos of Mr. Necker last week, August 21, in the bird's precise spot in Punchbowl Cemetery.

Join us plover lovers Saturday at Magic Island to celebrate Jake, Mr. Necker, and all our other amazing birds returning to Hawaii.

We know Hawai'i is the best place in the world to spend winters, and so do the birds.

Chu-WEET (*aloha in kōlea talk*),



Mr. Necker looking good last week, August 21, 2025. Note that the bird has already shed most of its breeding-colored feathers. If we didn't know the identity of this bird, we would not be able to tell whether it's male or female - Tom Fake

REPORT YOUR KŌLEA




The purpose of the Kōlea Count is to record when, where, and how many Kōlea migrate to Hawai'i and how many spend summers here.

In this ongoing study, we are asking these questions:

- When do Kōlea arrive in the Islands? (ARRIVAL DATE, July 1 - November 30)
- How many Kōlea spend the winters here? (LITTLE AND BIG COUNTS, December 1 - March 31)
- When do the birds leave for Alaska, and where do they gather for departure? (DEPARTURE DATE, April and May)
- How many spend the summer here? (SUMMERING-OVER BIRDS, June only)

Little Counts & Big Counts

We divided the count into Little Counts and Big Counts. Report a bird in your yard or small park for **Little Counts**. People who can count Kōlea three times this winter in large areas such as campuses, parks, cemeteries, or golf courses can sign up for **Big Counts**. Visit our Kōlea Count website under "Guidelines" to see the sites listed and to select your count location.

WWW.KOLEACOUNT.ORG

Hawai'i Audubon Society's outreach manager, Elena Arinaga, made these cards to explain our citizen science project Kōlea Count.

Waders in art - Sennen Powell



© Sennen Powell

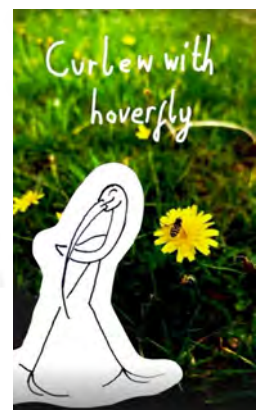
[We came across this striking image of a Curlew on Instagram and were immediately struck by the feeling of impending doom that it evoked in us for the dwindling Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* population. A sense that the world humanity has created, and is still creating, is closing-in on this wonderful species of bird and a rather anthropomorphic feeling that the species itself was feeling distressed and terrified by what was happening to it was overwhelming. We wrote to Sennen and asked if that was her intention and discovered in her a deep-seated connection with the environmental world, and its challenges, in her work. Ed.]



Curlew plays the Framoo



Curlew just woken up



I started drawing Curlew three years ago. I'd seen them occasionally since I was young when my family visited Hayle Estuary in Cornwall; every time it was a particular treat! That spindle legged, long beaked, whirling-calling bird.

It's hard not to be creatively expressive when thinking about such an otherly creature.

But three years ago, I was drawn to do something different from traditional wildlife art. At first, I made a little comic about a Curlew called Curlew, pronouns Curlew/Curlew!

Curlew was goofy and fun and made people laugh. I decided to make Curlew as whimsical as possible; Curlew was four inches tall, played the framoo, and had duck waterproofs (and a dragon onesie). It was about lifting people's spirits!

Waders in Waders in art - Sennen Powell cont'd

However, the immediate threat of extinction to Curlew was an inescapable reality and it was feeding directly into my wider feelings about biodiversity loss and the climate crisis. Anger, grief, hope, anxiety, joy. I decided that I would use Curlew as my medium to express these.

My first ever piece of activism (art which carries a political message) was of Curlew rising up to fight back against their decline. Against polluted waters, endless fossil fuel burning and intensive agriculture, all things which I referenced in the drawing.

I wanted to be able to be angry in my art as well as hopeful!

From then on, I became drawn to more unusual art genres like dystopia, cyberpunk, solarpunk and surrealism. I was also particularly inspired by sci-fi and fantasy for my work because having grown up in London it was often the only place I would see cities and nature fused together.



© Sennen Powell

Waders in art - Sennen Powell cont'd



I painted Curlew bathed in neon in deserts, I designed them sleeping stands, and imagined how they might decorate themselves. I made art inspired by the soulful and longing call of the Curlew. I wanted my work to reflect the mystery of that.

I started to build a world for the Curlew. I enjoyed the escapism of imagining how a world made by birds might be different from ours.

The environmental movement continually confronts themselves with a bleak future.



Sennen Powell

But what if we could playfully imagine it to be different or tell stories so odd, magical and strange they brought out hidden hopes in our current struggle. As well as reach new audiences by mixing genres which don't often meet.

I'm excited to continue drawing Curlew whilst using my creativity to help imagine a new world for us all!

My name is Sennen, I'm an artist and photographer and I love ornithology. I do mixed media including acrylics, coloured pencil and digital art. You can find my work on Instagram [@the outerwilds](https://www.instagram.com/the_outerwilds)



This shorebird named after a mythical Hindu ape god - Compiled by Harsh Vardhan

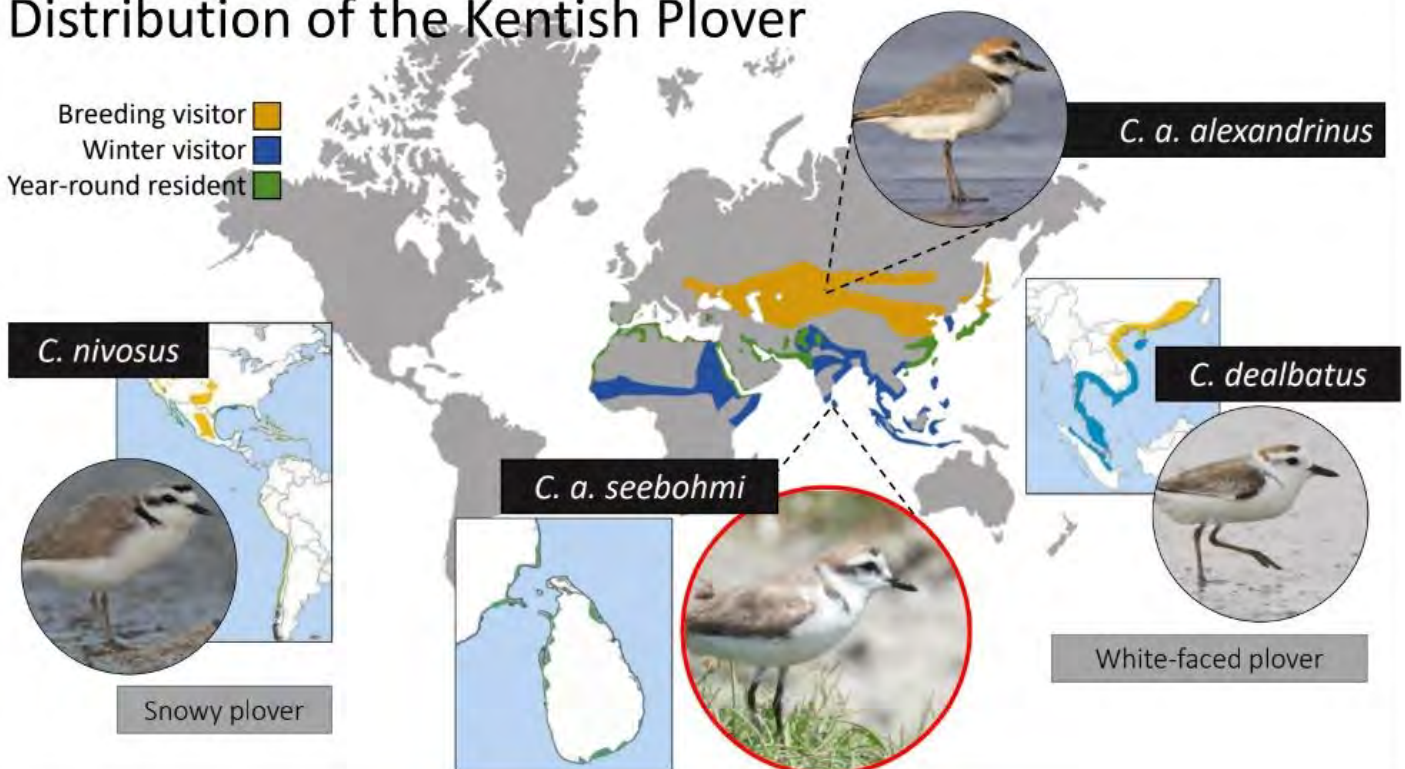
Hanuman Plover (*Charadrius seebohmi* honoring)

What is the Hanuman Plover? Not the migratory Kentish Plover *Charadrius [Anarhynchus] alexandrinus*, nor the White-faced Plover *Charadrius [Anarhynchus] dealbatus*! Sri Lankan bird experts were asking intriguing questions from colleagues as well as those abroad. They, however, appeared enthusiastic since they found the new bird breeding in the Sri Lankan region.

The new bird was named as Hanuman Plover after the legendary ape god, Hanuman who found narration in an Indian religious epic, Ramcharit Manas, and who helped his master, lord Rama in constructing a bridge between India and Sri Lanka in ancient times. The area was between India's Rameshwaram and Sri Lanka's Mannar. A small wader species received the same name as it was found breeding in the same region. The species became new to science. It was studied in depth and its photographs taken to judge it a new wader species, thanks to meticulous work executed by young Sri Lankan bird experts.

Sampath Seneviratne, a professor in zoology attached to the University of Colombo, was responsible to steer the study on this new species. He stated: Hanuman Plover's adopted common name is to "celebrate the mythology linked to the native land of this plover." The bird is scientifically categorized as *Charadrius [Anarhynchus] seebohmi* honoring Henry Seebohm, the British ornithologist. Henry had (during 1887) first suggested the Sri Lankan breeding population could be a possible distinct species.

Distribution of the Kentish Plover



Distribution of Kentish Plovers, courtesy Seneviratne and Niroshan in Sri Lanka.

Until the new discovery, the Hanuman Plover was thought to be a subspecies of the Kentish Plover. So it was (during 1848) scientifically categorized as *Charadrius [Anarhynchus] alexandrinus seebohmi*. The Kentish Plover is a common shorebird found in Eurasia and North Africa, and is the winter migrant. It migrates to Sri Lanka in large numbers and flies back to its breeding grounds after the migratory season. Its new population remains in this region throughout the year.

As research was initiated, it was also presumed that Hanuman Plover would not have any connection with Mongolian [Siberian Sand] Plover *Charadrius [Anarhynchus] mongolus*. They were therefore compared with two other species: Kentish Plover and White-faced Plover. Finally the assessment had to rest on three plovers: Hanuman Plover, Kentish Plover and White-faced Plover.

Examination of the genetic differentiation of the three taxa was undertaken. It used a combination of mitochondrial, sex-linked, and autosomal microsatellite markers. More than 350 individuals were studied and analysed. It brought to the fore minor genetic differentiation among the three, indicating that the taxa are distinct though they still share some "genetic similarities." So Seneviratne based himself in Mirijjawila, a Sri Lankan village, to commence his new thrust. He kept watch at a Kentish Plover nest, observing the hatchling.

In this process, Seneviratne showed Yang Liu of Sun Yat-Sen University in China a video of a nesting plover in northern Mannar. So Yang joined him to collaborate on the study of the Sri Lankan and South Indian plover species.

This shorebird named after a mythical Hindu ape god - cont'd

Global reviews showed the possibility that some plover subspecies could be new and distinct species. However, the genetic studies finally supported to elevate the Chinese subspecies as being distinct. In 2019, it was named as a species White-faced Plover *Charadrius dealbatus* by a team led by Yang. More studies were to follow. Seneviratne came in contact with a student, Jude Janitha Niroshan. Jude had filmed the birds in that region. Data were collected from more than 900 birds from about 30 field locations from Sri Lanka and also the Chinese coast.

The original type specimen of the *C.a.seebohmi* was part of Walter Rothschild Natural History Museum at Tring, England. The genetic analysis threw up sufficient evidence to support that the Sri Lankan and the Indian breeding plover population was a distinct species. The analysis also showed the breeding group is genetically and phenotypically distinct from the migratory Kentish Plovers and the White-faced Plover. According to Niroshan, genetic analysis revealed the Hanuman Plover diverged some 1.19 million years ago.

It is suggested that the sea level rise across Adam's Bridge may have gradually created a suitable coastal nesting habitat for the bird. Over time, the individuals that bred in Sri Lanka gradually evolved to be different from those of the mainland, according to Alex Bond, principal curator of birds at the Natural History Museum in Tring. He is a co-author of the research paper on the species.

Bond stated: *it is important to understand what we should protect in conservation. It is more true for islands dotted with a high rate of endemism. The Sri Lankan population might have been passed over under the assumption that it was the same Kentish Plover that existed in abundance elsewhere. By showing that the Hanuman Plover is unique, the research illustrated that conservation efforts can be more focused.*



Hanuman Plover at Kappad beach, courtesy The HINDU daily.



Seneviratne and Niroshan taking notes on Hanuman Plover, University of Colombo.

Sri Lanka is home to about 500 bird species with 220 breeding residents and 250 migrants. Among the breeding residents, 34 bird species are endemic to the country, but a further 80 species are endemic subspecies that are found only in Sri Lanka.

A subspecies is one of two or more populations of a species living in different areas of the species' range and having different physical characteristics from one another such as body size, shade of the plumage, beak, tail and so on.

A common criterion for recognizing two distinct populations as subspecies rather than full species is their ability to interbreed. But in the wild, subspecies usually do not interbreed due to geographic isolation or sexual differences, so there is potential for them to, in fact, become distinct species. The advent of genetic research techniques helps unravel such hidden potential, and more studies like the one on the Hanuman Plover may further elevate endemism among Sri Lanka's avifauna. Seneviratne is enthusiastic and has more to offer.

[Bracketed nomenclature follows the [AviList](#) taxonomy recently adopted by Wader Quest where Hanuman Plover is currently considered a subspecies of Kentish Plover *A. alexandrinus seebohmi*. Ed.]

Wader news from around the world

- Rick Simpson

New Zealand: Black Stilt releases.

New Zealand's Black Stilt *Himantopus novaezelandiae* population has been boosted with the release of 148 young birds in The Mackenzie Basin this month.

Conservation efforts over the past 40 years have seen this striking wader rescued from a low-poin population of just 23 birds and on the brink of extinction.

The released Stilts were raised in captivity by the Department of Conservation at their Twizel facility, and at The Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust in Christchurch, South Island, New Zealand. They join an estimated 141 adult birds in the wild, whose population fluctuates but is slowly increasing.

([See more here.](#))



Black Stilt - Elis Simpson

Russia: New Spoon-billed Sandpiper breeding grounds discovered.

Collaborative conservation initiatives, involving local communities, scientists, and policymakers, can enhance habitat protection and foster awareness about the importance of preserving these rare birds for future generations.

In the summer of 2025, by an unexpected signal from Kamchatka, which came from a satellite transmitter attached to the feathers of one of the birds, scientists received sensational information... ([See more here.](#))



Spoon-billed Sandpiper - Bauman Moscow State University

Wader news from around the world - cont'd

Australia: New population of Plains Wanderer found.

In the vast, arid landscapes of South Australia's northeast, on the lands of the Adnyamathanha and Wilyakali, a surprising discovery is changing our understanding of one of Australia's most endangered birds.

The Plains-wanderer *Pedionomus torquatus* has long hovered on the brink of extinction. Conservation efforts focus on protecting its known grassland habitats, mainly in Victoria and New South Wales.

But new research shows more than 250 of these birds are thriving in habitats previously considered unsuitable, on the western edge of its range ([See more here.](#))



Plains Wanderer - Ron Knight

India: Another search for the Jerdon's Courser.

Jerdon's Courser *Rhinoptilus bitorquatus* has not been seen for more than two decades now. Looking for it might take many nights in the field. Birders need to listen very carefully after dusk for that one call. Some areas need special permissions, other areas might be sensitive, and even satellite maps of habitats can be tricky as plantations can look deceptively like natural scrub habitats.

([See more here.](#))



Jerdon's Courser *Rhinoptilus bitorquatus* by Eastern Ghats Project / Macaulay Library

Republic of Ireland: Dunlin *Calidris alpina* Headstarting

Breeding Waders, EIP and LIFE on Machair teams.

See how these small waders progress quickly throughout their 14 days spent in Fota Wildlife Park under the care of their expert animal care team. Though too small for GPS tracking, each Dunlin was ringed for identification before returning to the Breeding Waders EIP and LIFE on Machair teams for further care and phased release back into the wild. This is a retrospective look at a groundbreaking conservation effort ([Click and scroll down for more detail.](#))



Juvenile Dunlin - Elis Simpson

Shorebirds of the Whangateau, Auckland, New Zealand - Marie-Louise Ward

[The information presented here was taken and adapted, by kind permission, from a talk given by Marie-Louise Ward PhD who is with the PI Muscle Cell Function Group and is a Senior Lecturer within the Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, at the University of Auckland. Ed.]

Fourteen species of shorebirds breed in New Zealand.

Recent colonists;

- Masked Lapwing / Spur winged Plover / Black-shouldered Lapwing (1930s)
Vanellus miles subspecies *novaeollandiae*
- Black-fronted Plover (colonised in 1954 first proven breeding 1961).
Thinornis melanops
- White-headed Stilt (early 19th century)
Himantopus leucocephalus;
Maori *Poaka*.

Endemic species confined to outlying islands;

- Chatham Island Oystercatcher
Haematopus chathamensis;
Maori name *Tōrea tai*,
- Shore Plover
Thinornis novaeseelandiae;
Maori name *Tuturuatu*,
- Subantarctic Snipe
Coenocorypha aucklandica
- Snare's Snipe
C. heugeli;
Maori name *tutukiwi*.

Mainland endemic species;

- South Island Pied Oystercatcher name SIPO;
Haematopus finschi;
Maori name *tōrea*,
- Variable Oystercatcher nickname VOC
Haematopus unicolor ;
Maori name *tōrea pango*,
- Black Stilt
Himantopus novaeseelandiae;
Maori name *kakī*,
- Double-banded Plover (NZ name Banded Dotterel)
Anarhynchus bicinctus ;
Maori name *Pohowera*,
- Wrybill
A. frontalis;
Maori name *ngutu pare* and,
- New Zealand Plover (Dotterel in New Zealand)
A. obscurus
Maori names *tuturiwhatu*, *pukunui* (southern form) or *kūkuruatu*.

Whangateau harbour lies on the east coast of Auckland on the North Island of New Zealand. Only two species of Shorebird breed there, Variable Oystercatcher and New Zealand Plover.

Omaha Spit is on the southern entrance to the harbour and has it's very own shorebird protection group; The Omaha Shorebird Protection Trust, formed in 2009 to provide ongoing protection to the shorebirds that inhabit Omaha Spit & feed in the Whangateau harbour.

Both the Variable Oystercatcher and the New Zealand Plover are ground nesting birds, which renders their nest and chicks extremely vulnerable.



New Zealand Plover; status At Risk - recovering.



NZ dotterel pair Omaha Spit - Marie-Louise

Shorebirds of the Whangateau, Auckland, New Zealand - cont'd

- Three eggs 4.4 x 3 cm.
- Male incubates at night.
- Incubation up to four weeks.
- Chicks precocial and must find their own food.
- Chicks fledge at 6-8 weeks after hatching
- The presence of humans on the beach prevents chicks from accessing the food they require for survival.
- Omaha Spit has between 13 and 26 breeding pairs fledging between 0 (from 20 pairs in 2023/24) and 8 (from 17 pairs 2014/15 & from 16 pairs 2015/16) chicks. 2024/2025 season fledged 3 chicks (from 18 pairs).
- Omaha Spit also has one of the largest post breeding flocks in the Auckland Region ≈100 (2010) - ≈220 (2023).
- Flocks form near to an abundant food source.
- Flocks provide protection, & enable 'socializing' and pair bonding.



All photos - Marie-Louise

Variable Oystercatcher; status At Risk - recovering



Variable Oystercatcher - Marie-Louise

- Up to three eggs 5.82 x 4.06 cm
- Incubation is shared.
- Incubation takes about four weeks.

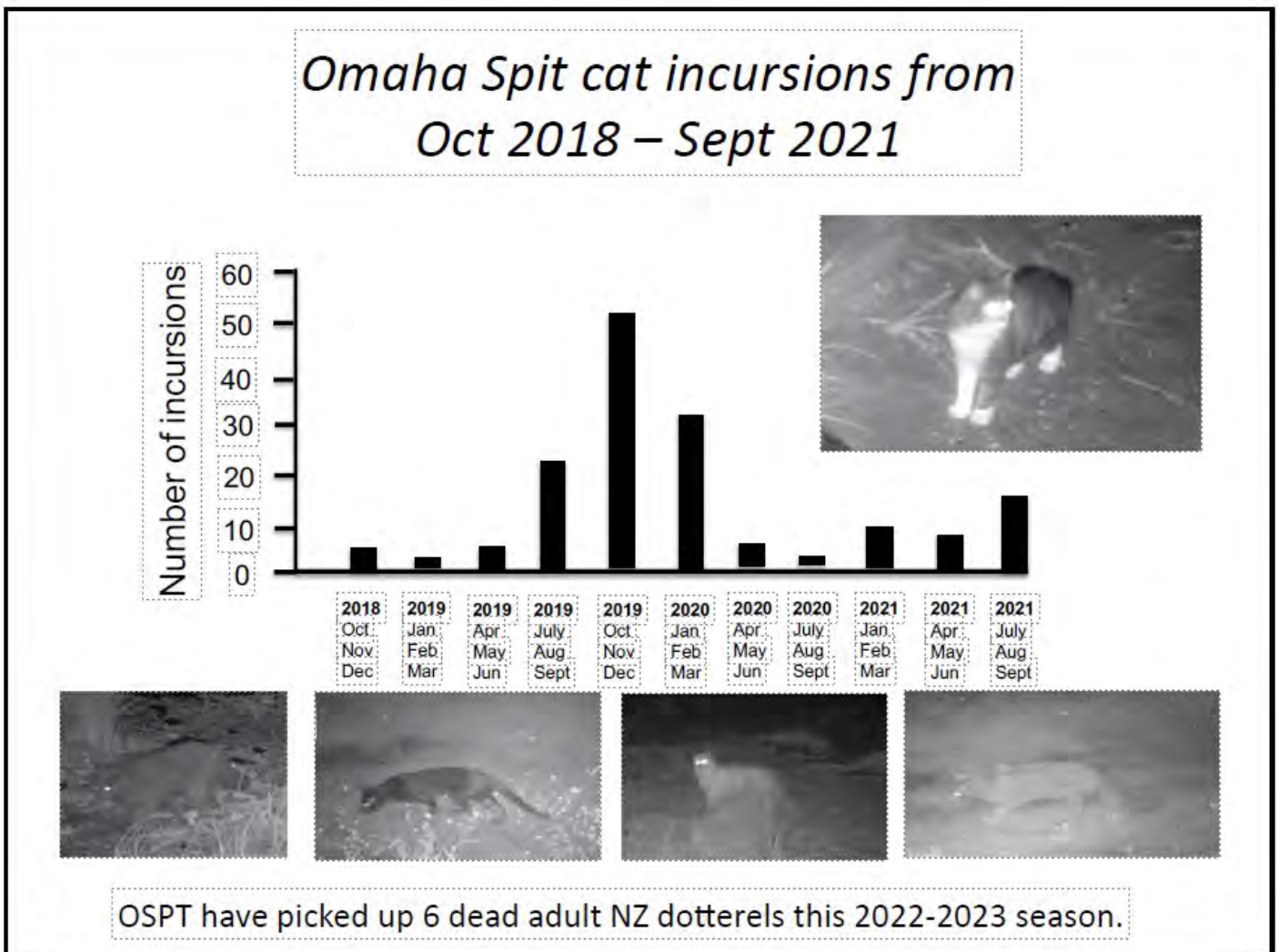
Shorebirds of the Whangateau, Auckland, New Zealand - cont'd

- Chicks are semi-precocial and rely on their parents for food for several weeks after hatching.
- Chicks fly at 6-7 weeks after hatching.
- Omaha Spit has around twenty breeding pairs.
- Omaha Spit has winter counts of between ≈50 (2013) - ≈130 (2016-19) individuals. ≈50 (2025)
- Very few chicks survive to fledge.



All photos - Marie-Louise

One of the reasons for this dreadful failure rate in fledging for both species is down to predation by cats *Felis catus*.



Seasonal visitors from within NZ

White-headed / Pied Stilt; status not threatened.

Banded Dotterel / Two-banded Plover; status Threatened, nationally Vulnerable - Declining.

- Most common small plover of NZ shores (~50,000).
- Breed throughout NZ. Migrate to overwinter in the North of NZ & in SE Australia.

South Island Pied Oystercatcher; status At Risk - Declining.

- Breeds on South Island, migrates north for the winter.

Wrybill; status Threatened, nationally Vulnerable.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica* 85,000 – 105,000.

Red Knot *Calidris canutus* 50,000 - 70,000.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* 5,000 - 7,000.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* 600 - 1,200.

Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis* 150 - 300.

Who's who in wader nomenclature, fame and obscurity; Temminck and Whistler – Rick Simpson

Fame: Temminck, Coenraad Jacob (1778–1858) Dutch ornithologist, collector and illustrator.

Born on the 31st of March 1778 in Amsterdam in the then Dutch Republic (which existed 1588–1795). Temminck was personally educated by a Swiss governor and in 1794, he was named as Auctioneer of Amsterdam for the Dutch East India Company, a position with no real work involved but providing him with an income, which allowed him to devote much of his time to ornithology. He became a skilled taxidermist developing a method that is still referred to as Temminck's method. In 1815 he wrote *Manual of Ornithology, or Systematic Table of the Birds Found in Europe*. This became the standard work on European birds for many decades. In the same year, he was named Deputy Director of the Leiden Cabinet of Natural History. This he combined with his own collection along with several smaller collections and turned it into the National Museum of Natural History, which opened in 1820, Temminck being its first director. He would hold this position until his death in 1858.

Although Temminck had no formal scientific education, he had a massive impact on ornithology describing over 350 different bird species including 6 wader species.

Wader taxa named by Temminck

Genus:

- *Ædicnemus* 1815

Species:

- Double-banded Courser proonym *Cursorius africanus* 1807 now *Smutsornis africanus*. (Photo 1)
- American Oystercatcher proonym *Hamatopus* [sic] *palliatu*s 1820 now *Haematopus palliatu*s. (P2)
- Small Pratincole proonym *Glareola lactea* 1820 still *Glareola lactea*. (P3)
- Red-capped Plover proonym *Charadrius ruficapillu*s 1821 now *Anarhynchus ruficapillu*s. (P4)
- Kittlitz's Plover proonym *Charadrius pecuariu*s 1823 now *Anarhynchus pecuariu*s. (P5)
- Comb-crested Jacana proonym *Parra gallinacea* 1828 now *Irediparra gallinacea*. (P6)

He also named two buttonquails, which were previously included as waders.

- Fynbos Buttonquail proonym *Turnix hottentottu*s 1815 still *Turnix hottentottu*s.
- Red-backed Buttonquail proonym *Hemipodiu*s *maculosu*s 1815 now *Turnix maculosu*s.

The following are invalid species names by Temminck.

- *Ædicnemus crepitans* 1815 = Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinu*s *capensiu*s.
- *Charadrius azarae* 1823 = Collared Plover *Anarhynchus collaris*.
- *Numenius nasicu*s 1840 = Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*.
- *Pluvialis longipes* 18?? = Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*.

Subspecies:

When a valid species is split into subspecies, usually the specific name is then used as one of them and is called the nominate form. This means Temminck was credited with the following subspecies.

- Double-banded Courser *Cursorius africanu*s *africanu*s 1807 now *Smutsornis africanu*s *africanu*s.
- Red-backed Buttonquail *Turnix maculosu*s *maculosu*s.
- American Oystercatcher *Hamatopus* [sic] *palliatu*s *palliatu*s 1820 now *Haematopus palliatu*s *palliatu*s .
- Comb-crested Jacana *Parra gallinacea gallinacea* 1828 now *Irediparra gallinacea gallinacea*.

In addition he is credited with the following subspecies deriving from species he unsuccessfully named, which are now invalid.

- Barred Buttonquail *Turnix suscitator fasciatu*s (as invalid species *Hemipodiu*s *fasciatu*s 1815).
- Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinu*s *capensiu*s *maculosu*s (as invalid genus and species *Oedicnemu*s *maculosu*s 1824).
- Giant Snipe *Gallinago undulata gigantea* (as invalid species *Scolopax gigantea* 1826).
- Common Buttonquail *Turnix sylvaticu*s *dussumier* (as invalid species *Hemipodiu*s *Dussumier* [sic] 1828).

Temminck has two wader species named in his honour both in the scientific name and the English name.



Temminck Coenraad Jacob 1770-1858 Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=276139>



Double-banded Courser



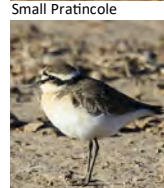
American Oystercatcher



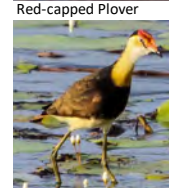
Small Pratincole



Red-capped Plover



Kittlitz's Plover



Comb-crested Jacana

Small Pratincole - Tommy Pederson; other photos - Elis Simpson

Who's who in wader nomenclature, fame and obscurity; Temminck and Whistler – cont'd

- Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii* Leisler 1812
- Temminck's Courser *Cursorius teminckii* Swainson 1822.

His naming is Eurasian Stone-curlew as *crepitans* 1815 (genus invalid synonymous with *Burhinus*) Collared Plover as *Charadrius azare* 1823, Eurasian Curlew as *Numenius nasicus* 1840 and Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis longipes* 18?? became synonymous with *Burhinus oedicephalus*, *Anarhynchus collaris*, *Numenius arquata* and *Pluvialis fulva*.

Obscurity: Whistler, Hugh (1889–1943) British ornithologist and policeman in the Punjab.

Hugh Whistler's claim to fame in waderology renders him obscure. His only contribution was to name the Black-winged Stilts in Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) as a distinct sub-species Ceylon Stilt *Himantopus himantopus ceylonensis*, which he describes thus; '*The resident race in Ceylon H. h. ceylonensis, is less black on the head in breeding plumage*'. This is not currently recognised as a subspecies.

However, as with others we have examined here, in the wider field of ornithology, Whistler has been anything but obscure.

He wrote one of the first, and certainly the first aimed at enthusiasts of a 'moderate purse' field guides to Indian birds. *Popular Handbook of Indian Birds* 1928. The cheapness of the sale price was, as he put it himself, '*due to the generosity of three gentlemen, Mr F. Mitchell, Sir George Lowndes and Mr W. S. Millard, who have taken the publication out of the sphere of commercial profit; whoever buys this book should realise that their public spirit and generosity have reduced the price by a very large amount.*'

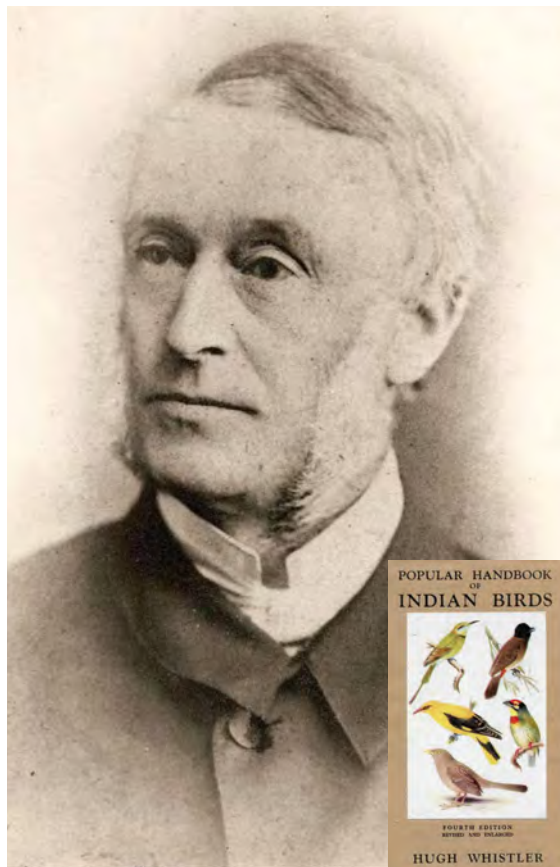
Whistler also contributed to many journals of the day with copious information about the distributions of birds, and also describing new subspecies, some of which, unlike the stilt are recognised today. He was also honoured in the subspecies of a warbler *Seicercus burkii whistleri*, which is now considered a full species: Whistler's Warbler *Seicercus whistleri*.

Whilst serving as a Policeman, Whistler studied and collected birds wherever he was posted in India, continuing his research on his retirement to England. He published extensively in the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society, making notes on the occurrence and on the distributions of geographic plumage variations. He published a ten-part introduction to the study of birds in India.

To his credit, Whistler, who had retired to Battle, near Hastings in East Sussex, was skeptical of George Bristow and his

observations which was later to become famous as the Hastings Rarities scandal. Whistler was also ahead of his time in being critical of egg collection driven by trade and stating that the necessity for collecting birds was now redundant, as there were copious collections and new information was required about the birds natural history that cannot be surmised from specimens alone, negating the necessity to kill.

Sussex University has The Whistler Prize named after him, which is awarded to the best essay on natural history or archaeology. His collection of 17,320 bird skins was presented to the Natural History Museum by his wife Mrs Margaret Joan Whistler in 1949.



Hugh Whistler- alchetrone.com / insert 4th edition of his book.



Black-winged Stilt in Sri Lanka '*H. h. ceylonensis*'? - Elis Simpson

Wader Guru 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.)

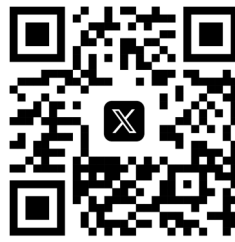
If you have ever wondered who all these people who have named waders are, or thought about the people behind the names given in honour of someone, then this is the place to look for your answers.

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)

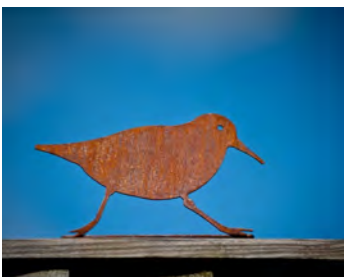
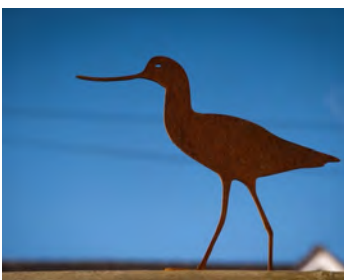
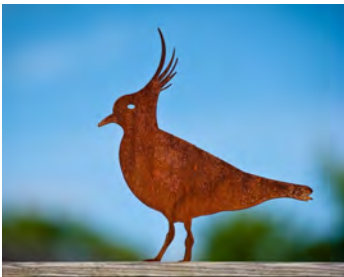
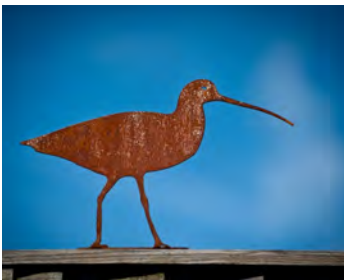
Curlew (small)

Lapwing

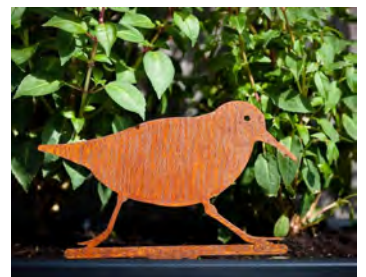
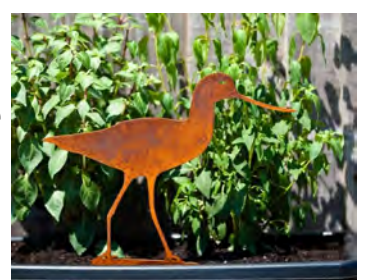
Avocet

Sanderling

Fence toppers



Lawn/pot ornament



Large Curlew only available as fence topper

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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.

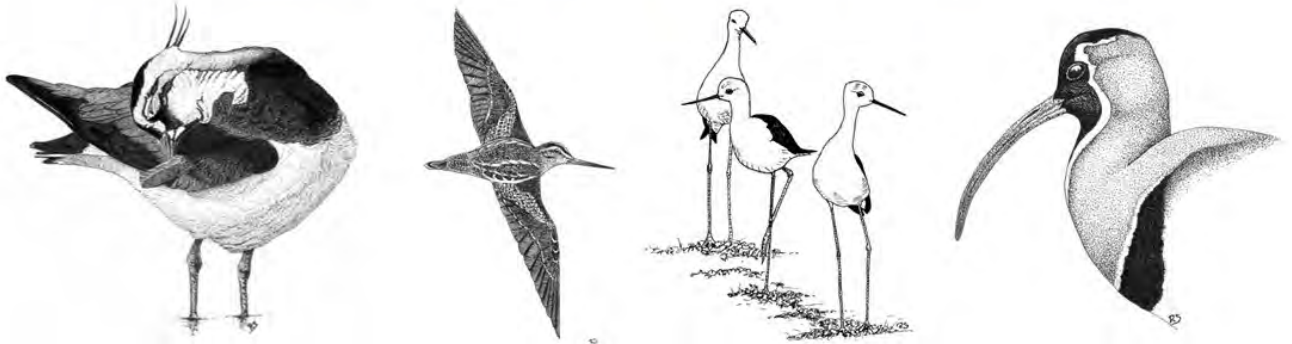


WWW.RedDragonMetalArt.co.uk

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



**£15.00
+p&p**

'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.

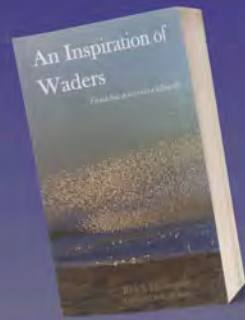
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An Inspiration of Waders - A Wader Quest Publishing book By Rick and Elis Simpson

An Inspiration of Waders



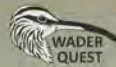
Twinkling gems over a falling tide
The foreword is by Keith Betton



Discover our cultural connection to waders and how they have inspired us.



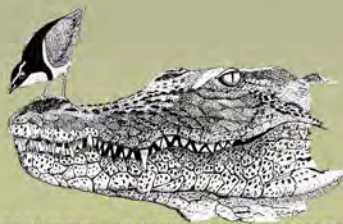
BY RICK AND ELIS SIMPSON



Find out how waders have inspired careers, myths, legends, art, music, poetry, theatre, books, discovery and much more besides.

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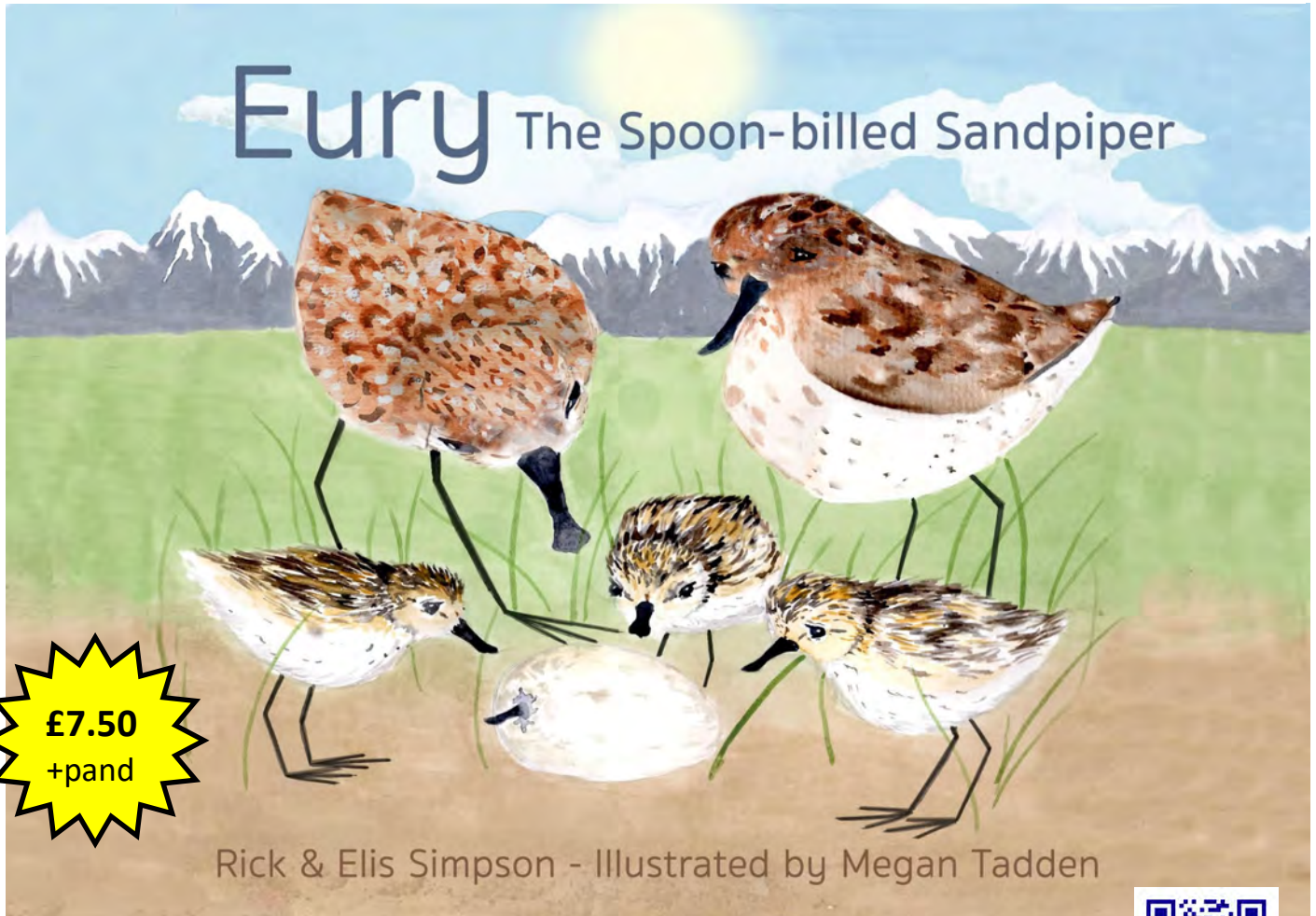
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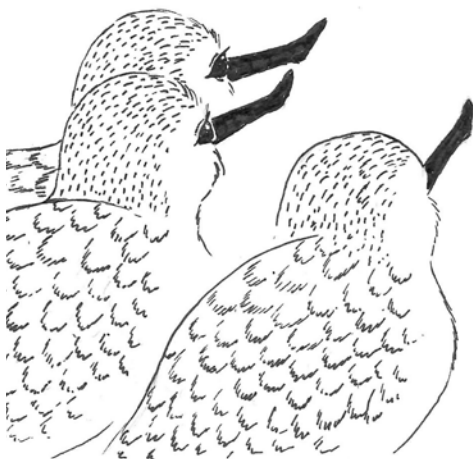
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11. River Lapwing
12. Common Ringed plover
13. Black-fronted Dotterel
14. Eurasian Curlew
15. Spoon-billed Sandpiper



16. Common Greenshank
17. Cream-coloured Courser
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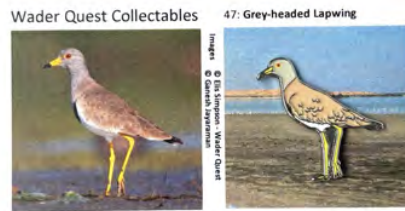
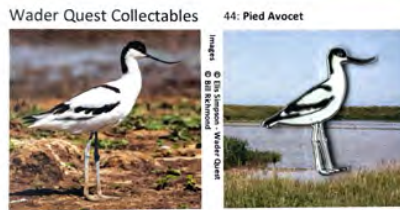
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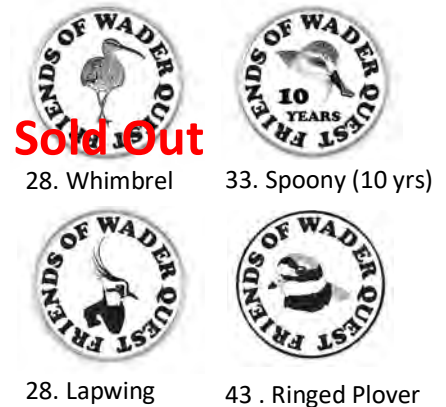
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Pied Avocets over Titchwell RSPB reserve © Julia Page

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



Eurasian Oystercatchers © Julia Page

Back in stock!



Common Snipe © Julia Page



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

Designs by
Julia Page



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

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)

£66,437.09

Species supported

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

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Kazakhstan	USA
Malaysia	Venezuela



White-headed Stilt - Elis Simpson