

Forthcoming talks: All 'Wader Quest' unless otherwise stated.

19/04/2018 Nuneaton and District Birdwatchers' Club

25/04/2018 St Lawrence Wildlife and Photography Club (New Moon on the Wane — The Curse of the Curlews)

08/05/2018 Lichfield RSPB local group

06/06/2018 Northamptonshire Bird Club (Plover Lover's World of Delights)

11/09/2018 Friends of Welney

20/09/2018 Mid Nene RSPB local group

05/10/2018 Leigh Ornithological Society

18/10/2018 Bristol Ornithological Club

06/11/2018 East Lancashire Ornithologists' Club (Confessions of a Bird Guide)

07/11/2018 Trent and Lower Derwent Derbyshire Wildlife Trust local group

For a more complete listing with times and venue details visit our [Talks page](#) on the website.

If we are giving a talk near you come and see us.

## Curlews and the Dartmoor Upland Wader Summit — Rick Simpson

*'Wader conservation is about so much more than a cute bird with a funny little bill in the far flung corners of Asia'.*

I wrote these words in 2013 as our travels, in search of waders, revealed the extent to which waders are being pushed to the margins in every habitat that they frequent. I was referring then, above all, to the decline in the British population of Northern Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus*. Those words however have once again taken on a great significance as we look at the crisis that is engulfing the very familiar, and much loved, Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*.

On pages 6 and 7 you can read about the Welsh Curlew Conference which we were sadly unable to attend. It was organised by Friend of Wader Quest Mary Colwell, who has done more than any other individual to promote the cause of the Curlew,

Mary has also written a book *Curlew Moon* which concerns the Curlew, its problems and her five hundred mile walk across Ireland, Wales and England, to raise awareness about them. You'll find a review on page 23. This book will be



Wader Quest meets HRH Prince Charles at the Upland Wader Summit — © Charles Sainsbury-Plaice

available on the 21st of April, its launch aimed to coincide with another of Mary's projects World Curlew Day.

Recently we were invited to another Curlew convention, this time hosted by the Duchy of Cornwall and entitled the *Dartmoor Upland Wader Summit*. Although the title suggests a more general theme the main topic was the decline of the Curlew and what can be done to save them from a fate worse than death; extinction.

The summit was attended by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales with whom we had the opportunity to

converse for a short time as he moved among the delegates.

The conclusions from the event were fairly predictable; survival rates of adults are holding up, but that of chicks is far too low resulting in a declining, ageing and geriatric population. The reasons for this are primarily a lack of suitable habitat and high predation rates.

We were treated to a number of excellent talks kicked off by Friend of Wader Quest Tom Orde-Powlett who talked about the wintering Curlews to be found in Wensleydale between September and February. He pointed out that silage, generally thought of as a menace as far as breeding waders are concerned, can actually be advantageous in the winter, particularly if treated with slurry, providing vital feeding areas in lowland habitat.

This was followed by Amanda Perkins of the Stiperstones Curlew project *Curlew Country* in Shropshire. Part of her presentation was about predation and the difficulty of acquiring funding for that contentious aspect of the project. The most remarkable image of the presentation was however of a sheep eating a



Eurasian Curlew — Elis Simpson

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**Total raised by Wader Quest to date: £21,389.42**

## Curlews and the Dartmoor Upland Wader Summit — cont'd

clutch of Curlew's eggs, not what you'd typically think of in terms of nest robbers. She also recounted the tale of an accidental hand rearing of some chicks that hatched before suitable foster parents could be found under which the eggs could be placed. All these headstarted chicks fledged and were successfully released.

Dr David Douglas of the RSPB reiterated the statistics surrounding the Curlew's decline and summed them up by saying a pair needs to fledge a chick every two years for numbers to remain stable.

With regard to predators he pointed out that the UK had the highest density of Carrion Crows *Corvus corone* in Europe and the second highest when it came to foxes. When considering why there are so many and how they survive he suggested that looking at the impact that releasing some thirty-five million pheasants each year into the environment may have on providing sustenance for this excessive population of top predators.



His Royal Highness Prince Charles

Next to speak was Geoff Hilton of the WWT who gave us the inside story on headstarting, when it works and when it does not. He summed up the technique as being very effective and cited the example of the British Black-tailed Godwits in the joint RSPB/ WWT *Project Godwit*. Thirty-eight wild Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa* fledged just twenty-five young while just eight clutches removed for headstarting realised twenty-five fledglings. The down side of this method



Carrion Crow — Elis Simpson

is that it is expensive, treats the symptoms and not the cause and there is a risk that released birds may introduce disease into an already small population in the wild.

Dr Andrew Hoodless, of the GCWT then told us about predator control and that this alone was not the silver bullet, declines over the long term were caused by drainage, sward improvement, earlier mowing, converting grass to arable, change in livestock density and forestry plantation in addition to predation. This combination of habitat loss and high predation meant reduced breeding success.

We then heard about the Dartmoor Wader Project, where five upland wader species were discussed by Jon Avon.

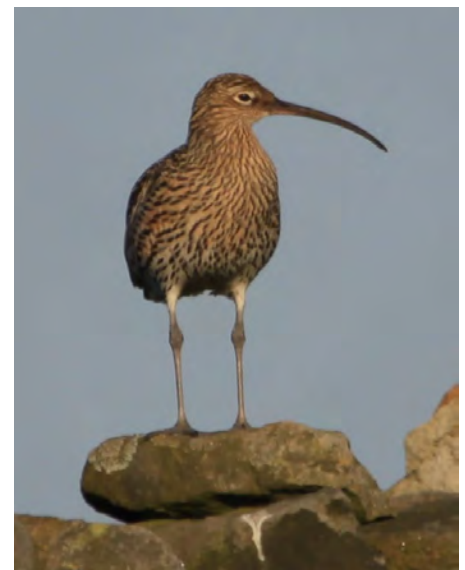
European Golden Plovers, *Pluvialis apricaria*, ceased to breed on Dartmoor in 2008, Dunlins, *Calidris alpina*, on the other hand have increased to about fifteen to twenty pairs. Northern Lapwings have declined along with the Curlews with only one breeding site with five breeding females. Curlews are, as we have seen, doing badly, there is just one pair now breeding on Dartmoor although there are four territory holding males. The last successful fledging was in 2016. Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* are at least stable and may be slightly increasing.

Andrew Sells, the Chairman of Natural England, spoke about his desire that the organisation could do more to help and Kevin Cox the Chairman of the RSPB outlined what they have already done and where the organisation saw the problems, which was pretty much in line with everyone else in the room.

Following input from the floor Prince Charles gave a summary of his thoughts and opinions concerning the Curlew and its demise. He also expressed his

admiration for the bird and mentioned that when he visits Scotland it is the call of the Curlew, sound he finds haunting and magical, which lifts his spirits.

He suggested that since the message about the mess plastics are creating in our seas was raised by a film, lamenting that people don't want to learn by reading any more, perhaps a series of films about the decline of waders would be useful. Mary Colwell, in her capacity as a television producer, said that the subject was not 'sexy' enough to attract funding. To this the Prince replied 'Well I think Curlews are sexy, hellish sexy!'



Eurasian Curlew — Elis Simpson

Continuing the theme of the trashing of the world by humanity he pointed out that the plastics were not our only sin, and that a combination of the destructive activities we are carrying out is disastrous. His summary was warmly received.



## Wader Quest News

In other news; January was quiet with just a couple of talks, one in East Surrey and other in Bucks, both RSPB local groups, plus the first Trustee meeting of the year.

February was a little livelier starting with an interesting event held by the The Parks Trust for its Junior Rangers at Linford Lakes Nature Reserve in Newport Pagnell. We were invited along to talk to the youngsters about the different bill shapes that waders posses and how this demonstrates the kind of feeding technique the bird uses.

After a couple more talks at the Wokingham and Bracknell RSPB local group and the Marylebone Bird Club we held our, now annual, Quiz Night in Simpson Village Hall in Milton Keynes. This year we raised an amazing £432.21. Our grateful thanks go again to our dear friends Pat and Neil Hodges who run the event for us, and many other charities throughout the year, for nothing, true salt of the earth, and people worthy of all manner of honours and awards.

March was a funny month with much snow when the 'Beast from the East' hit the UK. Of course across the rest of northern Europe where such things are more regular they referred to this phenomenon as 'a snowfall' with much mirth and merriment at the Brits' expense, of course this cold snap was not good news for our wildlife.

Of the four talks we had planned only one was cancelled due to the weather in Solihull but another one came close with



Rick Simpson discussing the various types of waders and their feeding mechanisms to Parks Trust Junior Rangers using old-fashioned, low-tech, chalk illustrations on a blackboard — Elis Simpson

snow on the day, namely, the Essex Birdwatching Society Conservation Conference. The others that went ahead were at Watford RSPB local group and the Peterborough Bird Club.

April has been a busy month. We have carried out five talks so far, three in four days earlier this week and two still to come later. These include a celebration of Curlews at St Lawrence in Essex.

There will be a Trustee meeting at the end of the month. Sadly we will not be able to attend The Naze on the 21st of April as we will be at a family wedding (the first in the family since our own in 2004, so not one we can miss), and there are no Trustees available to take our place.

The end of February saw the end of this year's *Where's Willet?* project with several sightings being posted. We are still awaiting the experts' decision on the subspecies involved so we'll be reporting on that later in the year we hope and, perhaps, repeating the exercise next year.

We have all the Anniversary Grant applications in now and we are considering around five or six excellent projects to receive the grant and optics. Although only one can be successful we hope that we may be able to help those that are not successful in some other way.

We will also be drawing the Steve Cale Painting raffle soon so get your tickets whilst you still can.

## New Website Waders/Shorebirds Photo Appeal — Allan Archer

**We are currently working on a new Wader Quest website.**

This will include a gallery of waders/shorebirds. We are hoping to represent every species, including sub-species, and their various plumages. We have a number of photographs in stock but, as you can imagine, there are many gaps.

**This is an appeal to photographers.**

If you have photographs you would be willing to donate to Wader Quest for use on the website (and maybe in the odd Wader Quest newsletter) please let us know by emailing a list of species to [waderquest@gmail.com](mailto:waderquest@gmail.com). We will contact you to arrange receipt of the photographs.

All photographs will be credited to the photographer and, if he or she has one, a link to his or her website.

## Featured Wader Photo: Eurasian Curlew — Dave Jackson



Words by Rick Simpson.

As Curlews, and in particular the Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*, are so much in the news at the moment, for all the wrong reasons, when this photo arrived in our inbox from Wader Quest supporter and Friend Dave Jackson we felt sure it was an image we would want to use somewhere special.

Dave has supplied many photos for the newsletter in the past, but something about this photo caught our eye. It later occurred to us that it should in fact be our featured photo for this issue. This was partly because of the topicality of Curlews, but it was also to do with the fact that Curlews are often shy and retiring birds that don't allow close approach. Getting a shot as detailed as this one, showing the bird off in all its glory, was a bit special.

We asked Dave the circumstances under which he took the shot, he replied;

*'My friend Mark Williams kindly asked me if I'd like to join him for a weekend birding in Norfolk. I was in the passenger seat of his car when Mark noticed the bird feeding next to the A149. We quickly made a U-turn and I started to take shots through the open driver's side window. The bird was feeding on the verge which was higher than the road giving it a low point of view. It had a deformed foot but that didn't seem to hinder it at all. On checking my camera the shots all*

**Photographer:** Dave Jackson

**Species:** Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*

**Location:** Brancaster Staithe, Norfolk, England

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

*seemed out of focus, surprising as the shutter speed should've been sufficient and the focus was locking on. I put it down to the air temperature change from the warm car making invisible heat-haze. I asked Mark to drive to the end of the lay-by so I could get into the back seat without disturbing the bird as it fed. That seemed to do the trick and when the bird was disturbed by a group of rambles it made a quick flight before returning closer to the car enabling me to get the shot, just as the light improved, as it settled back to feed on earthworms.*

*The weather had been atrocious; we'd been to Titchwell Marsh and seen very little in the 40mph wind and rain. I'm guessing the Curlew had found a sheltered spot by the tree-lined roadside. It snowed overnight and the temperature dropped below zero.'*

While researching our forthcoming book *An Inspiration of Waders* about humanity's cultural connection to waders it became clear that the Curlew, along with the Northern Lapwing were streets ahead of all other species in terms of their mythical and legendary associations with people. This connection, as far as the Curlew is concerned, is wonderfully amplified in Mary Colwell's

**Equipment:** Canon EOS 7D Mark II & EF 400mm f/5.6L

**Details:** Handheld, rested through car window, 1/1250 sec, f/6.3, ISO 500

new book *Curlew Moon* (see review on page 23).

The reason for these birds being so connected to our own lives is that they were common birds of the countryside, they were highly visible and audible and also, sadly for them, they were highly edible too.

Both Lapwings and Curlews have suffered terrible declines in Britain and Ireland and are considered to be Near Threatened. That means that their extinction is entirely possible at some time in the future.

Adult survival rate is stable but they are not producing a sufficient number of fledglings to maintain the population, which is therefore shrinking and becoming more elderly each year, as a result.

The reasons for this are quite clear, too little breeding habitat and too many predators, principally foxes and crows.

Most of us only see Curlews in the winter along the coast where there appears to be plenty of Curlews about. But those of us that don't live in the breeding habitat of the Curlews cannot perceive the deafening silence that those who do are experiencing with regard to the songs, calls and barks of breeding Curlews, a sound so evocative of a countryside now lost.



## WORLD CURLEW DAY – APRIL 21



There are eight species of Curlew worldwide and two are assumed extinct. The Eskimo Curlew *Numenius borealis* and the Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris* have not been seen for decades. Out of the remaining six species, three the Eurasian *N. arquata*, the Bristle-thighed *N. tahitiensis* and the Eastern Curlew *N. madagascariensis* are at risk of extinction according to the IUCN Red list of Threatened Species. It is no exaggeration to say that many parts of the earth will lose Curlews over the next few decades.

Curlews are iconic birds of wild, wet, evocative places – estuaries, mountain slopes, moorland, meadowland and coast. They have inspired poets, artists, musicians and writers for generations. They have given us so much, yet we are allowing them to slip away as we change their habitats and fail to

protect them from predation, disturbance and in some places, hunting.

April 21 is designated as World Curlew Day. It is a grass-roots initiative, supported by major environmental organisations, to raise awareness of the plight of curlews and to encourage activities to help them. Please organise an event on April 21 and post it on the Twitter: @WCDApril21 or World Curlew Day Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/WCDApril21/>

Ideas:

Hold a talk, organise a Curlew walk, have a Curlew coffee morning, hold a Curlew-themed art show, create a Curlew song or dance, hold a Curlew-themed poetry evening, draw a Curlew picture, have a Curlew Day at a local school, hold a 'Curlew conversation' and record people's memories of when Curlews were common. Any monies raised can go towards local or national Curlew projects. Thank you for supporting World Curlew Day.



## Welsh Curlew Conference, January 2018 — Mike Smart

There has been a growing realisation in the last two or three years of the plight of the Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata*, whose numbers have plummeted all across northwest Europe, largely, it appears, because of the failure to produce enough chicks. The Irish breeding population has crashed, leading to the holding of a first All-Ireland Conference in Higginstown in November 2016; as a result of this conference, the Irish Government established a Curlew Task Force, and has set up a system of local Curlew Champions. In February 2017 (on World Wetlands Day) a workshop on Curlews was held at the headquarters of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust at Slimbridge to draw attention to the situation of the remaining breeding Curlews in lowland England; this workshop led to exchanges between groups working all over southern England on the remaining breeding Curlews, to the establishment of the 'Curlew Forum' and to the setting up of the 'Call of the Curlew' website at [www.curlewcall.org](http://www.curlewcall.org).

It was natural under these circumstances for attention to turn to Curlews in Wales, so a Conference was organised on 24 January 2018 at the Royal Agricultural Showground Builth Wells by Natural Resources Wales, the Welsh Ornithological Society, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust, and RSPB Cymru under the title 'Status and Future of Curlew in Wales'. The organisers drew on the experience of previous meetings, where the pressing need to involve farmers, land-owners and other stake-holders who own, manage and appreciate Curlew breeding habitat had been emphasized. The impressive gathering of 110 participants therefore included not only bird-watchers, scientific ornithologists and conservation organizations, but a broad selection of farmers, farming bodies, advisers on land management and game-keepers.

The tone was set by the first speaker, TV presenter Iolo Williams, who spoke of how he had been aware since boyhood of Curlew as a common upland and farmland bird, not a normal species but an iconic bird, part of the history, language and culture of Wales. The meeting continued with an outline of the national picture in Wales by Patrick Lindley of Natural Resources Wales, and by a presentation of the sheep farmer's perspective by Phil Stocker of the National



Eurasian Curlew — Julian Bhalerao

Sheep Association, who noted as a major problem the decline in lamb consumption in favour of chicken. Then came presentations by Rachel Taylor on her project to follow movements of individual tagged Curlews, by the RSPB team carrying out a large-scale trial management project in North Wales, and a report from Curlew Country which is carrying out a range of monitoring and community activities in the Welsh Marches and Shropshire. Then, under the heading of Curlew Conservation, several speakers spoke of methods of reversing the decline, notably

predator control and the possibility of using 'head-starting' (incubating wild eggs and releasing the chicks) which has already been successfully used at Slimbridge for Spoon-billed Sandpipers *Calidris pygmaea* and Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa*.

In the afternoon session, the participants gathered in groups of ten at round tables, to argue out the best ways forward. Patrick Lindley had the unenviable task of summarizing the results, which he suggested were: data monitoring in key areas; engagement of farmers and land-



## Welsh Curlew Conference, January 2018 — cont'd

owners; flexible Curlew-focussed Agri-Environment Schemes; public awareness; establishment of an All-Wales Curlew Recovery Group; local approaches; and adequate funding.

There was general agreement at the end of the Conference that there had been a genuine breaking down of barriers, and that a clear way forward had been mapped out. Since January, the detailed conclusions have been circulated, plans are in hand for an early meeting of the All-Wales Group with Natural Resources Wales and the Welsh Ornithological Society very active in this field. Until a Welsh Curlew website is set up, the full texts of all presentations, and the complete conclusions have been posted on the 'Call of the Curlew' website, so that those interested can consult them.

### Protection in Place for Curlew:

For a summary of issues affecting all curlew species please see:

[http://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/document/COP11\\_Inf\\_33\\_Conservation\\_Statements\\_for\\_Numeniini\\_Species.pdf](http://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/document/COP11_Inf_33_Conservation_Statements_for_Numeniini_Species.pdf)

For information on the Hudsonian Whimbrel *Numenius hudsonicus*:

[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/b69337\\_778dd1136afa4f94ae14064d0a8aa36f.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/b69337_778dd1136afa4f94ae14064d0a8aa36f.pdf)

For the Long Billed Curlew *Numenius americana*:

<https://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/management/focal-species/Long-billedCurlew.pdf>

For the Eurasian curlew *Numenius arquata*:

[http://www.curlewcall.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ts58\\_eurasian\\_curlew\\_issap\\_website\\_version.pdf](http://www.curlewcall.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ts58_eurasian_curlew_issap_website_version.pdf)

For the Far Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*:

<http://eaaflyway.net/project/far-eastern-curlew-task-force/>



Iolo Williams — Mary Colwell



Conference delegates — Mary Colwell

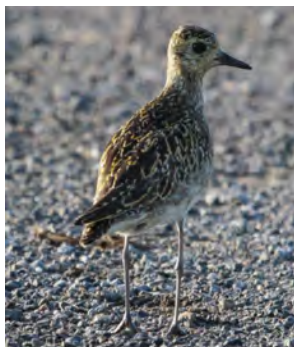
## Did you know?

Hawaiian airlines have named three of their fleet of B767 aircraft after migratory waders:

N580HA is named *Kolea* (Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*).

N592HA is named *Hunakai* (meaning sea foam which is a very apt name for the Sanderling *Calidris alba*).

N594HA is named '*Ulili*' (Wandering Tattler *Tringa incana*).



Pacific Golden Plover; Sanderling; Wandering Tattler — Elis Simpson



## Proud to be Bird Aware; success in The Solent — Karima Englefield

The Solent – for those of you who have not had the pleasure of visiting – is a unique stretch of coastline on the south coast of England, extending over 250 kilometres. Home to the international ports of Southampton and Portsmouth and containing the popular tourist venue of the Isle of Wight, this attractive coastline comes under many natural and human pressures.

Recognised internationally for the ecological value of its coastline, the rich mudflats and protected natural harbours of the Solent provide an invaluable food supply to both a sedentary and a migrant bird population. With birds flying as far as three thousand miles to overwinter on the Solent, it is literally a life line to a variety of bird species. For this reason, three Special Protection Areas (SPAs) have been designated across the Solent; supporting both nationally and internationally important numbers of a variety of non-breeding bird populations. Notable species include the Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*, Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca*, and Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla bernicla*. Over ten per cent of the global population of Dark-bellied Brent Geese rely on this precious coastline during the winter and over one hundred thousand waterbirds in total.

With a fine coastal landscape, and views to the mainland of the New Forest and South Downs National Parks, this unique setting is also popular with the public. Coastline settlements are numerous, resulting in high urban density in parts along the length of the Solent. Significant numbers of people (and their dogs) enjoy casual walks,



Dark-bellied Brent Geese in the saltmarsh at Bosham Quay. Over 10% of the global population overwinter on the Solent — © Mary Michael Patterson

cycling, sailing and a range of watersports in the same spots the birds rely on to survive.

For overwintering birds, the proximity of humans and the nature of their recreational activities can have significant impact. With limited opportunities to feed defined by the tides, human disturbance can inadvertently disturb the birds when they most need to feed and rest. After long and arduous journeys to the Solent, such disturbance can deprive them of vital opportunities and quickly impact on their overall ability to survive. Throughout the winter the birds are balancing their energy needs and disturbance has significant negative impacts on their reserves. Many conservationists are already aware of the increased energy expenditure associated with



Curlew feeding in the mudflat for marine worms and shellfish. Variability of food density across the Solent affects how well the birds can compensate for disturbance.

— © Mary Michael Patterson

birds being flushed while feeding or roosting. There are, however, other less obvious and indirect impacts. For example, birds suffer a reduced food intake during response to disturbance; even if they don't fly away they may become more alert and stop feeding. If disturbance happens in an area very often, the birds will stop using it all together, even if it is a suitable habitat and this can be considered a form of habitat loss. When disturbance forces birds to redistribute it is likely they will end up feeding in locations with reduced amounts of food and possibly more interference from other birds due to the reduced amount of space. Physiological impacts including increased stress are difficult to perceive but also likely to impact on their health.

Originally based on anecdotal evidence from local ornithologists and harbour authorities, significant local research has been undertaken in recent years to highlight such disturbance, and anticipates a future increase resulting from a rising population in the Solent and beyond. In an effort to minimise the impact of human



Karima, Lead Ranger, talks to a passing dog walker. By building positive relationships rangers help walkers and their dogs enjoy the coast responsibly — Bird Aware Solent



## Proud to be Bird Aware; success in The Solent — cont'd

disturbance, a major local partnership was developed. Comprising two national parks, thirteen local authorities and four nature conservation bodies, this represents a serious and concerted attempt to have a positive and meaningful impact on the birds through public engagement. With its own dedicated staff, the partnership publicly launched as Bird Aware Solent in 2016 to considerable local and national acclaim.

It is now increasingly recognised that access to the countryside is crucial to the long-term success of nature conservation projects and has wider benefits such as increasing people's awareness of the natural world and health benefits. In line with this best practice a team of dedicated rangers work along the Solent coastline, helping educate those using it. Armed with a stock of leaflets, advice – and best of all, a friendly disposition – the rangers actively engage with the public, helping them realise the value of the landscape and how little changes in their behaviour can be of significant benefit to the birds. Face to face conversations are having a real impact, and leading to unexpected support from a variety of sources. The rangers are also building strong working relationships with landowners, community groups, partner organisations and local businesses. Combined with an excellent and informative website, numerous public-facing events - and not to mention articles in the very best of publications! – Bird Aware Solent is really helping the public enjoy their valued landscape in new, more considered ways. With on-going research and investment in new campaigns, Bird Aware is a far-sighted project that is helping many organisations to work in partnership for the benefit of conservation.

All those interested in the plight of birds can help protect them. The rangers have come up with some top-tips as to how to highlight the birds and their plight without undue conflict - shouting at a dog running rampant does not usually win over the owner! The rangers' favoured approach is to strike up a friendly conversation before highlighting the value of the shorebirds to the public, for example by pointing out a particular bird and saying how far it's



Through outreach and education, Karima and other rangers help foster local engagement with the landscape, establishing a sense of responsibility for the local wildlife — Bird Aware Solent

travelled. People often respond with an exclamation that they've always wondered what those little birds are, and this provides a natural inroad into the hardships the bird may face and that a little care around them will really be a big help. The rangers assume that five per cent of people won't care – and five per cent of people might already know – but it's the ninety per cent they reach through such conversations that will make the big difference. Reaching those that care but do not understand is key, and anyone with an interest in birds can help educate and influence those people for the greater good. Bird Aware Solent's public facing work is backed up by hard research which helps inform their work and the campaigns they undertake. For those with an academic interest, the research can be found on the Bird Aware website at [www.birdaware.org](http://www.birdaware.org). The rangers can also be followed on social



Bird Aware Ranger Patrick Styles explains why sticking to the footpath around natural harbours is so important to the wellbeing of coastal birds

media – Facebook, Twitter and Instagram – and would love to talk to you about their day-to-day work and the varied bird company they keep! Why not take a peek and show your pride at being Bird Aware?

*Karima Englefield, whom we had the pleasure of meeting at the oyster beds on Hayling Island, is Lead Ranger with Bird Aware Solent.*



Oystercatchers roosting on a shingle spit. Disturbance to high tide roosts is a particular issue as there are limited safe roosts available, especially during spring tides — © Mary Michael Patterson

## Waders in Navarra — Haritz Sarasa Zabala



Navarra province is located in Northern Spain, close to the Bay of Biscay (about eighty km from the coast) and shares the Pyrenean mountain range with France in its westernmost and less altitudinal part. Navarra is relatively small in size covering just 10.391km<sup>2</sup> but has many different climate zones within its area.

This strategic emplacement, with the two special geographical characteristics mentioned above, makes Navarra one of the most important regions in bird migration of western Europe. Many thousands of birds, comprising a wide variety of species including passerines, cranes, pigeons, raptors (principally in the Lirio pass) are the better known examples that use this natural corridor. But waders too, in more moderate numbers, pass the same way but their nocturnal migratory habits make them less visible and obvious.

Generally birds on their postnuptial, southerly, migration in autumn register higher numbers, in more concentrated densities, than they do on their prenuptial, northerly, spring journeys. Waders however are recorded in similar numbers on both journeys.

Due to this natural phenomenon traditional hunting is deeply rooted in the region, where Wood pigeons *Columba*



White-rumped Sandpiper — Ornitocampero



Common Ringed Plover — Ornitocampero

*palumbus* and Eurasian Woodcocks *Scolopax rusticola* are the preferred game birds of the local hunters.



Eurasian Dotterel — Ornitocampero

There is a wide variety of wader species that choose this route for their migration. Up to now thirty-seven species have been recorded of which four are Nearctic species; Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*, White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis* (personal record), American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica* and Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*.

Birds such as Dunlin *Calidris alpina*, Red Knot *Calidris canutus*, Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*, Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*, Sanderling *Calidris alba*, Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* and most of the Plovers including Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* and Eurasian Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* use the region as a flyway corridor that connects their wintering sites in southern Spain or Africa, with their breeding territories in the Arctic tundra or Northern Europe.

Obviously the region provides some valuable and legally protected reservoirs, lagoons and other water bodies, forested areas and marshes where migrating birds find protection to roost and feed to replenish their fat reserves.

In some of these spots waders pass the autumn and winter seasons. The most representative species, which achieve the highest numbers by far, are Northern Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus* and Eurasian Woodcocks, followed by Common Snipes *Gallinago gallinago* and a few Jack Snipes *Lyminocryptes minimus* each year. It is likely however that the secretive behaviour of these birds masks the true numbers that pass through. In addition Ruffs *Calidris pugnax*, Green Sandpipers *Tringa ochropus* can be found in variable numbers and, not always common, we can observe Dunlins, European



Sanderling — Ornitocampero

Golden Plovers *Pluvialis apricaria* and Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa*.

Navarra also provides suitable habitats for breeding waders such as the Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos* and



## Waders in Navarra — cont'd

the Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* which are the most numerous due to the ample number of river banks that are present throughout the territory (mainly Arga, Aragon and Ebro rivers).

Variable numbers of Black-winged Stilts *Himantopus himantopus* and Northern Lapwings also breed in flooded fields and ricefields as well as the Eurasian Woodcocks in some of the northern wooded mountains.

As it is both a local breeder and a wintering bird, the Eurasian Stone-curlew is always present in suitable habitats all year especially so in the southern part of Navarra with extensive semi arid moors. Sadly though numbers are declining due to the agricultural transformation from traditional rain-fed crops such as wheat to irrigated plants like corn and olive tree plantations in some suitable areas.



Black-tailed Godwit — Ornitocampero

It is also necessary to point out that many waders find much needed shelter and protection in a variety of suitable habitats. In the last decades three regions that contain rice fields (Arguedas, Rada, Figarol) have proved to be highly important for wintering, as well as for, migrating birds, offering rich mudflats in otherwise not very suitable habitat for them. This is especially helpful to Lapwings, Snipes, a few European Golden Plovers in winter and in the migratory seasons to Little Stints *Calidris minutus*, Dunlins, Black-tailed Godwits and many others in more moderate numbers.

The most important wetlands are La Laguna de Pitillas (Pitillas), La Balsa de Zolina (Pamplona, Navarra's capital city), La Balsa de Loza (Loza), Laguna Las cañas (Viana) Badina Escudera (Villafranca), Salobre de Sesma (Sesma) and Balsa de Bajabon (Ablitas).

Combined these features make Navarra a highly interesting region for wader watching due to its diversity and it's relative small size were all the hot spots are easily accessible with relatively short distances between them.

[www.ornitocampero.blogspot.com.es](http://www.ornitocampero.blogspot.com.es)



Black-winged Stilts — Ornitocampero



Common Sandpiper — Ornitocampero



Curlew Sandpiper — Ornitocampero



## World Green Birding record attempt — Gary Prescott the Biking Birder

How else should one start an attempt at The World Green Birding record than by sitting on a large, extensive and seemingly never-ending sandy beach watching waders?

Los Pantanos de Villa beach, south of Lima in Peru will, on the first of April this year, be the location. Here possibly a dozen different wader species will be amongst hopefully another sixty different bird species seen on the first day of the latest Biking Birder adventure.

Waders such as Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*, Lesser *Tringa flavipes* and Greater Yellowlegs *T. melanoleuca* may be seen with other North American waders such as Willet *Tringa semipalmatus*, Least *Calidris minutilla* and Semipalmated Sandpipers *C. pusilla* and Hudsonian Whimbrel *Numenius hudsonicus*. All will be on their way north as autumn approaches this Southern Hemisphere site.

My name is Gary Prescott, better known as The Biking Birder from Worcestershire, UK. This latest adventure is my fourth and the most challenging yet.



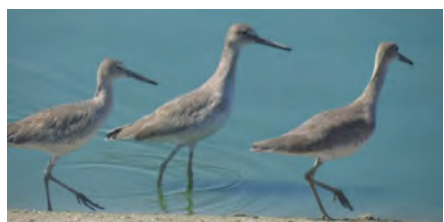
Gary and his faithful steed — Gary Prescott



Killdeer — Gary Prescott

In the past I have cycled around the UK visiting all the RSPB and WWT (Wildfowl & Wetland Trust) nature reserves, all two hundred and forty two of them! Indeed I cycled for thirty-six months, visiting all reserves in the first year cycling adventure in 2010 and doing it all over again in 2015.

2016 was different. I didn't visit all of the reserves but went for the bird. By this time I was the British Green Birding Year list record holder having seen two hundred and ninety different bird species by cycling. In 2016 I wanted the European Green Birding Year list record and achieved that on a magic October day on Fair Isle. Beating the previous record holder, Ponc Feliu Latorre's total of three hundred and four was tremendous but



Killdeer — Gary Prescott

it must be said that my BIGBY record, my Big Green Big Year record, isn't as good as Ponc's because in order to get to Fair Isle I had used ferries. A pure Green Birder mustn't use any fossil fuel transport during his birding year.

Be that as it may, I ended 2016 with 318 birds but have since had two birds taken away from me; Fea's Petrel is now

a one thousand mile cycle up and over the Andes. I will be sixteen thousand feet up feet up after twelve days!

Then, after three months of birding and cycling, the bike will be dismantled and placed in the front of an inflatable packraft. I need to navigate down The Madre de Dios River in The Manu National Park, a large and dangerous tributary of The Amazon for a further three months.

By October I hope to have broken Dorian's record. I also hope to have raised a lot of money for Birdlife International and here I ask you to please look at my blog :

<http://bikingbirder2016.blogspot.co.uk/>

Upon which you will find links to a Just Giving page from which to make a donation.

Here you may also be able to follow my adventures and see what incredible wader species I have seen along the way. Maybe Grey-breasted Seedsnipe *Thinocorus orbignyianus*, Tawny-throated Dotterel *Oreopholus ruficollis* and Puna Snipe *Gallinago andina* will be listed. Sublime Andean Lapwings *Vanellus resplendens* are a definite.

Waders to start an adventure of a lifetime. No better way to get peddling and birding.



American Oystercatcher — Gary Prescott

deemed a sub-species and the same has been decided upon by the British Ornithological Union, the BOU, with Hudsonian Whimbrel and Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*. (Not in our books—Ed.)

This year I want the World BIGBY record. Dorian Anderson is the current record holder, having seen a magnificent six hundred and eighteen different bird species during an incredible sixteen thousand mile cycle around the USA in 2014.

So I will be watching American Oystercatchers *Haematopus palliatus*, Spotted Sandpipers *Actitis macularius*, and Sanderling *Calidris alba* on the first day, April the first, April Fool's Day. Ahead of me will be



Los Pantanos de Villa beach — Gary Prescott



## World Green Birding record attempt — cont'd

### STOP PRESS:-

Gary has sent us some photos of the waders he has seen so far on his journey, here is a selection of them. Most of these were taken at Los Pantanos de Villa nature reserve. The only one that wasn't was the Blackish Oystercatcher which was by the pier at Miraflores.



Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia* — Gary Prescott



Blackish Oystercatcher *Haematopus ater* — Gary Prescott



Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus* — Gary Prescott



Hudsonian Whimbrel *Numenius hudsonicus* — Gary Prescott



Peruvian Thick-knee *Burhinus superciliaris* — Gary Prescott



Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* — Gary Prescott

## Sending US an SOS — Becky Bowen



Black Oystercatcher, MacKerricher State Park, Mendocino County, CA, USA — Becky Bowen

We don't speak their language, but they talk to us and the message is clear: shorebirds (waders) are in real trouble.

Here in a remote corner of the Northern California coast, 2017 was a year that raised concerns about the possible loss of federally-mandated wildlife protection. More urgently, we saw the collapse of local kelp marine beds, so critical to intertidal and coastal strand wildlife. And when drought-caused wildfires erupted in the fall, our skies were red and filled for days with smoke — some of it from six hundred miles away in Southern California. Would the migrators fly through the smoke or around it?

None of this was a surprise. Scientists had sounded the alarm many times, most notably for birds in 2007 when the National Audubon Society and the American Bird Conservancy declared an emergency triggered by climate change and loss of habitat. The organizations identified 59 bird species in the continental U.S. and 39 Hawaiian species on what was called the 'red list' of birds in grave danger of disappearing. There were 119 more birds in severe decline that appeared on a 'yellow list.' All of these birds were designated as 'watchlisted birds.'

People who live here were dismayed to see the Rock Sandpiper *Calidris ptilocnemis* and Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Calidris subruficollis* on the red list. Even

more alarming were species on the yellow list that frequently were seen here during migration, like Black Turnstone *Arenaria melanocephala* and Sanderling *Calidris alba*. The 'Western' Snowy Plover *Charadrius nivosus* also was on the yellow list.

In 2007, my friend Angela Liebenberg and I decided to do something to conserve and protect our shorebirds. Ms Liebenberg was a California State Parks Environmental Scientist who now works for the California Department of Fish & Wildlife. I retired several years ago from the television business and moved to Northern California to draw and watch birds.

With the advice of legendary local birder Dorothy "Toby" Tobkin and the help of Audubon California, we picked a name (Save Our Shorebirds), set up a Mendocino Coast

Audubon citizen science project in partnership with the regional district of California State Parks, received grant funding from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and started to count birds on hikes along the Pacific coastline of MacKerricher State Park in Mendocino County, California. The park is a birding 'hotspot' and contains Inglenook Fen-Ten Mile Dunes Natural Preserve, home to a year-round flock of 'Western' Snowy Plovers. A graduate of the local community college marine science program signed a contract to manage volunteers and compile data.

Those data were to be available to the public, schools, and agencies at no charge. They currently appear in annual reports posted on the Mendocino Coast Audubon Society website at [www.mendocinocoastaudubon.org](http://www.mendocinocoastaudubon.org) under the conservation tab. Some SOS volunteers collected shorebird data; others took lessons into classrooms and out into the community.

The goal was to increase (by a modest amount) the number of watchlisted shorebirds in the park. The method was collection of shorebird data. The hope was to use what we learned to teach people how to protect and appreciate shorebirds by raising awareness and reducing disturbance. The motivation was the plight of the 'Western' Snowy Plover. The tiny birds had stopped



Western Snowy Plover — Elis Simpson



## Sending US an SOS — cont'd

reproducing here, victims of nest destruction by feral cats, raccoons, skunks, river otters, Common Ravens *Corvus corax*, raptors, very high tide waters, humans, horses, and dogs. We also cared deeply about shorebirds that landed on our beaches to rest and refuel on heroic migrations from the Arctic to and from points south. The local college bird professor taught us that more than half of the young birds migrating from the Arctic never survived the first trip down the Pacific Flyway.

There was a lot of work to do and we foolishly set out to finish the project in two summers.

Now, twelve years later, we realize the work has just begun. Now, we conduct year-round surveys along five routes along the MacKerricher State Park coastline that stretches from the town of Fort Bragg, CA, north to Ten Mile River — some 15.7 kilometres. We have had some failures and some success. What we have in abundance is data — all gathered from 2007-2013 at three different stretches of land and from 2014-2017 at five sites: (see Figs. 1 & 2)

Total birds counted: 636,487

Total shorebirds counted: 255,411

Total surveys: 3,181

Total Watchlisted Shorebirds counted: 171,757\*

Total Non-Watchlisted Shorebirds counted: 83,654\*\*

Estimated Total miles hiked: 83,468.6 (134,329.6 kilometres).

SOS volunteers are teachers, business people, artists, nurses, scientists, farmers, students, writers, government employees, community service clients, musicians, attorneys, parents and grandparents. We write down field observations and our bird counts are submitted to Cornell University's international eBird database. Raw numbers are our business and we leave analysis up to professional researchers.

But as our story became the birds' stories, we knew it was not just about numbers. We learned three significant things.

1. We are all connected some way to the birds that breed in the Arctic. Political and economic winds are capricious and that may impact when and how migrators come down the flyway. We need to follow developments in the Arctic as closely as we watch efforts to bring offshore oil drilling to our own coast.
2. We must include disturbance observations

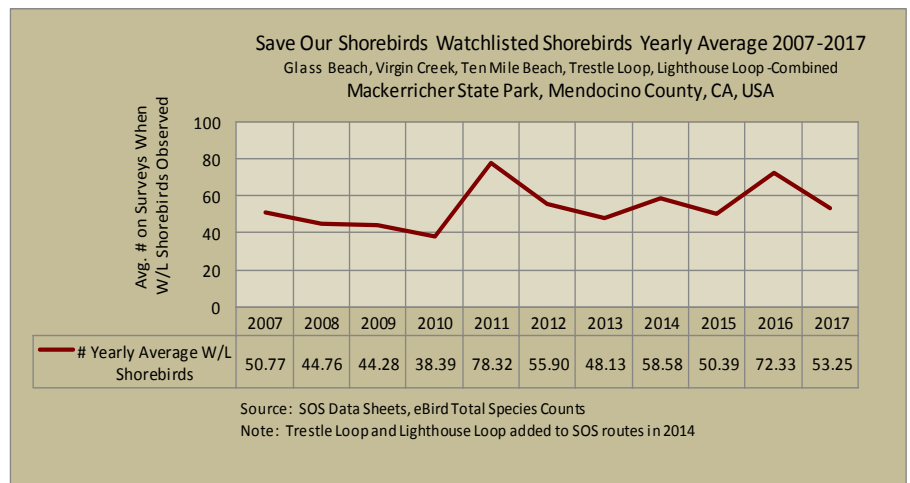


Fig. 1 \*Watchlisted shorebirds seen on MacKerricher State Park beaches listed on 2007 National Audubon and American Bird Conservancy red and yellow lists: Rock Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, American Golden-Plover *Pluvialis dominica* (rare here), 'Western' Snowy Plover, Wandering Tattler *Tringa incana*, Long-billed Curlew *Numenius americanus*, Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica* (accidental), Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa*, Black Turnstone, Surfbird *Aphriza virgata*, Red Knot *Calidris canutus*, Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla*, and Western Sandpiper *Calidris maura*.

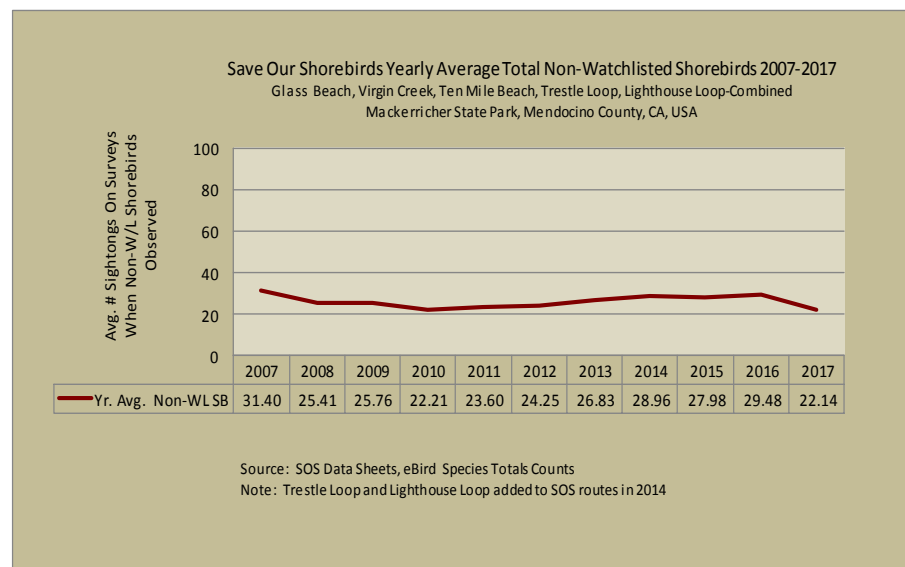


Fig. 2 \*\*Non-Watchlisted Shorebirds recorded on SOS surveys: American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*, Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*, Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva*, Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus*, Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus*, Black Oystercatcher *Haematopus bachmani*, Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca*, Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes*, Willet *Tringa semipalmata*, Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius*, Hudsonian Whimbrel *Numenius hudsonicus*, Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*, Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla*, Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii*, Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*, Dunlin *Calidris alpina*, Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus*, Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaci*, Wilson's Snipe *Gallinago delicata*, Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*, Red Phalarope *Phalaropus fulica*, and Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*.

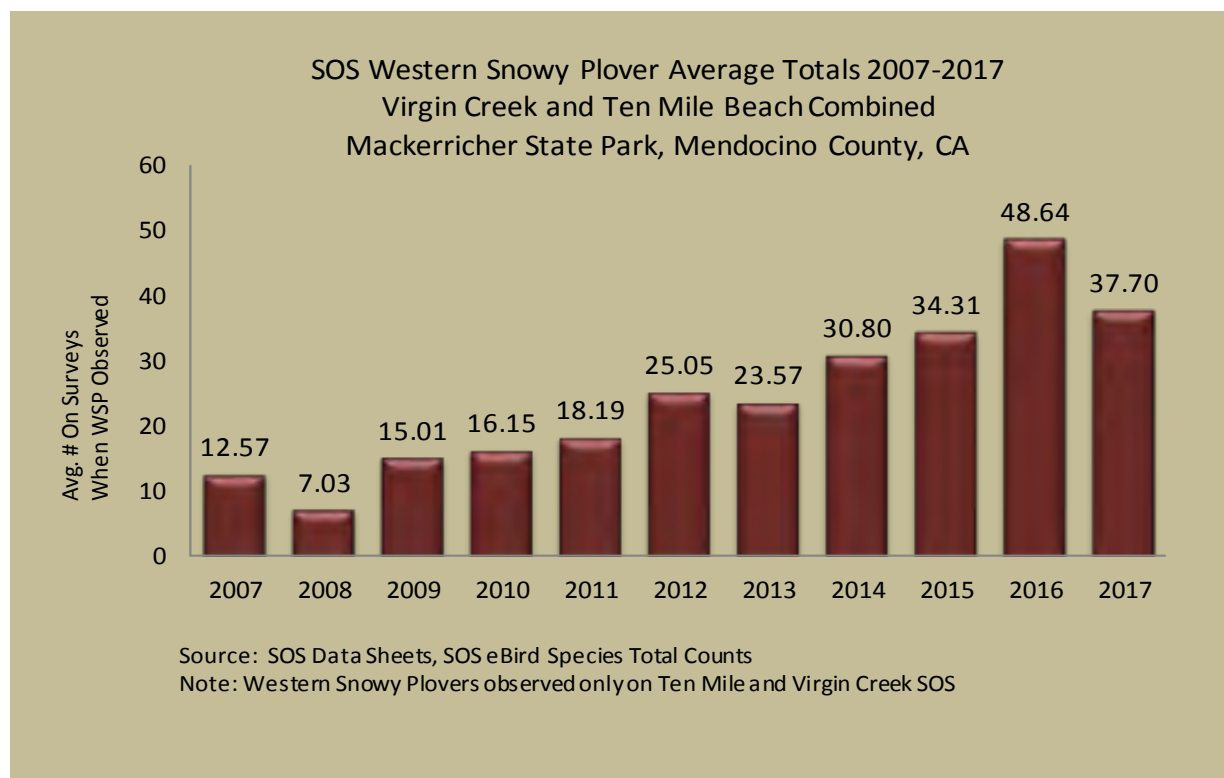
in our annual reports if we are to tell the whole story about our shorebirds.

3. To realize our mission, we must continue our citizen science surveys for a long time. No matter what happens in the future, our history is there in the data set. The longer we

survey, the more we know. And the more we know, the more we can do as stewards—and defenders — of our local land, air, water, wildlife, and birds.

SOS surveys began in 2007, the same year the U.S. Watchlist was published. It

## Sending US an SOS — cont'd



was the same year U.S. Fish & Wildlife Snowy Plover, the victim of coastal development that wiped out the wide areas of beach habitat. Wildlife scientists at the time estimated the global population was 2,100 breeding adults. According to a department background paper, there were only some twenty eight locations on the U.S. Pacific Coast where the birds nested. Inglenook Fen-Ten Mile Dunes Preserve was one of them.

Because of the remote location, we did not always have officers available to enforce protective regulations for 'Western' Snowy Plovers in the preserve, but now there was federal as well as state support. We sent SOS surveyors out to Ten Mile Beach to collect data and talk with visitors. State Parks Natural Resources staff also were available to monitor 'Western' Snowy Plovers and have a presence on the beach. In 2014, after long legal challenge, State Parks began work in the preserve to return the critical habitat to its natural state. An abandoned logging road was removed and invasive non-native European beach grass was pulled (an on-going work that continues in the preserve). Because of all these efforts, the number of 'Western' Snowy Plovers began to increase, especially in winter where the high count recorded on an SOS survey in 2015 was 116 adults. But an increase in the number of 'Western' Snowy Plovers did not result in successful nesting. The birds were there, breeding occurred, the nests were built (simple scrapes on open

sand), and nests were monitored by parks staff under supervision of environmental scientists observing federal protocol. A small number of chicks hatched between 2005-2017 — but none survived. Around each failed nest were tracks of humans, dogs, and ravens.

Common Ravens are forest birds attracted to the beach by trash and carrion. They adapt and stay. We see them digging for live sand crabs and consuming Dungeness crabs as well as fish. We see them foraging with Black Oystercatchers on mussel beds. They predate shorebirds eggs and chicks, and between 2007-2017, we counted 20,201 Common Ravens during SOS surveys.

Ravens are included in disturbance data that is gathered on every SOS survey. Disturbance data are something we feel comfortable analysing (unlike shorebird trends and statistics), because the data often describe a number of complex variables that may include human actions, predator behaviour, or use of mechanical devices that threaten wildlife.

All SOS surveys are conducted on public property — either in the state park or along off-shore rocks that are part of a national monument. There is a delicate balance between people who want to have fun (often with their dogs) and shorebirds that want to survive.

Even one dog on the beach can send an incubating 'Western' Snowy Plover

off a nest or scatter resting or foraging shorebirds. Since chicks don't fledge for 28 days, they are extremely vulnerable to predators and there is no doubt in our minds that plovers perceive dogs as predators. Four years ago, an SOS volunteer with statistical experience created a model that examines the potential for disturbance to shorebirds. The model formula contains the total number of watchlisted shorebirds and Common Ravens counted on each of the five SOS survey sites and extrapolates total numbers of people, dogs, and unleashed dogs. The



'Western' Snowy Plover hiding in a footprint  
 — Elis Simpson



## Sending US an SOS — cont'd

imputed total of 15,570 off-leash and leashed dogs in no-dog areas from 2007-2017 was a surprise to us and went a long way to explain negative impacts on shorebird nesting and roosting areas. It is the kind of information that is critical for those who manage the park's natural resources.

Disturbance data indicate shorebirds go to beaches where there are fewer people. The exception is one SOS survey site with a high number of people and a large number of leashed (allowed) dogs as well as a good number of shorebirds. The site's major hiking "trail" is a well-constructed raised walkway with observation platforms. The path is defined and enjoyed by dogs and people who gladly use leashes to avoid dog fights. The walkway also is built on a bluff top where ocean water separates hikers and wildlife that rests and roosts on offshore rocks.

But further north, Inglenook Fen-Ten Mile Dunes Preserve is a remote part of the park with no entrance gate. Access on foot can be made from three directions. No dogs are allowed, even on leash. Dog, vehicle, and equestrian regulations are strict and the fines (when applied) are stiff, but our experience shows that some people who come to an out-of-the-way beach are tempted to take shotgun target practice; race radio-controlled cars on sand; drop down to the water's edge in gasoline-powered paragliders; send drones after bird flocks; race horses through shorebird nesting areas; build fires, eat, drink, smoke, and toss their trash to the wind; set up illegal overnight camps; mutilate stranded or deceased marine mammals; and turn their dogs loose for a wild romp down a long beach.

We have seen all this in the last year. It left us shaking our heads and asking, 'Will somebody tell us some good news?' And so, someone did talk to us—in their own language and with their actions. For the first time in more than a decade and against all odds, a 'Western' Snowy Plover chick survived. Three eggs were in a nest near the mouth of Ten Mile River in the park preserve. Parks environmental scientists oversaw protection and monitoring of the nest during four weeks of incubation. Two chicks hatched July 31, 2017. One chick survived and was raised by the male parent. The chick fledged August 28, 2017. It was a sweet story with a happy ending.

*Becky Bowen is the Volunteer Compiler for Save Our Shorebirds*

*Mendocino Coast Audubon Society*

*You can visit them at;*

[www.facebook.com/SaveOurShorebirds](https://www.facebook.com/SaveOurShorebirds)



August 5, 2017 — Becky Bowen



August 19, 2017 — Becky Bowen



August 19, 2017; 'Western' Snowy Plover chick and male parent — Becky Bowen



September 2, 2017 — Becky Bowen



## Wader ringing in Portugal — Scott Petrek

In mid-March 2018 a small team of bird ringers from the UK based *Bache Shearwood & McShane* group arrived at Quinta do Marim, part of the Ria Formosa Natural Park in southern Portugal, with the aim of catching waders at this fantastic wetland site.

The site is made up of two main tidal lagoons just a few miles east of Faro airport near Olhão. The tide pours in to a deep lagoon and only begins flooding the shallow lagoon as the tide hits its absolute peak. The shallowest lagoon proved the most popular with waders and sitting in the hide we enjoyed close views of Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Little Stint *Calidris minuta*, Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*, Dunlin *Calidris alpina* and Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* with other waders including Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*, Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, Bar-tailed *Limosa lapponica* and Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa* staying further out in the deeper waters. A small flock of Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus* were also present and small roost of spoonbill often gathered in the nearby scrub.

Out on the beach a roost of Bar-tailed godwits and Eurasian Whimbrels *Numenius phaeopus* gathered during the day, but were not there during the night time high tides. To the east of the lagoons is an area of old saltpans which proved the most productive for mist netting on the rising tide. To the north is an area of scrubby grassland and woodland where we saw Hoopoe *Upupa epops*, Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*,



Ria Formosa from the air — Scott Petrek

Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*, Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* and Azure-winged Magpie *Cyanopica cyanus*. Amongst the scrubby areas of a couple of small pools where duck including Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* and Eurasian Teal *Anas crecca* could be seen, along with a party of Black-winged Stilts *Himantopus himantopus*. The final pool on the reserve looks like a small quarry with three small islands, home to a small flock of

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina* for the winter. Each evening hundreds and hundreds of Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis* pour in to roost here, completely covering the trees and shoreline with locals estimating at least 500 birds to be present. The odd Great Egret *Ardea alba* and Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* also make an appearance. The reserve also houses the *Centro de Recuperação e Investigação de Animais Selvagens* (RIAS), a rescue and rehabilitation centre for injured wildlife.

The group have been making an annual ringing trip to nearby wetlands at Vilamoura for migratory passerines for over 10 years and had some great recoveries of ringed birds from across Europe, including a British ringed Eurasian Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* recaptured by the same ringer in Portugal as had originally ringed it in the UK! The autumn passerine trip is always a highlight of the year but a new opportunity to target waders became viable thanks to the support of ICNF, the governmental body responsible for managing protected sites. Originally planned for the autumn, the trip was rearranged for spring when Monarch Airlines collapsed and our flights were cancelled.

Over seven days the group caught 327 waders of 13 species including Red Knot *Calidris canutus*, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwit and Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*. The vast majority of the birds were caught at night in the build up to high tide using mist nets. A bird watching hide overlooking the



Eurasian Whimbrel — Scott Petrek



## Wader Ringing in Portugal— cont'd



Common Greenshank — Scott Petrek



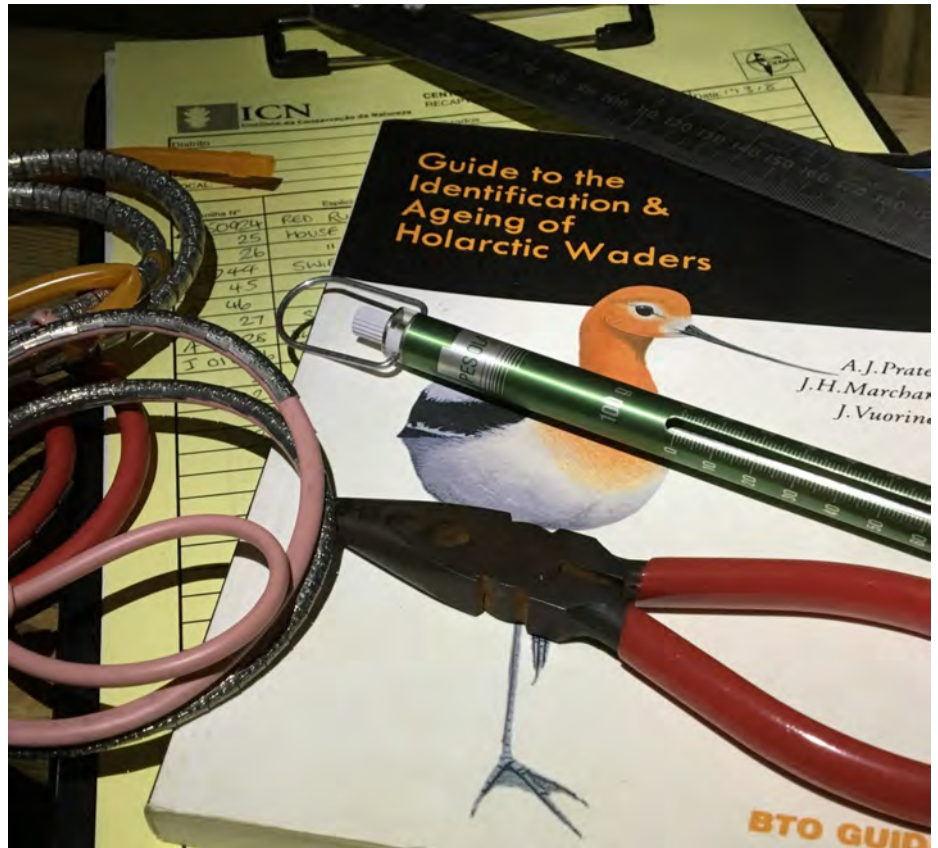
Kentish Plover — Scott Petrek

main lagoon also offered a good base for looking for colour rings during the day, but sadly no marked waders were seen, only Eurasian Spoonbills *Platalea leucorodia*. Of the total caught seven birds were already carrying a ring, five of which were from the Portuguese scheme.

One of the group's most notable birds of the trip was a Dunlin was caught carrying a British ring, number NR88882. An appeal on social media produced no news so all we can determine so far is that this bird was ringed in May 2003 in the UK as an adult male. This means that this bird is still going strong nearly 15 years later, and is only 4 years off the UK longevity record for the species. As it was ringed as an adult, we'll never know the bird's true age. We wait to hear more about where this bird was ringed once the record has been processed by the Portuguese ringing scheme.

After a successful first attempt at catching waders at this site, we hope to make the trip and annual addition to our overseas ringing with the potential to start our own colour ringing projects for target species in the future.

There was though one more and even more exciting capture on this trip, a Red Knot that was not only carrying a metal ring from Iceland, but also a yellow flag coded 23T. A quick hunt online found that this bird was part of a project coordinated by Jim Wilson. A reply came through to our email within hours from John which revealed that



Essential Ringing equipment — Scott Petrek

Please note the excellent artwork on the cover of this book see page 26 — Ed.

the bird was ringed in May 2017 near Skógarnes in western Iceland. Jim continued alone the project caught and ringed 670 birds, of which they have since received over 200 sightings.



Red Knot ringed and flagged in Iceland — Scott Petrek

## Colour ring sightings — Rick Simpson

Elis and I have a tradition. At least, that is to say, we did it last year, we did it this year and, if we do it again next year it'll certainly be looking like a tradition. That tradition is our Valentines Day wader watch where we visit a new spot to see what is about.

Last year we visited Scarborough to see the Ruddy Turnstones *Arenaria interpres* on the quayside and visited Filey Brig to look for Purple Sandpipers *Calidris maritima*. It was a great success. This year we headed to the south coast.

February is a grey month. There are splashes of colour from the lesser celandine, snowdrops, primroses and daffodils that bejewel that bases of the roadside hedgerows. On the other hand the green haze of buds on the awakening bushes is still a longed-for dream. In February everything is impatient for the promised warmth that is to come and an overcast wet and windy day in February is quite depressing. Depressing that is unless you are in the car, snug and warm and heading to Hayling Island, Hampshire. Hayling Island is surrounded by mud, and therefore, waders.

As we travelled, the wind buffeted

the car and the rain was slung against the windscreen in pulses like badly executed special effects in a cheap film. We eventually arrived over Langstone Bridge and saw the tide was beginning to fall, just as the rain continued to do. We checked into our hotel and noted from our room the birds from the window in the creek. We had seen Northern Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus* on the way in, and now through a curtain of rivulets coursing down the window we added Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* and two Eurasian Curlews *Numenius arquata*.

Impatient to see more, we braved the persistent downpour and headed south, driving along the road towards the ferry that takes passengers to Portsmouth. As we passed a small bay on the right near the ferry terminal known as 'The Kench', we stopped to scan for birds. Here were our first Eurasian Oystercatchers *Haematopus ostralegus*, a few dozen Dunlins *Calidris alpina*, two Grey Plovers *Pluvialis squatarola* and many more Common Redshanks.

The Redshanks drew our attention due to the unusual feeding method they were all employing. Apparently, as they were

not probing and picking in a typical *Tringa* fashion, they all had delusions of grandeur wishing to be Pied Avocets *Recurvirostra avosetta*. They were poking their bill, slightly open, a little into the mud, swinging it from side to side.

Whilst watching the 'Avoshanks' Elis noticed a couple had colour leg rings and despite the dull light conditions, with a ISO of something like ten million, a wide open aperture and a shutter time of eleven days, Elis managed record shots of them. The leg bands read R+R//GL and B+B//WG. Below are details of their movements. They have not travelled far since they were ringed.



Common Redshanks with colour rings  
— Elis Simpson

DD51366	R+R//GL	N		Ad	16/09/2013	Farlington Marshes LNR	Farlington RG Pete Potts et al	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			19/10/2013	Sinah Warren, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	David Ball
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			05/12/2013	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			31/01/2014	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			04/02/2014	Sinah Warren, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			23/08/2014	Broom Channel	Pete Potts	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			21/11/2014	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			01/09/2015	Farlington Marshes LNR	Pete Potts	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S	?		31/10/2015	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			23/01/2016	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			13/11/2016	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			19/01/2017	The Kench, Hayling Island	Ed Rowsell	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			11/03/2017	Sinah Warren, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51366	R+R//GL	S	?		30/09/2017	Broom Channel, Langstone Harbour,	Pete Potts	Robert Pell
DD51366	R+R//GL	S			14/02/2018	The Kench, Hayling Island	Rick Simpson	Elis Simpson
DD51711	B+B//WG	N		1st W	13/09/2014	Thorney Island	Farlington RG Pete Potts et al	
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			21/11/2014	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			12/01/2015	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	Alex Foy
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			10/04/2015	North Hayling	Pete Potts	Kathryn Eustace
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			11/04/2015	North Hayling	Pete Potts	Dave Ball & Ruth Croger
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			01/11/2015	Hayling Oysterbeds	Pete Potts	
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			12/12/2015	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	Dave Ball
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			19/12/2015	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	Dave Ball
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			23/01/2016	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			27/03/2016	Hayling Oysterbeds	Pete Potts	
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			13/11/2016	The Kench, Hayling Island	Pete Potts	
DD51711	B+B//WG	S	?		16/09/2017	Broom Channel	Pete Potts	
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			04/02/2018	The Kench, Ferry Road, Langstone	Anne de Potier	
DD51711	B+B//WG	S			14/02/2018	The Kench, Ferry Road, Langstone	Rick Simpson	Elis Simpson



## More colour ring sightings — Ric Else and Hazel Watson

On 7th March we'd gone to Galway city to visit the famous Nimmo's Pier in the hope of some hot gull action. Over the winter on Rathlin we'd had a succession of Glaucous Gulls *Larus hyperboreus* visiting the island and nice as they are we were in need of some larid diversity. We'd heard that Nimmo's Pier and adjacent shoreline was a hotspot for gulls, but we were delighted to find it was also brilliant for waders. Somehow we'd timed our arrival to perfection - the tide was just starting to drop but was still high enough to hold a nice flock of Dunlins *Calidris alpina* and Ruddy Turnstones *Arenaria interpres* super close to the footpath. For a while we were distracted by a couple of dodgy looking white-winged gulls feeding in the tide edge (all Iceland Gulls *Larus glaucooides* as it turned out, then with an ace bit of birding by Ric we briefly saw a Kumlien's Gull *Larus glaucooides kumlieni* flying overhead), then further along the shore we noticed a group of Bar-tailed Godwits *Limosa lapponica*. They were a welcome sight indeed, as the 'barwit' is a species that so far has never bothered to visit us on Rathlin. A flash of colour caught our eye and we saw it had colour rings. With the bird busily foraging on the newly exposed mud, it wasn't hard to sneak up to snap its picture. After a bit of googling and posting the sighting on Twitter, we soon discovered that the same bird had been seen by Niall Keogh at the same spot the month before, and it had originally been ringed on Griend in the Wadden Sea in April 2015. After being seen in a couple of other locations in the Wadden Sea in August 2015 and 2016, it had been off the radar until popping up this year in Galway on the west coast of Ireland. This is a great site for waders and it's well worth keeping an eye out for more colour-ringed birds here. (See below.)



Bar-tailed Godwit with colour rings — Ric Else and Hazel Watson

<b>Colourcode:</b> <u>N6YYGR</u>		<b>Catchdate:</b> 21-April-2015	<b>Catch location:</b> Griend
<b>Observations:</b>		<b>Coordinates:</b> 53.15.10N 5.16.40E	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Location:</b>	<b>Coordinates:</b>	<b>Observer:</b>
10-August-2015	Wad ten zuiden van de Richel	53.17.00N 05.08.00E	Jan de Jong
11-August-2015	Wad ten zuiden van de Richel	53.17.00N 05.08.00E	Jan de Jong
25-August-2016	Terschelling, wad 't Sehaal	53.22.42N 05.18.50E	Jacob de Vries
29-August-2016	Terschelling, wad Striep	53.22.22N 05.17.57E	Jacob de Vries
8-February-2018	Mutton Island causeway, Galway, Ireland	53.15.40N 09.03.30W	Niall T. Keogh
7-March-2018	Mutton Island causeway, Galway, Ireland	53.15.40N 09.03.30W	Hazel Watson

## Research on Bar-tailed Godwits — NIOZ Shorebirds Team

In 2001 the Royal Dutch Institute for Sea Research (Royal NIOZ) launched a study on the ecology of the Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*. In addition to the mainly shellfish eating Red Knot *Calidris canutus*, which we have been studying since the late eighties, we want to learn more about the ecology of a species whose food consists mainly of bristle worms. In May 2001 a project started with colour-rings on Bar-tailed Godwits in the Dutch Wadden Sea and the Banc d'Arguin in Mauritania, one of the major wintering areas

of the species in Western Africa. Every year, birds are caught and ringed by ringers of VRS Casticum (on the Dutch North Sea coast), VRS Calidris on the island Schiermonnikoog and wilsterflappers Joop Jukema, Catharinus Monk, Jaap Strikwerda and Bram van der Veen. These wilsterflappers are ringing on the islands of Texel, Terschelling and Ameland and catch hundreds of bar-tailed godwits in the meadows each spring. They do this with a traditional catching method that they used in the past to catch European Golden Plovers

*Pluvialis apricaria* for their income (wilsterflappen). Waders are also caught by the NIOZ with mist nets in the periods around the new moon in the Wadden Sea and in Mauritania.

The colour ring combination consists of four colour-rings and a flag (a ring with a kind of streamer). The flag colours that have been used since 2001 are shown in Figure 2 (see page XX) and are in chronological order, Yellow (Y), Red (R), Lime (L) and Black (N). There are two colour rings

## Research on Bar-tailed Godwits — cont'd

on each lower leg (the tarsus) with a flag in one of eight possible positions (see Figure 1 on page XX). Each bird also carries a metal ring, this is not part of the color combination.

Since 2014, black flags are used in combination with 4 color rings, the colours used are black (shorthand N in accordance with international agreements for colour ringing), Red (R), Yellow (Y), Green (G) and Pale blue (P). A Bar-tailed Godwit with a red ring over a yellow ring on the left leg and with a black flag above two green rings on the lower right leg is quoted as N4RYGG. First, the position of the flag is noted and then the colour-rings from top to bottom, first for the left leg (of the bird) and then for the right leg.

Since the launch of black flags, we have used a unique flag position for each catching area. This means that you can recognize where a bird was ringed from the position of the flag. N1 is used on Texel, N2 in Mauritania, N3 on Terschelling, N4 in Castricum, N5 on Ameland and N6 are birds that are caught with mist nets on Griend or Schiermonnikoog. N7 and N8 are not yet used.

Observations of Bar-tailed Godwits can be sent to [shorebirds@nioz.nl](mailto:shorebirds@nioz.nl) describing the colour-ring combination, the observation date and location. Additional information that we would like to receive are: the type of terrain, the flock size and if possible, the ring density (the number of color-ringed individuals and the total number of observed birds) and the plumage (summer or winter plumage; if possible expressed as a percentage).

In the early years of the study colour-rings were made of a plastic named Darvic. However, currently we are using a different material that has the properties of Plexiglas. These rings do not have eternal life and are often shorter than the maximum life of a Bar-tailed Godwit. This means there are incomplete combinations existing as a result of ring loss and some rings may be strongly faded as a result of ultraviolet light. We would also like to receive observations of birds with incomplete colour-ring combinations, so we can get an idea of the amount of ring loss.

For birds with incomplete ring combinations, it is important for us to know

the sex. It is easy to see the sexes between the birds in size (males are smaller than females) and plumage, especially in spring when the males get a reddish colour.

The study on Bar-tailed Godwits has provided us with a lot of information on their feeding ecology and area use in the Wadden Sea. In combination with the extensive benthic sampling program Sibes, which started in 2008, we have been able to get a better understanding of the food landscape for birds. For this programme the annual distribution of benthic life is sampled on almost all the tidal mud flats in the Dutch Wadden Sea (covering over 4500 sampling stations).

For more information on our work you can also visit the website of [Metawad](http://Metawad) and the NIOZ ([www.nioz.nl](http://www.nioz.nl)). In 2014 Sjoerd Duijns completed his PhD thesis on the feeding ecology of Bar-tailed Godwits under the title "*Sex-specific foraging; the distributional ecology of a polychaete-eating shorebird*", his thesis is available on the website of the [Waddenacademie](http://Waddenacademie)

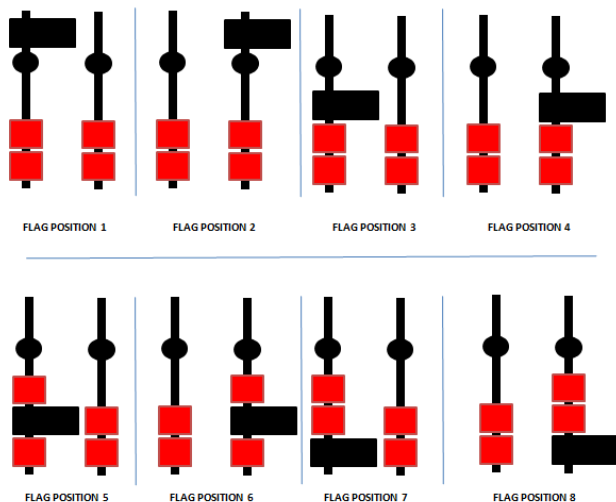


Fig. 1

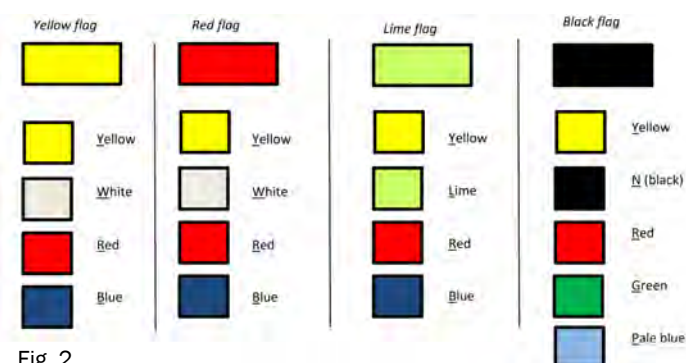


Fig. 2

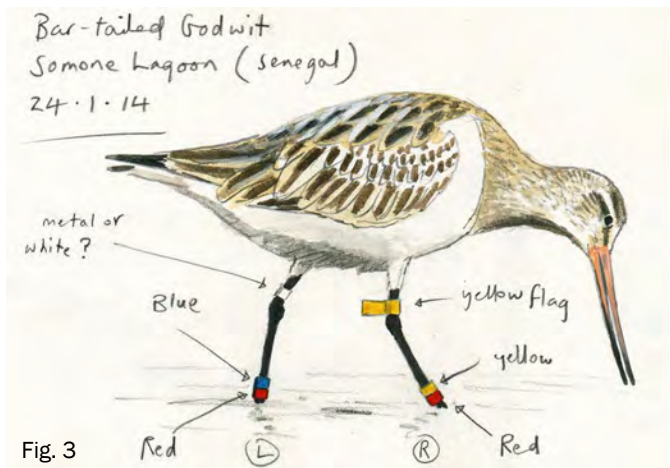


Fig. 3

### Did you know?

Bar-tailed Godwits of the subspecies *baueri* migrate from their breeding grounds in Alaska to their wintering grounds in New Zealand via an 11,700 km non-stop flight of 8 days!

On their return flight they travel north-west to the Yellow Sea. This is a flight of 10,200 km in itself. They then spend some time feeding and building their strength before setting off again for the 7,400 km final leg of the journey to Alaska. A total journey of 29,300km.

The Yellow Sea is crucial to their survival, as it is to many other species, so it is welcome news indeed that the Chinese Government is changing its policy and preventing new 'reclamation' work to be carried out in the inter-tidal zone.



## Book review — Rick Simpson

This is a book that never should have been written. Not, I hasten to add, because it is a bad book, quite the contrary it is an excellent, well written and thought provoking book. It is just that in an ideal world there would have been no need for this book. If Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* numbers had not fallen precipitously there would have been no need for Mary Colwell to walk 500 miles across Ireland, Wales and England to draw attention to this depressing fact. However in the real world, the Curlew is in terrible trouble and this book is entirely necessary in order to raise the profile of the plight of one of our most iconic and, as Mary would have it, cherished waders.

This is not however a book that berates or harangues the reader for not knowing or caring enough. Nor is it sentimental clap-trap. Mary gently leads you across Ireland, Wales and Scotland pointing to facts and figures she discovers from a wide range of folk, highlighting the rise and fall of the Curlews fortunes in our British Isles. She does not tell you what you should think or what you should do, she presents her case and leaves you to decide what to do with the information. She has a quiet persuasive way about her, as anyone who has met her will attest to.

Mary is always fair and honest, there is no hidden agenda, no point scoring or setting one faction off against another, in fact the whole of her aim is to do the opposite, to bring people together. Anyone who may be able to help in any way is welcome to take part.

As she makes her journey she conveys you along with her. Her descriptive prose paints pictures of the bogs, mountains, valleys and moors through which she travels. When Mary is cold you shiver with her, the wind bites as hard on your skin as it does hers, and the glorious warmth of the sun will bring a contented smile to your face. But this is not a book about Mary, there is no self-indulgent grumbling about the pain and discomfort that such a journey inevitably

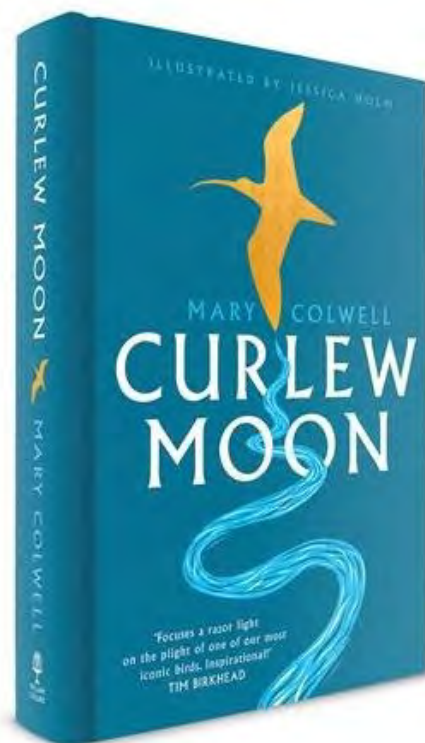
involves, nor thoughts of any praise that doing it may bring, her focus is on the curlews alone.

By looking back across the history of Curlew populations we discover that they were once denizens of upland areas only. Their numbers increased and they spread down to the lowlands where they lived happily alongside agriculture done the old fashioned way. But all that changed, and the birds were pushed into smaller and smaller pockets by agricultural intensification and reduced to pitifully small isolated populations where they now struggle to hold on.

This is a tragic story of humankind's destruction of all that surrounds us without so much as a sideways glance to see how our actions are affecting the other creatures with which we share these islands.

Curlews are a beautiful, magical, robust and highly vocal species resulting in us absorbing them into many aspects of our culture, myths and legends. This aspect was of particular interest to me as I delight in our cultural connection with waders and, although most of the stories were familiar from my own research, there were still a few little nuggets of gold that I had not unearthed. From a Wader Quest point of view what Mary has to say about local conservation being about local people caring for local birds, fits in resoundingly with our own Community Wader Conservation message and we welcome it wholeheartedly. There can scarcely be many among us that do not have an enchanting Curlew memory. In reading this book it may dawn on you that these will have occurred a long time ago and that you had not noticed that they have become fewer and further between and have now perhaps ceased altogether.

The book is a joy to read and the breath taking drawings are a joy to behold. Jessica Holm, the artist who has illustrated the book so beautifully, helps Mary bring to life the scenery and sights that she experienced. The depth and accuracy of the Curlews and landscapes, even those including



man-made structures and vehicles, are magical. As an aspiring artist myself, it drew from me great admiration, tinged with a touch of gentle envy, that she could portray such scenes so vividly with just a pen.

Buy this book when it is released on World Curlew Day, 21st April. Read it, enjoy its wonderful heart warming stories of ordinary folk, and its attractive artworks, blink in disbelief at some of the outrages we have perpetrated on the land, and feel sympathy if not empathy, for the Curlews. When you have finished reading it, place it conspicuously on your shelf as a vivid reminder of how dreadfully we have treated this earth and be thankful that people like Mary care enough to do their best to reverse, at least some, of the damage. There is no room for complacency, we need to act now, to quote a saying that Mary recalls from her Stoke upbringing, we need to 'stop mithering an' get on w'it!'



## WCWW5 - November 3rd and 4th 2018

### Make a note in your diaries now.

Make this year bigger and better than ever — Regional coordinators needed.

## One of the easiest places to learn your wader species becomes less so... — Mandy Soymonoff

For many visitors to Australia and locals, Cairns has provided the perfect place in North Queensland to view a variety of waders relatively close at hand. There's no need to drive on dirt roads, trudge through knee deep mud or tackle crocodiles and insects while carrying equipment worth more than your car. The Cairns Esplanade has provided generations of birders with a fabulous opportunity to learn to identify over a dozen species of waders within an easy walk of the centre of the city. The Esplanade mud flats are a link in the chain of stopovers for migratory waders of the East Asian Australasian Flyway. The birds feed on a variety of benthic invertebrates to fuel their journey north to breed or south to spend our summer fattening up for the return journey. Some immature birds even stay for a year or two while they mature.

As a university student, one of our practical lessons was to choose a species of wader on the esplanade and observe how many times it caught prey in a defined time. The assignment was difficult as the birds of various species moved in front of one another in a frenzy of activity. It proved challenging to get an accurate count as the success rate was so frequent and the birds numerous. From personal observations, this is no longer the case.

Besides being an important feeding and roosting site for waders, the Esplanade is also a well loved recreation area for BBQ's, dog walking and afternoon strolls. In the early 2000's, the foreshore was revamped and sand was added on the Northern end of the 2.5km stretch. The southern end has long been the main area to observe waders foraging on an incoming tide, so was not covered with sand. To maintain the sandy beach at the northern end, the sand was periodically replenished. During severe weather events, large amounts of water are discharged from storm water drains onto the mud. Tides and currents rework the sand distribution. The result is a blanket of sand covering the mud on the southern end. Mudskippers are no longer common and my favourite wader observation sites no longer throng with probing and pecking bills. The sand bar looms out of the existing mud and provides a much firmer surface. While the waders are roosting on the sand bar at high tide, it is now solid enough for people and dogs to walk out to and disturb the resting flocks.

There have been talks between the local council and environment groups and two studies into sand movement initiated, one completed. The sand replenishment is on hold, for now. It is difficult to tease apart the



Cairns Esplanade with no sand cover in 2013 — Elis Simpnson



The southern end of the Cairns Esplanade is now 'choking' under a blanket of introduced sand.

— @Tony Neilson



CRC staff/contractors dumping and moving sand in the triangular section at the south end of the Esplanade in Oct 2014. (Most of that sand has made its way out into the bay and 'solidified' the mud.)

— @Tony Neilson



## One of the easiest places to learn your wader species becomes less so... — cont'd

effect the over lying sand has on number of birds present as there are many other factors affecting waders along this flyway. It is unknown if enough food is left on the sandy mud flats for the birds present to forage on. How long can the remaining birds go on without a safe roost and their precious food to fuel them on their journeys? We certainly need more information but the concern is that it is too little too late. Will the Cairns Esplanade cease to be an amazing place to watch waders or will the combined efforts of local council, state government agencies and environmental groups come up with a plan to ensure the waders are accommodated. This will be a pivotal year in securing their future as a Cairns icon.



Stormwater drain outlets are regularly blocked by the shifting sand — ©Tony Neilson



Recent GPS plotting confirms significant sand movement out 100-plus m from the shoreline — ©Tony Neilson



Sand accumulation under the Esplanade boardwalk is substantial — ©Tony Neilson



Sand from an artificial beach at the southern end of the Esplanade now sit atop former prime benthic mudflats — ©Tony Neilson



Fingers of hard sand now enable the public to walk 150 m out into the bay - scaring roosting and feeding birds — ©Tony Neilson



## Waders in art — Rick Simpson

Unfortunately the artist that we had invited to fill this section was unable to meet our publication date, so as a last minute desperate substitute I'm afraid you'll have to put up with something from me.

I thought it might be of interest to tell the tale of how I came to provide the artwork for the cover of a BTO publication: BTO Guide 17 *Guide to the Identification & Ageing of Holarctic Waders* by Prater, Marchant and Vuorinen.

In 1996 I was suffering from a damaged back as a result of an accident I sustained whilst fire-fighting as a Sub Officer in the Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service. It turned out that this injury was to end my Fire Service career and at the time I was off sick, laid up and unable to get out much. A good friend of mine, David Lindo, was then working for the BTO and suggested I may wish to occupy myself by doing the artwork for the reprint of a publication that they were planning for 1997. David has always been very supportive, but a little over generous as to my ability on the art front, so this was a daunting task. I set about the job with as much care as I could. The result, an American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*, was produced after many attempts and corrections, and is what you see on the right.

I was thrilled when the publication came out and bought a copy thumbing eagerly through the words to find my name credit for the cover design. It took some finding but in the end I found what I was looking for, buried deep on page 29. It read:

*'We are especially grateful to Robert Gillmor for the cover design.'*

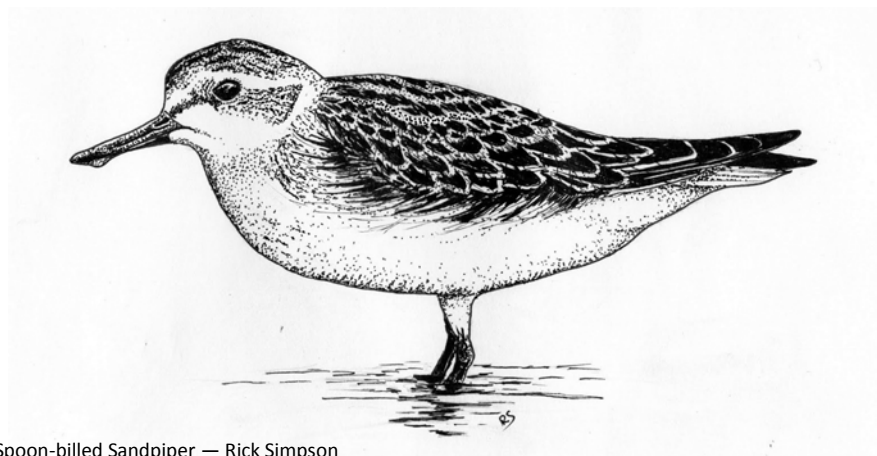
I was crestfallen and I don't suppose Mr Gillmor was best pleased either! Chances like that don't come along very often; claim to fame shot down in flames.

An *Erratum* giving my details instead of Mr Gillmor's was issued and inserted in each new copy. In some ways this may have worked in my favour, I suppose, as people could not help to see that although they may have missed the credit on page 29.

Painting is very rewarding but I particularly like to work in pen and ink using the stipple technique. It can be rather painstaking at times but if you get it right the results can be very effective. Here is an artwork of the Spon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea* from our forthcoming book: *An Inspiration of Waders*.



American Avocet — Rick Simpson



Spoon-billed Sandpiper — Rick Simpson



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## Wader photo gallery — send us your favourite wader photos



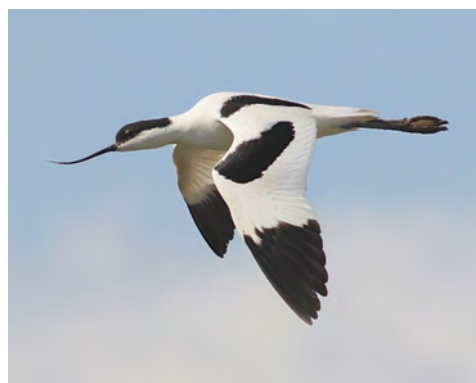
Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*  
- Haritz Sarasa Zabala (Ornitocampero), Spain



American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus*  
- Gary Prescott; Peru



Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*  
- Elis Simpson; Thailand



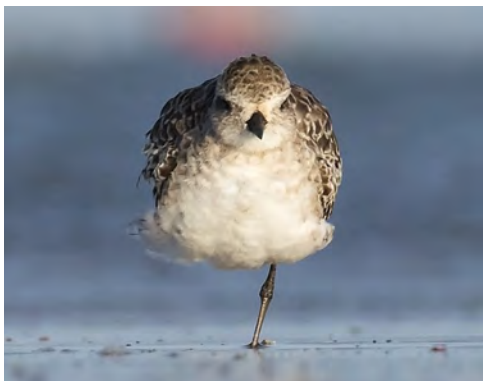
Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*  
- Dave Jackson; UK



Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*  
- Alan S. Jack; UK



Wrybill *Anarhynchus frontalis*  
- Roger Smith / Kapiti Birders; NZ



Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*  
- Jaysukh Parekh; India



Hudsonian Godwit *Limosa haemastica*  
- Martin Eayrs; Argentina



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*Wader Quest the newsletter*

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