

Which one is going to come home first?

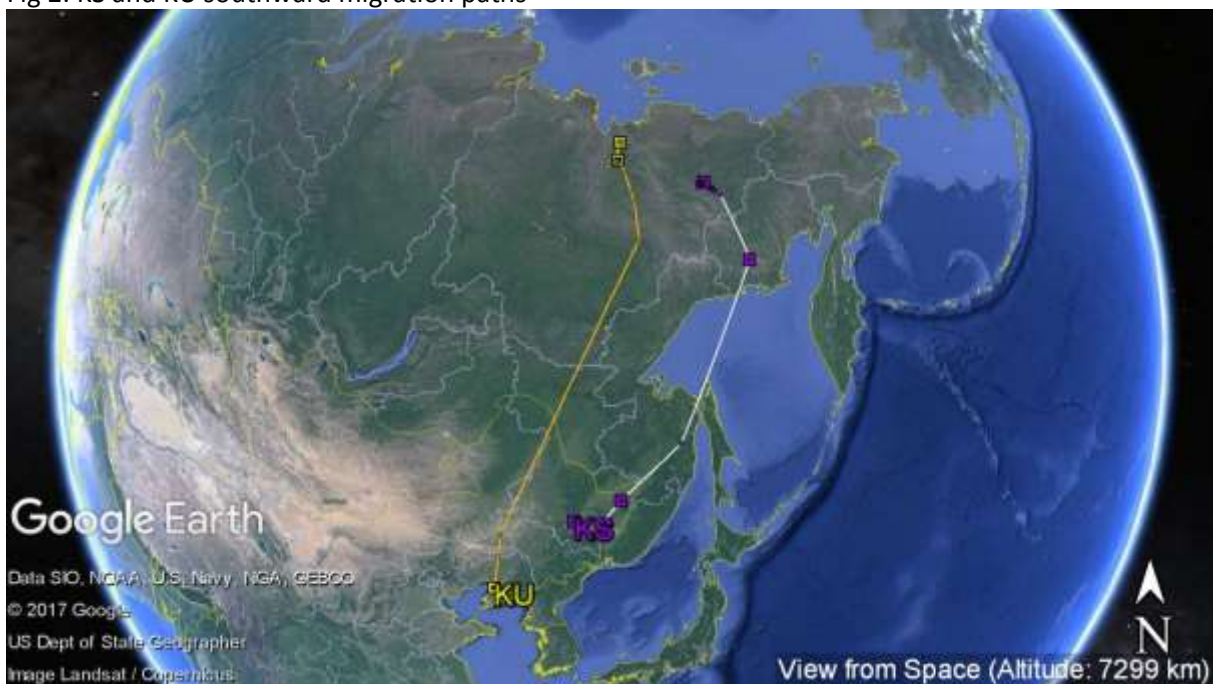
All three Whimbrels are on their way back home!

JX, the Whimbrel which didn't make its way to the breeding ground this season, started its southward migration on 9 Aug 17 after staying in Palawan, the Philippines for 107 days. After flying south for 1,984km with an average speed of 41.3km/h, JX is currently 46km south-east of Bima City in Indonesia. It is uncertain at this moment whether JX is making a stop or is flying continuously. The next transmission in 2-day time will tell us more.

Fig 1. Southward migration of JX



Fig 2: KS and KU southward migration paths



Meanwhile, the other two frontrunners from the Russian breeding ground have made their first stops in China on their southward journeys.

KS crossed the Russian-China border on 3-Aug-17. After landing in Heilongjiang Province, KS flew south-west until it made a north-west turn on 6-Aug-17. It is now about 185km east of Harbin City, in a reservoir called Shuanfeng, which means Double Phoenix. The reservoir was built in 1965 with total area of 175km<sup>2</sup> and is associated with the commercial aquaculture of Prussian carp. Satellite image of the reservoir does, however, show that there are extensive mud banks suitable for shorebirds. Could this be a place which KS has visited before hence it suddenly changes its flight direction?

Fig 3: KS's making a turn in Heilongjiang Province, China

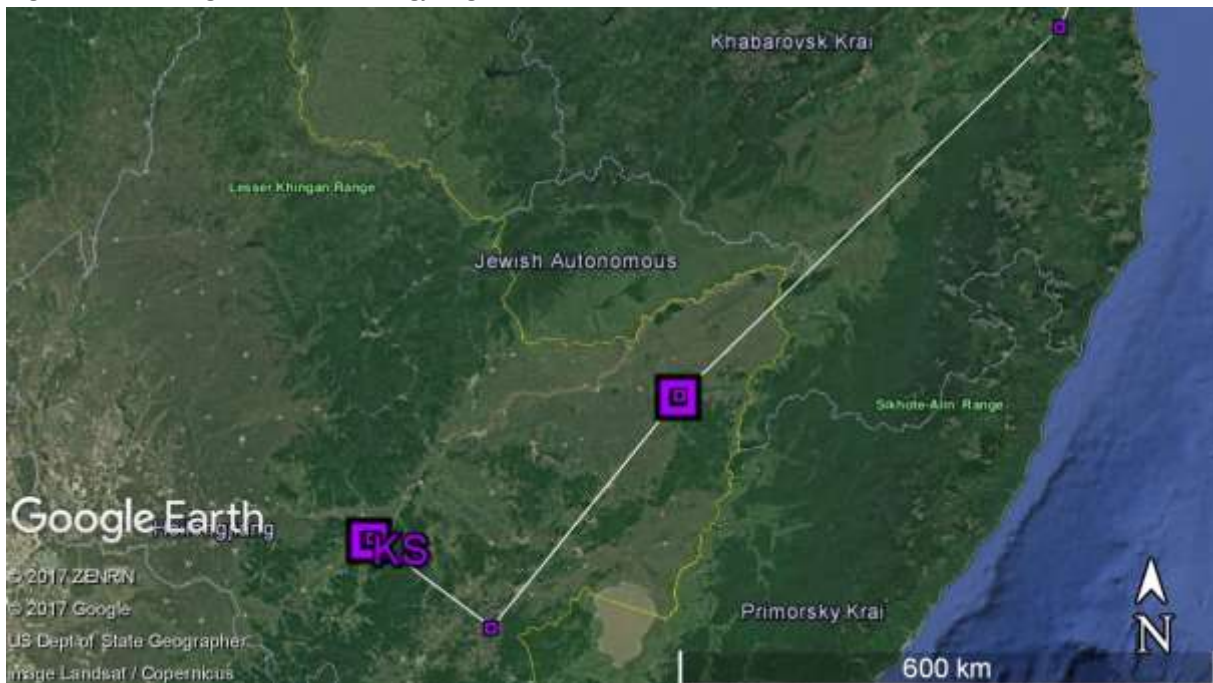


Fig 4: KS's movement at Shuanfeng Reservoir



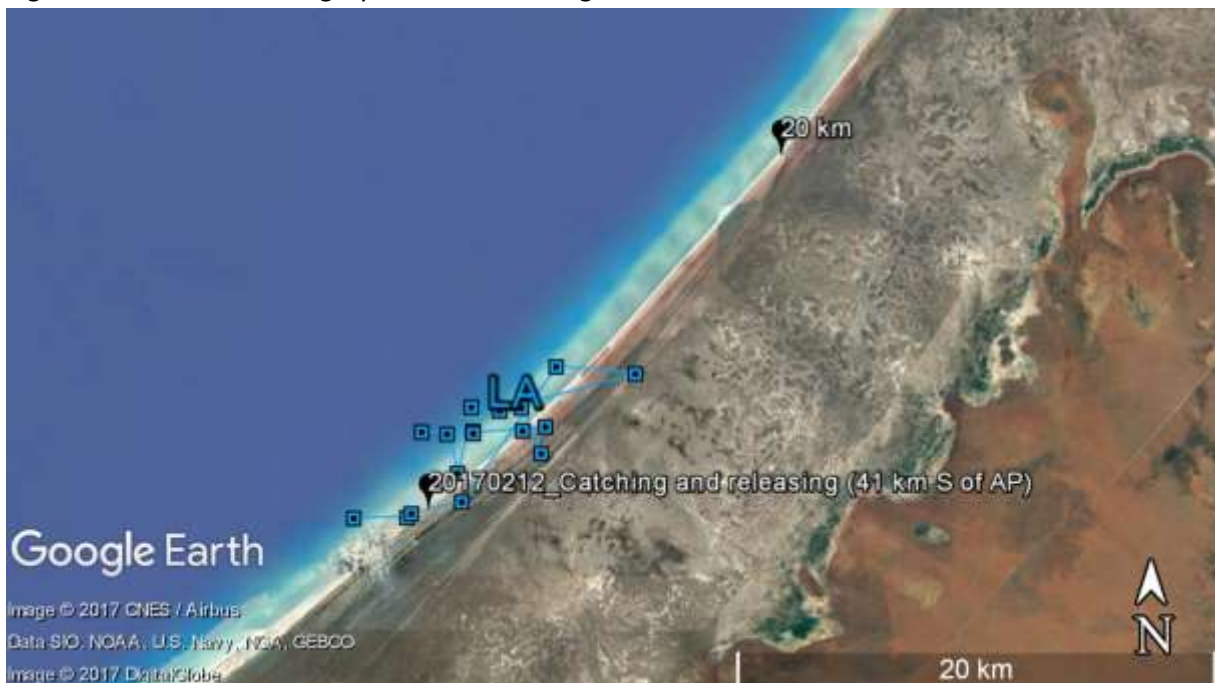
KU made a continuous 4-day flight from Siberia to Liaoning Province, China, with an average speed of 33.7km. It is now at the north-east corner of Bohai Bay near Yingkou, currently utilising aquaculture ponds and mudflat areas. Yingkou is an unprotected important area for waterbirds with a high count of 53,199 individuals in spring 2016, according to the “Yellow Sea-Bohai Region Coordinated Waterbirds Survey 2016”.

Fig 5: KU’s movement in Yingkou, Liaoning Province, China



LA has also made a small change in the area it is using in the past month. Compare to using 43-52km south of the beach entrance from Anna Plain Station in the past 6 months, LA has moved to the 33-40km south area in August.

Fig 6: LA’s movement at Eighty Mile Beach in August



**As of 11 August 2017:**

Migration tracks of our Whimbrels:



Migration summary on our Whimbrels

<b>Leg Flag (track colour: N - S)</b>	<b>No. of days since deployment</b>	<b>No. of days since departing Australia</b>	<b>Distance travelled</b>
LA (blue)	180 days	0 days	0km
KS (purple - white)	168 days	117 days	13,509km
KU (yellow - orange)	168 days	116 days	13,276km
JX (pink - green)	139 days	113 days	5,033km

Katherine Leung  
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