

Confirmed talks by Rick and Elis Simpson: all 'Wader Quest' unless otherwise stated.

26/11/2019 (20.00) Mid Herts
Herts and Middx Wildlife Trust
local group
05/12/2019 (19.30) Solihull RSPB
local group
14/01/2020 (19.30) Lichfield RSPB
local Group (Plover Lovers' World
of Delights)
17/01/2020 (19.45) Amersham
Birdwatching Club
21/02/2020 (19.15) Marylebone
Birdwatching Society (An
Inspiration of Waders)
02/04/2020 (19.45) Sevenoaks
RSPB local group
09/04/2020 (19.45) North Bucks.
RSPB local group (An Inspiration of
Waders)
14/04/2010 (tba) Shoreham District
Ornithological Society
28/04/2020 (19.30) Shrewsbury
RSPB local group
29/04/2020 (19.30)
Huntingdonshire RSPB local group
07/05/2020 (19.30) Sheffield RSPB
local group (Confessions of a Bird
Guide)
21/05/2020 (19.30) Wensum Valley
Birdwatching Society
16/06/2020 (19.30) Medway RSPB
local group

For a complete listing with times
and venue, visit the website [Talks
page](#). If we are giving a talk near
you come and meet us.

Inside this issue:

1-3: Inspiration of waders event and
AGM
4-6: Wader Quest news
7: Subscription rates reminder
8-9: Sands of Change - S 2: Ep 1
10-11: Terek Sandpiper in Valencia
12-13: Featured artist
14-17: Wader festival in Belarus
17: Ulcinj Salina; Montenegro
18-19: 'New' ID feature of White-
rumped / Bairds Sandpiper?
20-23: Whimbrels on the Dee Estuary
24: French Curlew shooting update
25: Waders in poetry / From the library
26/27: Stone-Curlews in East Anglia
28-29: Fuerteventura waders
29-30: Wood Sandpiper influx in UK
31: World wader news in brief
32: Featured photo
33: Wader photo gallery
34: Wader Conservation World Watch6
35: Grant application guidelines
36: Contact details and sponsors

Wader Quest Inspiration of Waders Event & AGM



Inspiration of Waders Event and AGM

Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Cley Marshes Visitor Centre, Coast Road,
Cley-Next-The-Sea. NR25 7SA

Sponsored by:



27th October 10:30 - 15:00

Cley Marshes Visitor Centre, Coast Road,
Cley-Next-The-Sea, Norfolk NR25 7SA

This year, for the first time, we are holding a special
event to celebrate our AGM. There will be talks,
Wader Quest goodies for sale, second-hand books, a
raffle and best of all free tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits
all day.

Please come along to support our first event of this
kind, which will be an upbeat celebration of waders
and their conservation.

Event Sponsored by



Total raised for conservation by Wader Quest to date:

£33,096.44

Wader Quest Inspiration of Waders Event & AGM

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE INSPIRATION OF WADERS EVENT AND AGM AT CLEY ON THE 27TH OF OCTOBER

FREE ENTRY TO FRIENDS AND SPONSORS

£5 FOR NON MEMBERS REDEEMABLE IF SIGNING UP ON THE DAY WITH A FREE
OPTICRON LENS CLEANING KIT AS A WELCOME

FABULOUS SPEAKERS BOOKED

RICK SIMPSON - *AN INSPIRATION OF WADERS*

GRAHAM APPLETON - *60 YEARS OF WADER RINGING ON THE WASH*

JESS OWEN - *PROJECT GODWIT*

BEN POTTERTON - *STONE CURLEW HABITAT ADAPTION BY THE BRECKLAND SPECIALIST*

CRAIG JONES - *NORFOLK RHAPSODY*

HARRY EWING - *SAVING THE UK'S MOST THREATENED BREEDING WADER*

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE EXCITING ITEMS

AVAILABLE FOR THE FIRST TIME

EXCLUSIVE SIGNED LARS JONSSON POSTER

BRAND NEW EURASIAN DOTTEREL PIN BADGE

RAFFLE WITH SUPERB PRIZES INCLUDING;

OPTICRON SAVANNA R PC 10X33 ROOF PRISM BINOCULARS

SIGNED COPY OF THE FABULOUS *SHOREBIRDS IN ACTION* BY RICHARD CHANDLER

FREE TEA AND COFFEE ALL DAY

BOOKABLE LUNCHES AVAILABLE AT THE VISITOR CENTRE

Wader Quest Inspiration of Waders Event & AGM and other news

This year, for the first time, we are holding an event to accompany our AGM as many other organisations and societies do. Until now we have not felt the need, nor indeed felt there was an appetite for yet another event. However, our hand has been somewhat forced by the fact that now we are a registered charity, we need to conform to certain guidelines. In this case, for our AGM to be valid, we need to have 10% of our subscribers with voting rights to be present. Wader Quest is an international organisation with subscribers on every inhabited continent, so getting that many of our people in one place at one time is a tall order.

We thought that people were unlikely to turn up merely to attend a dry and uninteresting AGM, so the challenge was for us to come up with a way of getting as many of you there as possible. After a few suggestions, the idea for an event was put together. With our hearts in our mouths we have invited external speakers to come and entertain attendees, with upbeat and interesting talks about waders in various forms.

Beyond the talks there will be your chance to buy early Christmas presents. We are pleased to announce that, exclusive to Wader Quest, we will be making this year's signed Lars Jonsson poster (50x70cm) of wader chicks and eggs available for the first time. Stocks are limited so it will be on a first come first served basis. If there are any left after the event, they will then become available on line, but we cannot reserve posters in advance I'm afraid.



50x70cm Museum Lars Jonsson poster 2019

Moreover, for you pin collectors we will be (if the production schedule allows) presenting a new pin badge, the fifth this year. The chosen species is the ever-popular Eurasian Dotterel. The pin will be crafted from this photo below, kindly supplied to us by Ian Davies of eBird.

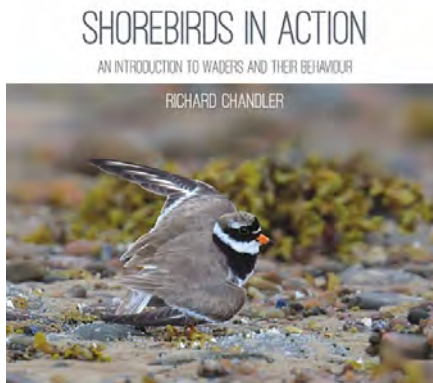


Eurasian Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*
- Ian Davies/eBird

We will also have a raffle on the day with the first prize generously donated by Opticron; a pair of Savanna R PC 10x33 Roof Prism binoculars..



Other prizes include a signed copy of the fabulous *Shorebirds in Action* by Richard Chandler.



Entry for Friends and Sponsors is free with a charge of £5 for non-members. We are also pleased to announce that any person signing up at the AGM will receive a refund and free gift, also generously

supplied by Opticron, a Lens Cleaning Set worth over £10.

Naturally there will be a full range of Wader Quest goodies on sale; books, earrings, pin badges, fridge magnets and next year's calendar, with 13 superb wader photos to enjoy, all of which will make excellent stocking fillers. We will also be bringing along some second-hand books to sell.

As if that was not enough to get your there, we will be providing free coffee, tea, biscuits and cakes all day. Lunch will be available in the visitor centre, but it will need to be prebooked and paid for in the centre itself on the day to prevent a rush and holdups at lunchtime.

At the end of the talks (see running order on next page) we will have the time to get to Snettisham where the high tide is sitting just right for us to witness the swirling inspirations of waders, a fitting end to what we hope will be an inspiring day.

The event will take place in the Simon Aspinall Building at the Norfolk Wildlife Trust visitor centre at their Cley reserve; Trustee Andrew Whitelee will comper and run the event;

Doors open at 10.00;
talks start at 10.30;
lunch 12.00;
AGM at 13.00;
talks resume 13.30;
close at 15.00;
Snettisham; meet at 16.00 in the public car park.

We hope that as many of you that can come, will do so to support the charity and to make this, our first ever AGM event, a real success so we can build on it in future and secure our foothold as a registered charity into the future.

We would like people to book a place, not because we are expecting to be overrun, but purely so we can gauge how many will be attending.

To book your place please go to our [Eventbrite page](#) and follow the instructions or write to agm@waderquest.net.

The whole event is being sponsored by Corporate Sponsors [Birding Ecotours](#) based in South Africa, for which we are extremely grateful.



Wader Quest Inspiration of Waders Event & AGM and other news - cont'd

Talks confirmed:

10.30-11.00 An Inspiration of Waders - Rick Simpson, Wader Quest; Rick will talk about the title of the event, *An Inspiration of Waders* and what exactly that means.

11.00-11.30 Project Godwit - Jess Owen, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust; Jess will talk about Project Godwit and the success they are having with the head starting of Black-tailed Godwits *Limosa limosa* in East England.

11.30-12.00 Stone Curlew habitat adaption by the Breckland Specialist - Ben Potterton; A Norfolk based zoologist, with a particular interest in plants and birds. In his zoological roles he has worked with a variety of critically endangered species and is currently developing projects in West Africa. In his spare time, he coordinates wader conservation initiatives in the River Waveney and Little Ouse Valley of Norfolk and Suffolk.

13.30-14.00 Saving in the UK's most threatened breeding wader - Harry Ewing; Harry is studying the Eurasian Curlew populations of Breckland and will talk about plans to save this most threatened of the UK's waders.

14.00-14.30 60 years of wader ringing in The Wash - Graham Appleton; Graham writes an entertaining and informative blog called Wadertales, making the science behind the conservation of waders more accessible. He'll tell us about the history of wader ringing at the western extreme of Norfolk.

14.30-15.00 Norfolk Rhapsody - Craig Jones - Wildlife and Conservation Photographer; Craig is a much-travelled wildlife photographer and wader enthusiast who will be delivering his talk about the glories of birdlife in our host county Norfolk.

Wader Quest Grants Panel

We are pleased to announce the forming of the Wader Quest Grants Panel, this will comprise two Trustees and one non-Trustee with funding experience. Initially the new panel will comprise Rick Simpson and Andrew Whitelee as Trustee members and Jannik Hansen the non-Trustee member.

Andrew and Rick are well known to you as long standing Trustees but we would like to welcome Jannik to the team. Jannik is a Danish member of the International Wader Study Group Executive Committee (since 2007) in the role of Projects Coordinator (since 2014).

He commenced his career working with waders in 1998 doing a Master's thesis

on the breeding strategy of the Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* in Svalbard. Next, he worked as a fieldworker on a Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* breeding biology study in Sweden. Currently he is employed at the Institute of Bioscience, University of Aarhus in Denmark, working with ecological monitoring (including waders) at Zackenberg in Northeast Greenland.

Grants Fund application guidelines can be found on page 33

Events

Since the last newsletter in July we have been busy, in fact this is the busiest time of year for us with events happening in relatively quick succession.

It all kicks off in August when we attend the British Birdwatching Fair at Rutland Water, in the UK. It is an enormous event and although it is not cheap for us to attend, it is certainly worth it both from a financial point of view and also from the exposure we get to interested persons, from all walks of life, from all over the world. We also take the opportunity to talk to people to discover possible projects we may be able to help.



This year we launched four new pin badges and two new earrings from the Wader Quest Collectables range. The pin badges were numbers 15 to 18; Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea*; Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*; Cream-coloured Courser *Cursorius cursor* and Grey (Black-bellied) Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*. They proved very popular with collectors some of whom made a bee line for our stand on arrival. For the first time ever we used a photograph that was not one of our own, so our thanks go to Chris Miller who provided the photograph of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper from which the pin was designed and which adorns the card. Chris also provided the Spoon-billed Sandpiper photo that we used for the front cover of the 2020 Wader Quest calendar.

While on the subject of pin badges, a spanner was thrown into the works when our friend Astrid Kant from the Netherlands arrived and deposited some of her hand made hats for sale. As part of her offering for using part of the stand she produced a number of flying Black-tailed Godwit pins



which we immediately placed on sale. These pins came with no card, so someone took our business card and placed an image of the godwit, on the card, on the internet. The floodgates then opened with people thinking they were our pins, we were deluged with orders and people coming to buy them. They soon ran out and many were disappointed. We have tried to get some more which should be with us soon.



Wader Quest Inspiration of Waders Event & AGM and other news - cont'd

The new earrings, Spoon-billed Sandpiper and Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* were equally well received.



The 2020 Wader Quest calendar was also launched with 13 fantastic photographs this year provided by Chris Miller (front page) Dan Walters (Jan); Bob Dee Photography (Feb); Aravind Venkatraman (Mar); Yoav Perlman (Apr); John Chardine (May); Rich Lindie (Jun); Stein Ø. Nilsen & Tone Malm (Jul); De Ruwe Filip (Aug); Teresa Hedden (Sep); www.tropicalbirding.com (Oct); David Taylor (Nov); and our own Elis Simpson (Dec). Our thanks go to all the photographers for allowing us to use their wonderful images.



Again this year we were allocated a time slot for our Wader Quest talk. This year it was entitled *Wader Questing in Peru*. It was at 11:00 on Saturday morning and coincided rather unfortunately with Iolo Williams' talk elsewhere. Although we were disappointed not to fill the auditorium we were nevertheless pleased that over 80 people



(L-R) Elis Simpson, Shangxiao Cai and Rick Simpson - Elis Simpson

had still come to listen to what we had to say despite the strong competition.

The BBF was swiftly followed, a fortnight later, by two events occurring simultaneously. Rick and Elis attended the Falsterbo Bird Show in Sweden and volunteers Phil and Gail Pickett attended the Wirral Wader Festival.

Falsterbo is a very pleasant event, held under the flight path of migrating raptors, among other birds. This year the Wader Quest stand was the scene of an amazing coincidence when group of young Chinese students approached the stand and, upon spotting the Eury The Spoon-billed Sandpiper book, got very animated and started taking photos of the display copy. This spurred Elis to jokingly say that there would be a small charge for taking photos. Amid the laughter one of the girls said that she had been one of the two people involved in translating the book into Chinese. Amazed that she should turn up at our stand, we asked if she was aware that it was we who had written it? She had not realised and at once we all realised what small world it is. Of the four people involved in writing and translating Eury, three of them arrived in a mutually foreign country, at the same spot, on the same day from different sides of the world. There was much mirth and snapping of photographs all



The Falsterbo Wader Quest stand - Elis Simpson

round and we presented the young lady, Shangxiao Cai, with an English version of the book.

Meanwhile in the UK the Wirral Wader Festival was in full swing. This year it was held at the Dee estuary RSPB reserve Burton Mere Wetlands. It was a super venue using the reserve house, where the second-hand book sellers were housed, and a large marquee in the garden of the house where the other exhibitors, including Wader Quest, were installed.



A number of interesting exhibits were the in the marquee including mounted wader specimens from the Liverpool Museum, and for the children and young at heart a chance to make wader pom-pom chicks. Elsewhere there was a 'creatures in the mud' exhibit and a live web cam coming from the reserve bringing the wildlife on the mere closer.

Wader Quest Inspiration of Waders Event & AGM and other news - cont'd



Inside the Wirral Wader Festival marquee
- Gail Pickett

In addition to being on the Wader Quest stand with Gail, Phil also helped out on the Tombola stand, earning himself the nickname 'Tombola Man' due to his enthusiastic celebrations of winning tickets.

Burton Mere Wetlands is a superb reserve, which always has some interesting waders on it. This year the RSPB were celebrating 40 years on the Dee Estuary and the holding the 2019 Wirral Wader Festival at the reserve was a fitting way for us to share in their celebrations.

Then came the International Wader Study Group annual conference at Morecambe, in Lancashire. Although Wader Quest was not officially represented there, Rick and Elis, both members of the group, took the opportunity to make Wader Quest merchandising available to conference delegates, and once again the earrings and pin badges proved to be very popular.



Forthcoming Events

The first event is the previously mentioned Inspiration of Waders Event and AGM in Norfolk on the 27th of October at which we hope to see, and indeed meet, many of you.

Secondly the Wader Conservation World Watch global wader watch, on the 2nd & 3rd of November, where Andrew Whitelee will be attending the Wader Day at Caerlaverock to give a talk on waders and

Wader Quest and, in the afternoon, he'll take part in a wader workshop, looking at the waders on the reserve.

Rick and Elis will this year be searching for waders in Sri Lanka, which promises to be interesting. Needless to say, we also would like you all to go out and find some waders over that weekend and let us know what you see to liven up our WCWW6 event. Don't forget that your name, sightings and photos will appear in the special newsletter resulting from the event (see website for details).



Thirdly the Northwest Birdwatching Festival at Martin Mere Wetland WWT reserve will take place on the 16th and 17th of November, which will be attended by Rick and Elis Simpson who will give a talk on both days at 11.00am on *Wader Quest* (Saturday) and *An Inspiration of Waders* (Sunday).



Last, but by no means least, the Scottish Ornithologists' Club conference in Pitlochry, Highland which will be attended by Andrew Whitelee and Penny Insole with Wader Quest merchandising and publications available to buy.

Trustee news

A number of Trustees are standing down at the AGM this year.



It is with great sadness that we announce that long serving Trustees Lee Dingain and Rachel Walls will not be standing for re-election this year. Both have been with us since our start in 2014 and Rachel has served as Secretary the whole time. Their input, ideas, good humour and general *bonhomie* (and Rachel's delicious cakes) will be greatly missed at future Board meetings by us all.

Similarly long serving, is Oliver Simms who will also not be standing. He too has been with us since 2014 and his understanding of what makes young birders tick (if you'll excuse the pun) has been invaluable. His carefully considered opinions have been of great help in making some difficult decisions over the years.

In addition, we are sad to lose Allan Archer. His keen business mind has shaped Wader Quest and moulded the charity into what it is today. We will also be forever indebted to Allan for setting up the attractive new website, which is a work in progress, now that the firm foundations have been laid by Allan. We trust however that our unofficial meetings over a bacon and egg butty at Welney WWT Wetland will continue.

We wish all of these wonderful people all the best for the future and thank them sincerely for the time and effort they have afforded us in their time serving on the Board of Trustees.

As Rachel has stepped down as a Trustee, and as Secretary, the role will be filled by existing Trustee Ian Dearing whom we thank for stepping forward to help. Ian will take office at the AGM.

This does of course mean that there are vacancies on the Board of Trustees. Anyone interested in finding out more then please email info@waderquest.net.

New Subscription rates applicable from 06/04/2019 — The Trustees

A reminder for those still to pay 2019 subscriptions

Our subscription rates have been increased

If you have a standing order, please remember to change the rate before your next payment is due.

THE NEW RATES

FRIENDS OF WADER QUEST

Individual £10.00

Family £15.00

Life £200 (no change)

WADER QUEST SPONSORS

Club Sponsor subscriptions £20.00

Corporate Sponsors £50.00 (no change)

Editorial Announcement

Non-Trustee position



We are seeking a young birder

who has an keen interest in waders and

a wide circle of contacts to become Deputy Editor of the newsletter.

We hope that we will be able to bring more news concerning waders as seen through the eyes of the up and coming generation who will, in the fullness of time be taking over where we have left off.

The role will entail seeking out wader stories involving young people, contacting the persons concerned and asking them to write an article.

Alternatively, the news or item will need to be written up and passed to the editor for inclusion.

The Sands of Change: Series 2 Episode 1 — Nature's Valley Trust

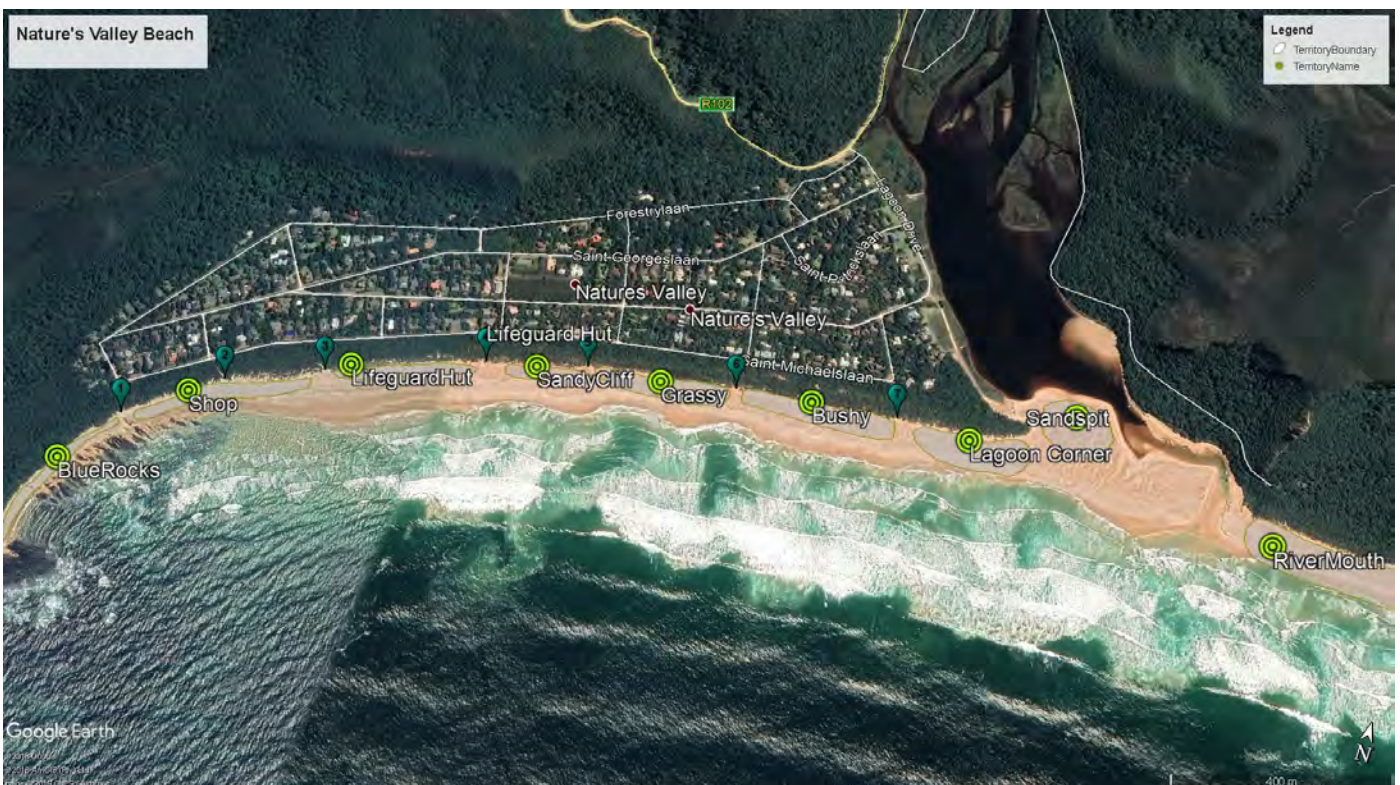
'These stories were written in order to make our coastal work, namely the shorebird component of coastal impact programme, more accessible to the lay-person. This is the person to whom the jargon of scientific work does not resonate but they do indeed still care for our environment and the animals that live in it. So we use a social media platform to bridge the gap, to share the plight of the shorebirds in a way that appeals to everyone. With this out the box idea we try to connect people emotionally to shorebirds, and of course to spread awareness in that way. Everyone loves a good soapy!'

These stories are written mainly by the interns and staff of NVT who work on the shorebird programme. We grow to know each and every pair of shorebirds that nest on Nature's Valley and Lookout beach very well and try to make it a bit easier for them to fledge their young. We are with the nests from egg to fledge, constantly monitoring and so we get very well acquainted with the social structure and general behaviour of the adults. The stories are based on true events



with a little bit of imagination added here and there to make it a palatable read.'
- Brittany Arendse NVT.

[We loved this idea of connecting with the local community through storytelling so decided to serialise the stories.]



Ed the plover has taken even more lovers! When we last left Ed, he seemed to be happily paired with Pearl, a beautiful female who earned her name because of her light, almost white colouration. Ed seemed to be

smitten with pretty Pearl and, after the untimely and mysterious disappearance of his previous mate, the one-footed Peggy, the researchers at NVT rejoiced in this seemingly happy union.

However, all was not as blissful as it appeared. Disaster struck when one of Ed and Pearl's fledglings became mortally ill and, even though our researchers tried to intervene, the little bird could not be saved.

The Sands of Change: Series 2 Episode 1 — cont'd

Unfortunately, things were about to get even worse! Earlier in 2017, the beautiful Pearl was spotted far from her original territory (which was around the blue rocks/ shop entrance area at Nature's Valley beach). To the great despair of our researchers, she was seen around the mouth of Nature's Valley's estuary, heavily entangled in some fishing line. The fishing line had wrapped around both her legs and she too soon disappeared without a trace.

Ed, however, apparently had little concern about the plight of his previous mate and this season he has been seen with two new females!

First, he set his sights on an attractive un-banded female, and our researchers were thrilled to find a nest with two little eggs in their territory. The un-banded female was excited to start a family with the handsome Ed, but, to her dismay, found him gone not long after she had produced the two little eggs. Undeterred, she prevailed, and soon she had two beautiful chicks to take care of. She also showed great strength in character, allowing the seemingly remorseful Ed to return to her and the twins. The researchers hoped all would be well with this little family, but were disheartened when discovering Ed had once again gone off in pursuit of another! Heartbreakingly, this was not the only blow to be suffered by our little un-banded heroine as one of the twins was also nowhere to be seen!

Was Ed concerned with this news? Of course not! He had forgotten about his family and has since been seen strutting his stuff around Violet. Perhaps Violet may remind Ed of Peggy, his mate of seasons past, as this feisty female is also missing her left foot, just like Peggy. Ed and Violet have not yet nested and we are all waiting with bated breath to see what happens next in this, the Ed-saga.

We are, however, left with many unanswered questions. Is Ed just a Casanova, whose mates and offspring have just been unlucky? Why are most of Ed's mates missing a limb? Why are his ex-lovers and progeny disappearing at such an alarming rate? Will Violet be the one to tame the illustrious Ed? What will happen to the un-banded, non-mangled female and her little chick, ruthlessly abandoned by Ed? With the sands ever changing, only time can tell what will happen to Ed and all his plover lovers.



Our un-banded heron and her remaining chick - NVT



Violet. Will she be able to tame Ed - NVT



Cassanova Ed - NVT



Terek Sandpiper; An exciting find on one of the hottest days of the year in Valencia, Spain - Yanina Maggiotto

It was one of the hottest days for 150 years in Valencia. I was booked to provide a guided birding trip to the huge wetland site of Albufera de Valencia but a few days before the trip, the clients contacted us to ask if we should move the date. As the forecast for the duration of their stay was more or less constant, I suggested that we stick with the original day but take sensible precautions.

It was over 30 degrees C when I collected the clients from the city centre in Valencia - that was at 7:30am! After a short journey we arrived at Albufera Natural Park, one of Spain's most important wetlands. Located on one of the major migration flyways of the Western Palearctic, Albufera de Valencia is an extensive wetland which is immediately south of the city of Valencia, right on the Mediterranean coast and in 1990 was designated as a Ramsar site. It was declared a Natural Park in 1986 and holds a huge variety of ecosystems. It was originally formed by sediment that was deposited by the region's two principal rivers, the Jucar and the Turia, both of which flow into the Mediterranean close to Valencia. This eventually created a land bar, trapping behind it a sizeable lagoon right at the heart of the Gulf of Valencia. Today, the lake is surrounded extensively by rice paddies.

Albufera de Valencia is one of Valencia Birding's most popular trips. In August it's a strategic hotspot for migration. Once we arrived at our first stop in the main reserve area, together with the clients Charlie and Martha we discussed the priorities for the day, in terms of target species that they'd like to see. As they were from the USA, they simply wanted to enjoy the bird life of the area, as most of the species would be new to them. Therefore, we decided on a relaxed approach, as the site is generally very species rich.

After we spent all morning in a protected reserve area, enjoying great views



A hot day in Albufera de Valencia - Yanina Maggiotto



Curlew Sandpipers - Yanina Maggiotto

of many waders... Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola*, Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*, Little Stint *Calidris minuta*, Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*, Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*, Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*, as well as Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus*, Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*, Slender-billed Gull *Larus genei*, Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*, Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*, Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* and many passerines, we opted to stop for lunch in the traditional rice farming village of El Palmar where we enjoyed a fabulous Paella.

The temperature steadily increased

and by the time I suggested making a final stop it was over 40 degrees C. I have lived in Albufera de Valencia for over a decade and one of my local patches is a small lake beside the sea. I check it daily and can even see it from my apartment block in the Devesa Forest. It is a fabulous feeding point for waders, especially on migration and during August it is a popular site for Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*, Common Ringed Plover, Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*,



Common Ringed Plover - Yanina Maggiotto

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*, Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*, Common Redshank *Tringa totanus*, Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*, Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*, Ruff *Calidris pugnax*, Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Dunlin *Calidris alpina*, Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, Pied Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, Eurasian Whimbrel and Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*. A few rarities such as Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* and Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos* have also been seen resting and feeding on their way to Africa.

It was extremely hot and the



Collared Pratincoles - Yanina Maggiotto



Little Stint - Yanina Maggiotto

Terek Sandpiper; An exciting find on one of the hottest days of the year in Valencia, Spain - cont'd



Raco de L'Olla - Yanina Maggiotto

clients were understandably tired, but I motivated them to make this one last stop! We parked in the shade and did the short walk up to the lake. There are not many trees around the lake, but we managed to



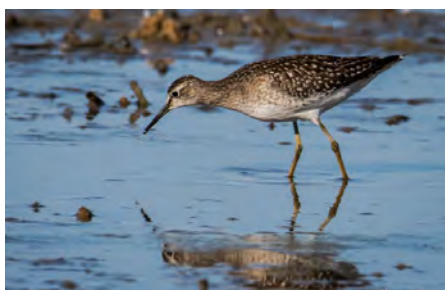
Little Ringed Plover - Yanina Maggiotto

find some shade under a large bush. As soon as I lifted my binoculars, I couldn't believe what I was seeing! A Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* in amongst a flock of Little Terns *Sternula albifrons* on a small island in the centre of the lake! I quickly told the clients to



Kentish Plover - Yanina Maggiotto

watch this very special bird but frustratingly something disturbed it before I was able to get a photo. However, our luck was in and after just a few seconds, it landed even closer



Wood Sandpiper - Yanina Maggiotto



Terek Sandpiper - Yanina Maggiotto



Black-winged Stilt - Yanina Maggiotto



Dunlin and Curlew Sandpiper - Yanina Maggiotto

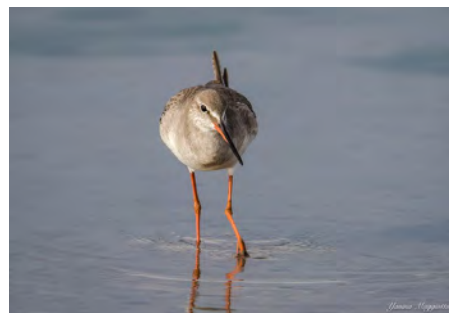
to us, allowing us not only to get superb views but to photograph it too!

Terek Sandpiper is not a common sighting in Valencia, indeed not in Spain. This species was last seen in Albufera in 2011 but has never been seen on this particular lake. Just a few years ago the local government installed barriers around the lake to protect it from human disturbance and to provide

suitable habitat for waders and other nesting and migratory species. It is critical for us all to understand the importance of effective habitat protection, and today was just one

example of this! The species breeds mainly in central and northern Russia, but also patchily in adjacent countries, with Europe accounting for less than a quarter of its global breeding range. Its European breeding population is relatively small, where it's unlikely to exceed 25 pairs. The major threats are the loss and degradation of habitat, human disturbance and pollution. (Ref. EU Commission)

It had been a fantastic day's birding with amazing sightings and even nicer people.



Spotted Redshank - Yanina Maggiotto



Yanina Maggiotto - Bird Watching Guide at Valencia Birding. www.ValenciaBirding.com

Featured artist — Dan Bradbury



Little Ringed Plover artwork in progress - Dan Bradbury

I grew up in rural Norfolk, in a village surrounded by large areas of agricultural land. When I was a kid I would go out for walks and I would see large flocks of European Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* and Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*. When I say large, I mean 500 - 600 plus. This used to be a common sight, however 25 years later, I walk round the same patch and I'm lucky if I see either of these species. I probably took them a little for granted when I was younger.

I studied technical illustration at Bournemouth and Poole college of art and design but soon realised that drawing car engines wasn't my thing; I had always had a love of the natural world, especially birds. After many years of not actually picking up a paint brush I spent some time in the company of wildlife artist Bruce Pearson who inspired me to pick up my brushes again.

I now work for the World Land Trust, which specialises in protecting threatened habitats around the world. Having had the opportunity to travel with work I have been lucky enough to see waders in Central and South America as well as in Asia. I can see the impact that habitat loss is having on wading birds and this is something that needs to be addressed. Waders can be very much overlooked or unloved and the Wader Quest team do a fantastic job of highlighting the plight of waders around the world so, if I can help in any way, I will.

I recently spent a week in Scotland on the Society of Wildlife Artist John Busby Seabird Drawing course, which was an amazing experience. It gave me an opportunity to work, and spend time, with some amazing artists who work in a range of media and styles. Whether it was the movement in the work of Alice Angus, the oil paintings of Lorna Hamilton, the sound



Northern Lapwing - Dan Bradbury

Featured artist — cont'd



The finished artwork - Dan Bradbury



Common Ringed Plover sketch - Dan Bradbury

drawings of Melanie Mascarenhas or the large metal sculptures of Andy Jarrett, they have all inspired me to try and develop my own style. I have stayed in touch with them all and we have been painting together in Norfolk, where I did the sketch of the Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius haiticula*.

I also realised whilst away in Scotland that painting is a form of escapism. It is something that I do simply because I enjoy it, it helps me to relax. I also believe that art has the power to change the hearts and minds of people, so if one of my paintings can help the Wader Quest team in any way, that's enough for me.

Website: www.danbradburyart.co.uk

Instagram: danbradburyart

Twitter: awanderingmod

The Northern Lapwing painting was done in a hide at Titchwell during a Plover Appreciation Day event and donated to Wader Quest at the time - Ed

Wader Town - how birders lived it up in Turaŭ — Alesia Basharymava



An inspiration of waders at Turaŭ - Siamion Levy

On May 25th and 26th Turaŭ hosted a Wader Festival - for the eighth year running!

For two days the guests of Turaŭ were getting to know the birds of Turaŭ Meadow - APB's (Birdlife International Belarus partner) nature reserve. The guests appreciated the beauty of the place and took part in the numerous shows and contests.

On Saturday morning birdwatchers and photographers rushed to photograph birds - 20 people participated in the photobirding competition called 'Focus on Waders', which was a part of the Wader Festival for the first time. During 6 hours the participants managed to take photos of 100 different species of birds! The winners – Valeryja Saško and Pavel Alaksiejeŭ – took photos of 68 species.

Many people dream of visiting the Turaŭ Meadow and seeing the long-billed birds with their own eyes. This is one of the most important sites in all of Europe for aquatic and semiaquatic birds, which can be seen here in great numbers and variety. Half a million birds use this site as a stopover during their spring migration alone.

APB Conservation Officer, Siamion Levy, said; 'As for the waders, one could see numerous Black-tailed Godwits [*Limosa limosa*], Common Redshanks [*Tringa totanus*] and Northern Lapwings [*Vanellus vanellus*]. Some pairs of Lapwings had little chicks, and one could see them through a spotting scope. From time to time Common Ringed Plovers [*Charadrius hiaticula*], Eurasian Oystercatchers [*Haematopus ostralegus*] and Terek Sandpiper [*Xenus cinereal*] - the most desirable wader for the birders - would flow closer up to the birdwatchers.

Quite often White-tailed Eagles [*Haliaeetus albicilla*] - our biggest raptors - were spotted over the meadow. Once even a Red-footed Falcon [*Falco vespertinus*] flew



Valeryja Saško and Pavel Alaksiejeŭ - the winning team of the 'Focus on Waders' photobirding competition - Alesia Basharymava



Black-tailed Godwit - Siarhiej Zujonak

Wader Town - how birders lived it up in Turaŭ — cont'd

out into the open. Some people were lucky to see the Greater Spotted Eagle [*Clanga clanga*] - bird of the year 2019 in Belarus - circling over the meadow holding its prey in its claws.



An inspiration of waders - Viktor Natykaniets

Besides, the visitors could see Grey Herons [*Ardea cinerea*], Great White Egrets [*Ardea alba*] Common [Sterna hirundo] and Little Terns [*Sterna albifrons*] fishing. One could easily see Garganeys [*Anas querquedula*], Northern Shovelers [*Anas clypeata*], Yellow Wagtails [*Motacilla flava*], Sand Martins [*Riparia riparia*] and Black Terns [*Chlidonias niger*] in detail. All in all, more than 100 people came to the observation site to watch the birds alongside ornithologists.'

Turaŭ Meadow Reserve covers just 140 ha. It has been rented and managed by APB since 2007. It is the only nature reserve in Belarus that is managed by an NGO.

A campsite was organized at the festival for the first time. In the evening, the guests of the festival sitting on the bank of the Prypiac River listened to the wonderful Belarusian poetry of Nasta Kudasava and sang along with Siaržuk Doŭhushaŭ.

The formal opening of the festival was on Sunday. The Chairman of Turaŭ Executive Committee Ihar Mitsyurych greeted the guests and emphasized, 'We inherited the beautiful Turaŭ Meadow that waders have taken fancy to. They come here every year to breed and raise their chicks. This place attracts many tourists who come here to watch birds. We must preserve nature given to us by God.'

Alexandre Vintchevski, Director of APB, thanked the residents of Turaŭ for the preservation of the Turaŭ Meadow. 'All of Belarus takes pride in the thousand-year history of Turaŭ, but outside of our country it is better known as the most important stopover site for the migratory birds in Central Europe. Hundreds of thousands of birds from Western Europe and Africa stop here, in your Turaŭ Meadow, on their way north', he said. 'Should the Turaŭ Meadow disappear, these birds would disappear too, as they would have no place for a stopover.'

Alexandre Vintchevski then officially



During the festival everyone can observe the waders with their own eyes - Alesia Basharymava

announced the Belarusians awarded with the honorary title of Nature Heroes-2018 by the global conservation partnership BirdLife International.



Yury Filipaŭ, head of the body of the self-governing town of Vopytny, Minsk District accepted the Nature's Hero Certificate - Alesia Basharymava

It was not only people living in Turaŭ that came to the festival. A group of guests came 400 km on their bikes from Mahilioŭ, many people came from Minsk and other Belarusian cities. The British guests from the famous Sherwood Forest where Robin Hood used to live also gladly participated in the festival.

Michael Copleston from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK) said that they conduct a similar festival in the Sherwood Forest, and visiting the festival in Turaŭ was an inspiration for him. 'Friendly people, magnificent nature, and a beautiful ancient town - this is the real treasure, which must be appreciated. We came here to share our knowledge and learn something new from you,' he said.



Common Sandpiper - Siarhieŭ Zujonak

Wader Town - how birders lived it up in Turaŭ — cont'd

For the children there were games and kite flying, everyone interested could make toy waders during master classes organized jointly with the UNDP-GEF Wetlands Project, women who get inspiration from nature conservation. All guests could visit photo exhibitions and participate in guided tours, take photos in a bird box, a nest or next to huge wader eggs on a special photo set.

The photo exhibition 'Nature of a Belarusian Woman' ('She is Nature') devoted to the women who made a significant contribution in environmental conservation and until now engage in conservation activities in various areas was organized with the support of the Centre for Ecological Solutions and the UNDP-GEF Wetlands project.

In the evening, after the opening act by the local cover band 'As it is', Belarusian bands REKHA and AKUTE performed.

The Turaŭ Wader festival in 2019 was supported by The Michael Otto Foundation for Environmental Protection and Landesbund für Vogelschutz in Bayern e.V. (LBV).

Everybody enjoyed the festival taking back with them lots of pleasant emotions, photos and good memories. See you in Turaŭ in May of 2020!

Translation by Tacciana Karžyckaja



Pavel Pinchuk, ornithologist at the oldest ringing station in Belarus, explains his job to visitors
- Alesia Basharymava



During the festival anyone could participate in workshops and make a handmade souvenir
- Alesia Basharymava



People of all ages were able to enjoy the festival - Alesia Basharymava



Games for the children - Alesia Basharymava



Are they kids or waders? - Alesia Basharymava



Northern Lapwing - Tatsiana Ramanava



Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* - Tatsiana Ramanava

Ulcinj Salina; Montenegro — Bojan Zeković



Ulcinj salina - Bojan Zeković

Ulcinj salina is probably the most important site for birds on east coast of the Adriatic. It is located in southern Montenegro, a small Balkan country.

Ulcinj salina used to produce salt from 1936 to 2013, after this ceased a lot of problems occurred, mostly connected with bad water management and this reflected on the local birdlife.

Birdlife Montenegro – Center for Protection and Research of Birds (CZIP) with partners such as Euronature struggled for almost 20 years to protect this location. Finally in June this year they were successful; Ulcinj salina was declared a



Old salt works - Bojan Zeković

Nature Park, and in September as a Ramsar site, after a great deal of noise and pressure.

More than 252 bird species have been registered with 55 breeding birds, with more than 20,000 individuals occurring in a single day during migration.

This site is of great importance for species such as Collared Pratincole *Glaucolani pratincola*, Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*, Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, Little Tern *Sternula albifrons*,

European Roller *Coracias garrulus* and Eurasian Stone-Curlew *Burhinus oedipnemos* in the nesting season when salina holds more than 1% of the Balkan population and, for some species, up to 13%.



Black-winged Stilt - Bojan Zeković

In winter and during migration salina is a very important stopover for birds on the Adriatic flyway. It feeds a lot of birds, especially waders, herons and ducks. The most important among these are Eurasian Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*, Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*, Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*, Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* - the population of this species here represents more than 1% of the Western Palearctic population. Up to 130 Dalmatian Pelicans *Pelecanus crispus* winter on Skadar lake. For more information please visit www.czip.me



Eurasian Spoonbill - Marija Šoškić



Common Greenshank - Bojan Zekovic

ID feature for White-rumped and Baird's Sandpiper? — Rick & Elis Simpson



Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* (left) and White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis* can be hard to tell apart in the field without direct comparison.
- Elis Simpson

Some time ago (2015), having spent many hours looking at photographs, both our own and on the internet, and at skins at the Natural History Museum Bird Collection in Tring (BNHM), we noticed that there was a tendency for the feathering at the base of the bill of these two species to be distinctive and thought that perhaps this could be used as an additional feature to help ID a lone bird in a strange place. We do not claim that this is 100% across the board with all individuals and on its own would not be reliable (wear and tear and moult should always be considered in any assessment of feather features), but here is what we observed.

Figure 1 (right) White-rumped Sandpiper (top) Baird's Sandpiper (bottom): Note the shape of the feathering at the base of the bill. The Baird's shows a distinct step where the feathering along the lower mandible extends further forward giving the appearance that the bird has a protruding 'lower lip'. The feathering on the White-rumped is less visibly stepped in this way. Also note the respective positioning of the nostrils. On Baird's they are very close to the feathering and the step on the lower mandible extends well along them. On White-rumped the nostrils are further from the feather base and the lower mandible feathering extends only as far as the start of the nostril (see Figure 2 on next page for more clarity).

On Museum specimens (118 Baird's Sandpipers from North, Central and South America and 145 WRS from North, Central and South America including the



Figure 1. - BNHM / Elis Simpson

ID feature for White-rumped and Baird's Sandpiper? — cont'd

Falkland Islands and Caribbean Islands) this feature was consistent in the vast majority of specimens examined. Some skins had been damaged in the face area and it was not possible to determine the structure, others did not show the feature to such a degree as that shown here. However, we felt that the feature was consistent enough to mention as a possible aid to identifying these two cryptic waders when some doubt arises in the field.

Figure 3: Here are two photos from the field. White rumped (left) and Baird's Sandpiper (right). Note the position of the nostril in relation to the feather details of the birds as outlined above. Also observe the general shape of the feathering at that point. The Baird's is fairly tatty, but the feature is still clear.

Here are some more examples from our photo library. 1 & 2 Baird's Sandpiper; 3 - 5 White-rumped Sandpiper.

Relative positions of feather edge and nostrils on the base of the bill on White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis* and Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii*.

© Rick Simpson - Wader Quest

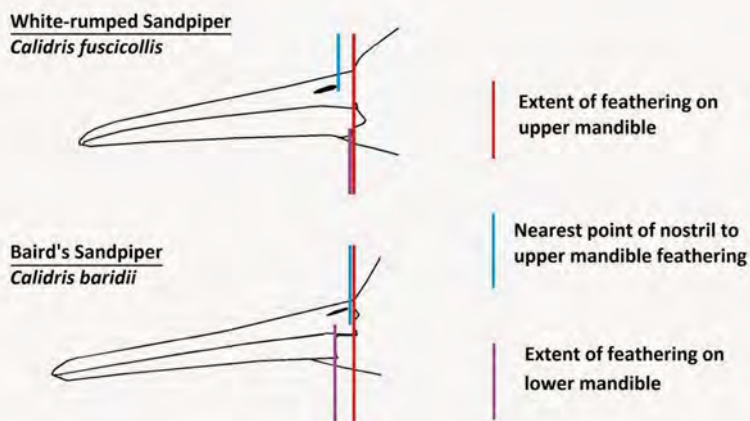
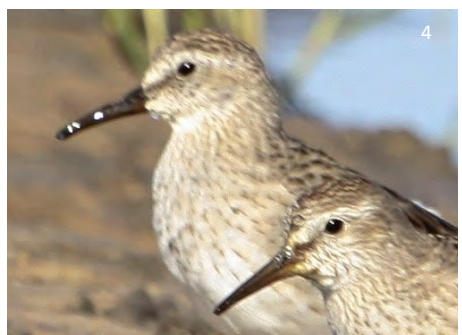


Figure 2. - Rick Simpson



Photos 1-4 - Elis Simpson



Figure 3. White-rumped (left) and Baird's Sandpiper - Elis Simpson

Here's one that bucks the trend (photo 5). Although there seems to be a bit more of a step in the feathering in this White-rumped Sandpiper the feathering on the lower mandible still only just reaches the first point

of the nostril (compare this feature with photo 1). If you look at the webpages for photographs for these species, you can judge for yourself if we are onto something or not.



Photo 5 - Elis Simpson

Seven Whistler — Richard Smith

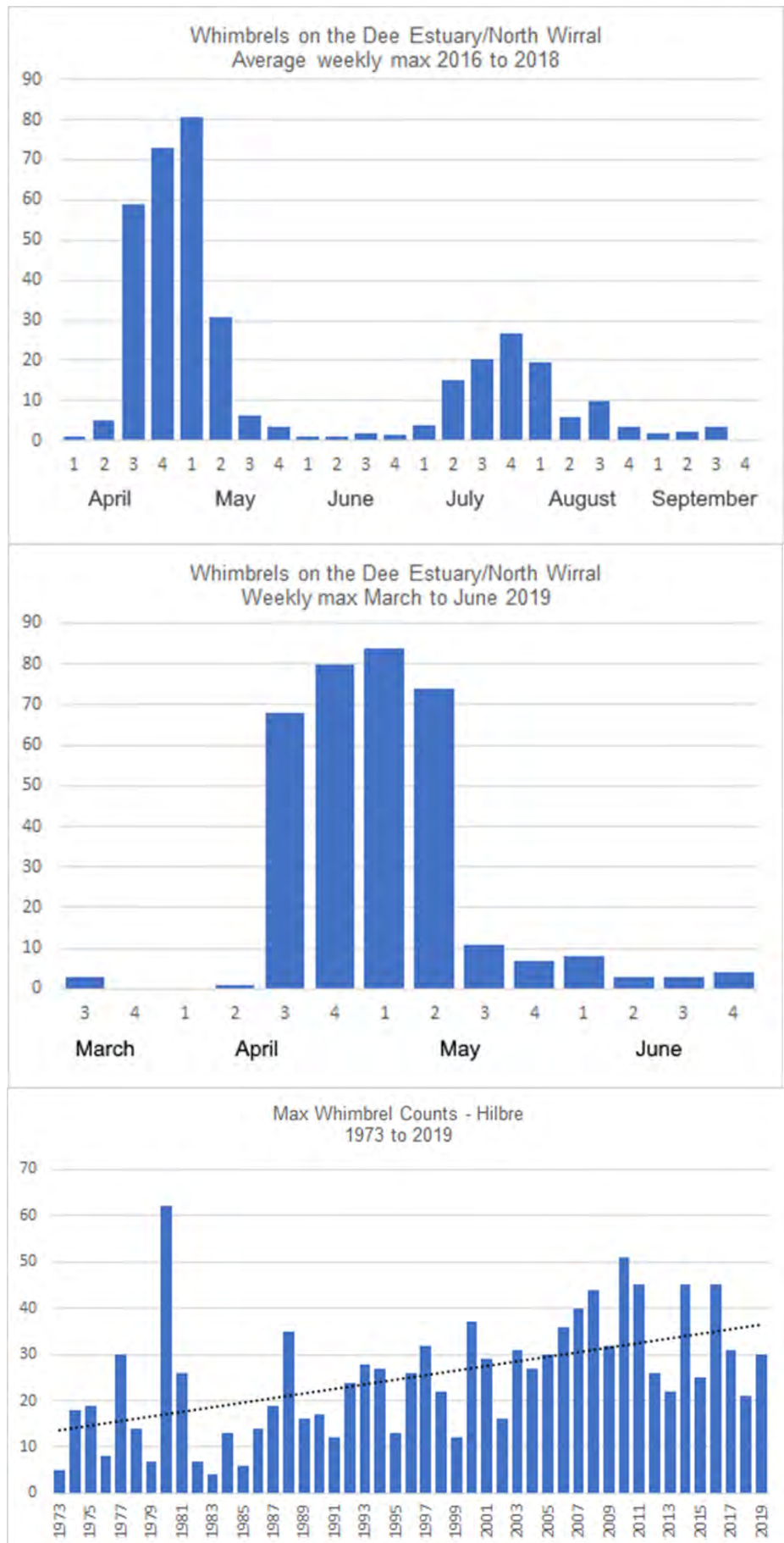
It was Jeff Clarke (ex Senior Ranger at Thurston - www.jeffclarkeecology.co.uk) who told me that the old name for Whimbrel was the 'Seven Whistler' because of its distinctive seven whistle call. We only hear that call for a few weeks as they pass through the estuary on their way north in spring before returning south in late summer. Whimbrels don't over-winter here so we only see them on migration making them something special to look out for, particularly in late spring when the estuary can otherwise be very quiet with many waders having already left us.

The majority of [Eurasian] Whimbrels [*Numenius phaeopus*] pass through the Dee estuary on their way north from mid-April to mid-May although in some years the migration can start as early as March and in 2011 two were recorded exceptionally early at Leasowe on February 23rd. We often get a few birds present in June including at least three at Heswall in 2019, presumably immature non-breeding birds which make the journey this far north without making the final flight to the breeding grounds. Numbers then increase through July and certainly by the second week breeding birds are returning and the southerly migration peaks in the last week of that month. Counts then decrease through August and into September and by October only one or two are left.

Where to find them

Whimbrels can turn up just about anywhere on the estuary and north Wirral, from Leasowe Shore down to Burton Mere Wetlands, and along the Welsh coast all the way to Gronant. But during the main migration periods two sites almost guarantee good sightings - Heswall and Hilbre. I've drawn up a graph of max annual counts for Hilbre from 1973 to 2019 (2019 up to the end of June) and the trend line (dotted line) suggests an increase in numbers over that period. Coverage at Heswall has been nowhere near as good as Hilbre over that period but again numbers have been higher there in recent years and all three-figure counts have been over the past five years: 110 in 2012, 156 in 2014 and 131 in 2017, all during the spring migration. The 2014 count is the highest ever recorded for the Dee estuary.

At Hilbre birds can easily be seen around the island at low tide and many roost on the west side at high tide, there is even a spot called 'Whimbrel's Rest' used regularly by them for many years. At Heswall on higher tides the birds roost in the marsh, rather hidden in the long grass. But they can be more easily seen on an incoming tide on the



Seven Whistler — cont'd

sand/mud banks, it's best to get down to Caldy at half tide and walk towards Thurstaston and Heswall - here you will see and hear the birds as they are pushed towards the shore as the tide rises. On lower tides some will roost on the rocks between Thurstaston and Caldy, or on the sand bank off Shore Cottage. If walking from the car park at Banks Road, Heswall, you need to get there at least two hours before high tide and walk towards Thurstaston where you should see the birds passing you on the way to the main roost site.

On the Dee estuary Whimbrels are usually observed feeding on mudflats but they can also be seen in damp fields, the paddocks near Leasowe Lighthouse seem to be to their liking and in April 2019 a small flock of up to eight fed for several days close to the footpath at the lighthouse end of Park Lane. Elsewhere, there are sites in the UK where hundreds of Whimbrels feed in fields, the most important being the area around Barnacre Reservoir in Lancashire and here they roost at night with a massive 730 on May 3rd 2019, the highest count there since 847 in May 1998. The Reservoir is private but there are guided walks in spring specifically to see this spectacle.

Where are they coming from and where are they going?

We see two sub-species of Whimbrel in the UK - Icelandic breeding birds (*Numenius phaeopus islandicus*) and North-east Europe (Scandinavia and Baltic) breeding birds (*N. p. phaeopus*). It is estimated that around 250,000 pairs breed in Iceland and up to 110,000 pairs breed in north-east Europe with many more of the nominate race breeding in western Siberia. Whimbrels breed right around the northern hemisphere but, depending on which estimates you use for total numbers, between 25% and 40% of them breed in Iceland which is thus a vitally important country for them.

Both of these sub-species winter on the coast of West Africa and perhaps all the way down to South Africa, with a few wintering in Iberia. Although these wintering grounds have been confirmed by observation, ringing and satellite tracking the large majority of birds, which must be in the region of at least one million, have never been found. I quote Delany *et al.* : Counts of Whimbrel at their winter quarters in Africa can account for only a small proportion of the populations concerned. Smit & Piersma (1989) could account for only 69,000 *islandicus* and *phaeopus* combined, and recognised that this was a major underestimate. The total from 1990s mid-



Eurasian Whimbrels - Mark Woodhead



Whimbrels on Hilbre, April 2019 - Allan Hitchmough



Whimbrel flying off Flint - Jeff Cohen

Seven Whistler — cont'd

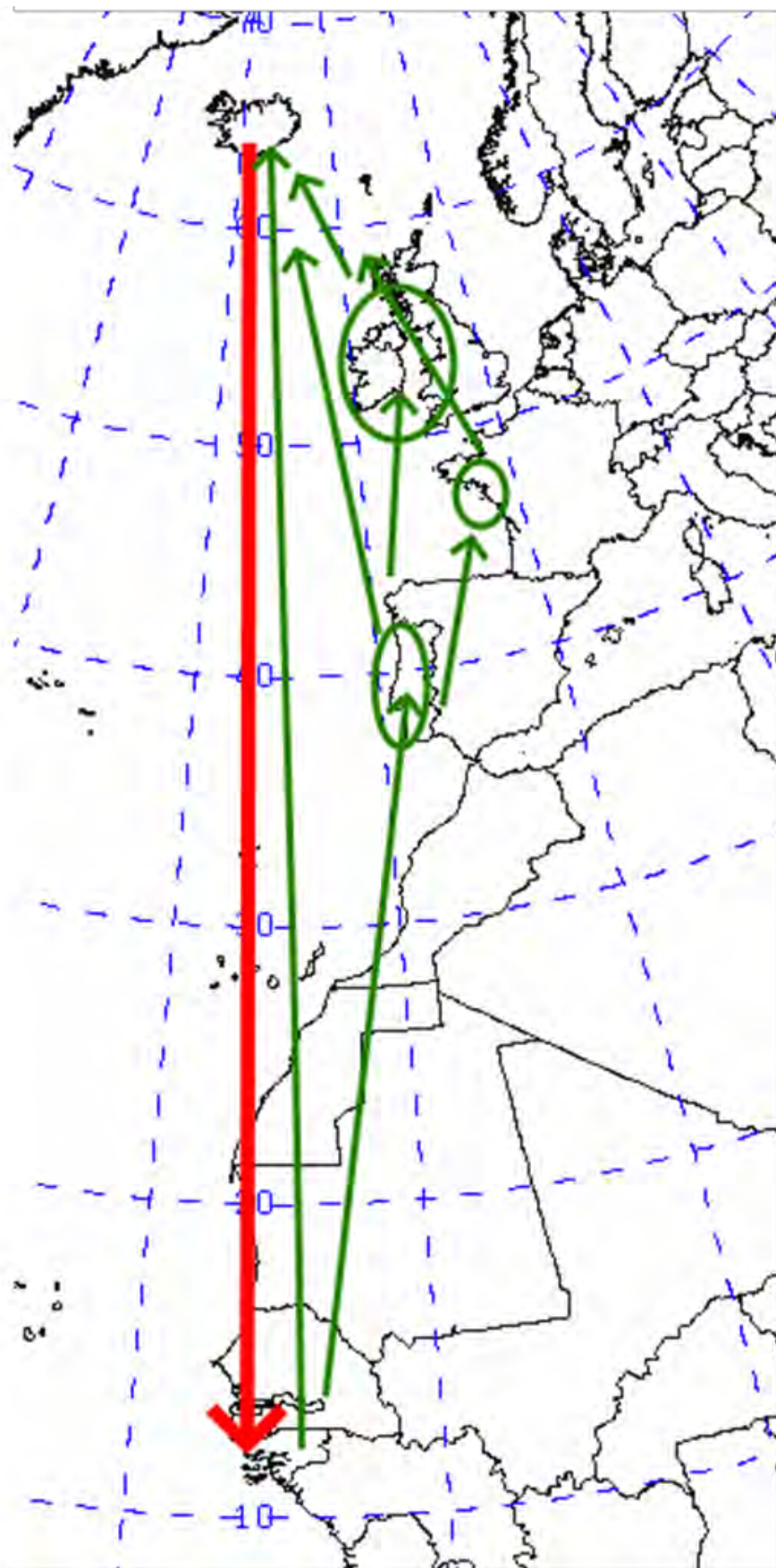
winter counts and estimates was only slightly higher at 89,000 (Stroud et al. 2004). These low figures suggest that either the main wintering areas in West Africa remain to be discovered, and/or that the species is readily underestimated by counts in the wintering areas. This might occur, for example, if a high proportion makes use of mangroves, and/or the wintering range for this population extends considerably further south in Africa than was previously believed (Stroud et al. 2004). It is also possible that breeding numbers may have been over-estimated. (NOTE: Recent surveys in 2014 and 2015 have confirmed the high figure of 250,000 pairs breeding in Iceland - Richard Smith)

Between 2012 and 2015 40 adult Whimbrels in Iceland were fitted with geolocators and this has shown (together with previous studies) that *islandicus* birds fly direct from Iceland to Africa after breeding - a distance of almost 4,000 miles. The study shows that for the spring migration some birds, perhaps around half, stop over in Portugal, France, western UK and/or Ireland. Ringing data had already suggested that the majority of Whimbrel flying up the eastern side of the UK were heading for north-east Europe and those on the west were heading to Iceland, so this confirms that pattern. The birds we see here on the Dee estuary in spring are therefore probably mostly *islandicus* with some *phaeopus*, whilst the return migration consists is likely to be wholly *phaeopus*. This would explain why, as shown in the first graph, above, that we get more birds in spring than in summer/autumn.

The map shows the direct southward flight from Iceland to West Africa in autumn (red), followed by the northward flight in spring (green) with some birds taking a direct flight and others using staging areas in Portugal, France, Ireland and western UK. Ireland seems to be a particularly important stop off point. It can be seen that using one of these staging areas does not add very much to the distance flown and allows the birds to feed up and be in good condition for the final leg, the Geo-locator data showed the birds typically stop for 10 to 15 days. (Maps based on data/maps shown in Refs 7,8 and 9.)

References and Further Reading

1. Cheshire and Wirral Bird Reports - 1973 to 2017, CAWOS.
2. 2018 Whimbrel records kindly provided by CAWOS.
3. Steve Williams and Hilbre Bird Observatory, pers. comm. June 2019.
4. Allan Conlin, pers. comm. June 2019.



Seven Whistler — cont'd



A Whimbrel standing in front of Redshanks and a Dunlin. Meols Groyne - Les Hall

5. Sightings published in Dee Estuary Birding - <http://www.deeestuary.co.uk/>.
6. Simon Delany et al. , An Atlas of Wader Populations in Africa and Western Eurasia, 2009.
7. Graham Appleton, Whimbrels on the move, WaderTales, April 2016. <https://wadertales.wordpress.com/>
8. C. Carneiro, T. Gunnarsson and J. Alves, Faster migration in autumn than in spring: seasonal migration patterns and non-breeding distribution of Icelandic whimbrels *Numenius phaeopus islandicus*, Journal of Avian Biology, November 2018.
9. Veronica Mendez, Risking it all in a direct flight (The non-stop migrations of Whimbrels between Iceland and West Africa), BOU Blog January 2017.
10. Waterbird Population Estimates, Fifth Edition, Wetlands International, 2012. [This article is reproduced here by kind permission of the author. First published in the Dee Estuary Birding July newsletter www.deeestuary.co.uk - Ed.]

The Seven Whistlers — Rick and Elis Simpson

There exists an old superstition concerning the Seven Whistlers, which were supposed to be a portent of impending doom as mentioned by William Wordsworth (1770-1850) in his poem, *Though narrow be that Old Man's cares*:

'He the seven birds hath seen, that never part,

Seen the SEVEN WHISTLERS in their nightly rounds'

The story goes that six of the Seven Whistlers travel endlessly across the night skies looking for the seventh. In days past they would often be reported passing overhead and it is widely supposed, by those of a less superstitious nature, that these whistlers were in fact Eurasian Whimbrels [*Numenius phaeopus*]. The legend continues that if the six should ever



find the seventh whistler then the world would come to an end. So, be warned, if you should ever come across seven whimbrels anywhere, you had better get all your redshanks in a row.

An extract taken from *An Inspiration of Waders* by Rick and Elis Simpson.

Available from [Wader_Quest Publishing](http://Wader_QuestPublishing) for £8.50 plus p&p contact sales@waderquest.net.

Zero Quota for the hunting of Curlew in France! - LPO/BirdLife france

Referred to it by the LPO/BirdLife France, the French Council of State decided the 26 August 2019 to suspend with immediate effect the decree authorizing the hunting of Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* in order to meet France's obligations under European Birds Directive & AEWA.

Ignoring the bad conservation status of this threatened shorebird species, ignoring the negative opinion of the Adaptive Management Expert Committee, ignoring the large opposition of a majority of French and EU citizens, ignoring formal letters sent by European NGOs (e.g. BirdLife International Europe, RSPB, NABU, BirdWatch Ireland, Vogelbescherming Nederland, ASPO, BirdLife Malta), ignoring France's obligations under European Birds Directive & AEWA, the French minister of Environment, Elizabeth Borne, has authorized the hunting of 6,000 Eurasian Curlews, by a decree signed the 31 July 2019.

Committed to meet its obligations under AEWA (cf. Brown 2015), France had previously promised to ensure that either any harvest of Eurasian Curlew is sustainable or to apply a complete hunting moratorium until the Adaptive Hunting Management process has been established. Last year, France was found to be circumventing this obligation by establishing a partial hunting moratorium, allowing hunting on the Public Maritime Domain, where most Eurasian Curlews occur during the hunting season. After the recommendation (31 May 2019) of the Adaptive management expert committee to the Minister of the Environment, to not authorize any curlew harvest throughout the national territory, including the Maritime Public Domain, it was thought that the French government would comply with its international obligations.

But the pro hunting lobby at the highest levels of the State was very efficient, notwithstanding opposition by EU citizens and NGOs to that decree that could jeopardise conservation efforts carried out in Europe to try to recover, or at least prevent further declines of Eurasian Curlew breeding populations. LPO/BirdLife France decided to ask for an interim order to suspend the enforcement of the decree as soon as it is published.

The 26 August 2019, the French Council of State considered that the decree did not conform to an adaptive management process and France's highest administrative jurisdiction issued a decision to partially modify the decree calling for a Zero quota! This decision is immediate: No more Eurasian Curlews to be shot this season!

Thanks to all BirdLife partners and



Eurasian Curlew - Dave Jackson

others institutions for their unfailing mobilization to ensure the total protection of the Eurasian Curlew in Europe.

The case is also not closed as it was sent to European court by LPO/BirdLife France in the form of a complaint and to the AEWA in the form of an Implementation Review Process by the International Wader Study Group (IWSG) to ensure the sustainability of this decision.

Considering France's lack of compliance with AEWA, in August the IWSG submitted a call to UNEP-AEWA to undertake an Implementation Review Process (IRP) regarding hunting of Eurasian Curlew in France. The AEWA Secretariat have passed this IRP on to the AEWA Standing Committee with a recommendation from the Technical Committee for opening an IRP. The Standing Committee will discuss the IRP at the latest on 11-12 December in Bristol, UK during the 15th Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee.

Last spring LPO/BirdLife France also challenged France regarding its lack of compliance regarding the Bird Directive in several point. For your information the several points are:

- 1- Unsuitable Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* hunting;
- 2- Spring hunting of Greylag Goose *Anser anser*;
- 3- Unsuitable hunting of Eurasian Curlew;

4- Hunting of threatened species (package of n=20 species listed in the EU Red List);

5- Art. 9 derogation for traditional hunting (thrushes, skylark, limestick and clapnet, ...). The European Commission has already decided to take legal action against France for failing to comply with EU laws that protect nature regarding failure to protect the Turtle Dove, failure to properly implement Article 9 of the Birds Directive when issuing derogations for the traditional hunting of birds and illegal attempts to authorize the spring hunting of Greylag Goose. The case of the hunting of Eurasian Curlew has been kept active and is being actually heard by the Commission services.

But the decision came too late for this Polish bird

A Polish GPS tagged Eurasian Curlew - which was a chick raised in an aviary as part of a head-starting programme, was killed two days before the council of state decision.

The track stopped right above hunting areas in Northern France (Pas-de-Calais). It could have been a Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* that killed the bird, but there is a great probability that it was shot given the area where it fell.

There were only two young Curlew released this year from the Polish head-starting programme, so it is particularly sad that one met its end in this way, so close to the decision that would have saved its life.

Waders in poetry — Norman Hadley

Coming to Curlew Country

Even now, I hear that song,
I smell Cumbrian earth
punctured by a tent-peg.

Creaking from the car to set up camp,
that lonesome fluting overhead. We were,
in every sense that mattered, home

In *Curlew Calling Anthology* 2017 (Karen Lloyd) and
read on *On Your Farm* on Radio 4 by Karen Lloyd.

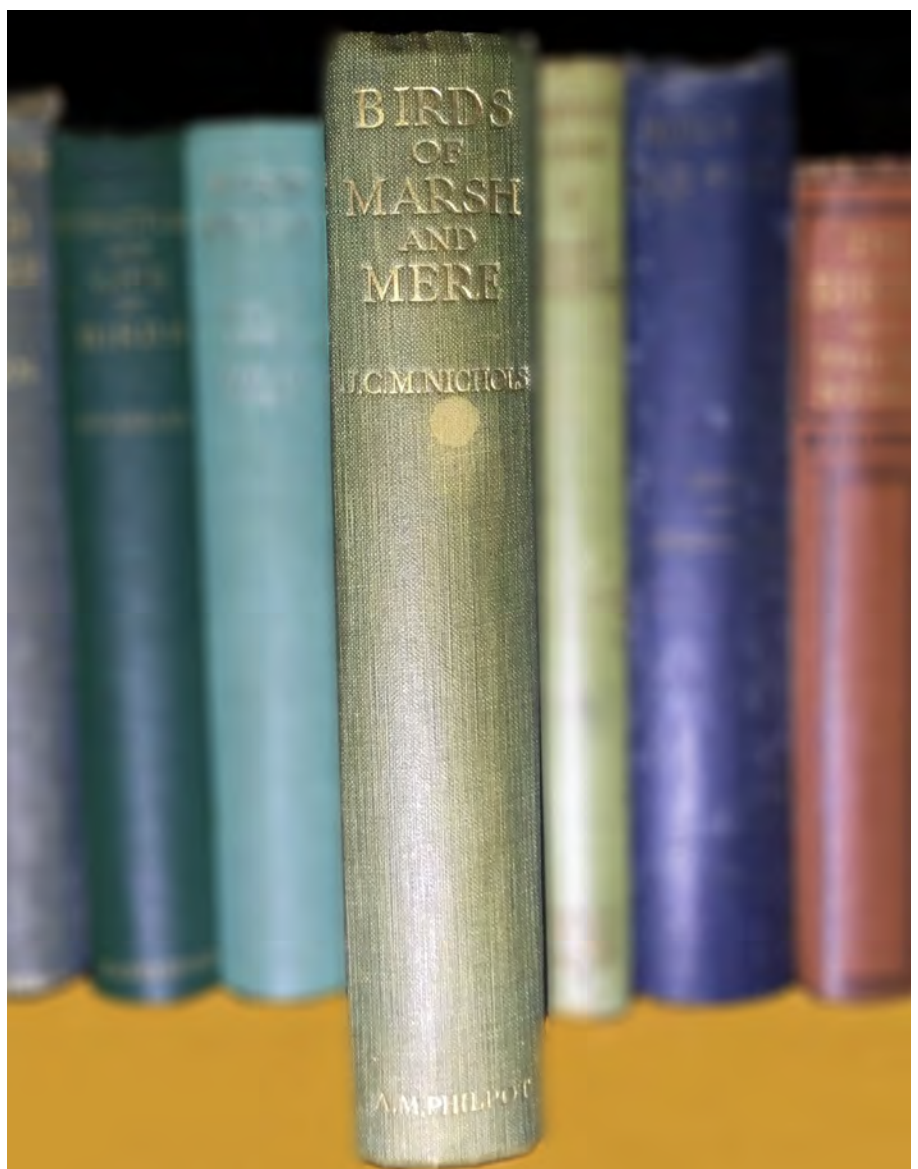


Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* - Elis Simpson

From the library - Birds of Marsh and Mere (and how to shoot them); J.C.M.Nichols (1926)

Old Fred Barrett, a well-known professional wildfowler (who has years ago joined the great majority, was a wonder at calling up curlew; he would actually call up the birds by using their alarm note. His modus operandi was as follows: Well hidden in a creek we would wait for flying curlew; when a small flock appeared, a clear call-note or two would attract their attention, and then with the help of a home made it 'squeaker' the old man would start screaming like a curlew in very bad trouble, at the same time letting his handkerchief flutter just above the edge of the creek. The effect was magical; the curlew would come swooping in with stiff wings to investigate the trouble, only to be greeted with a devastating broadside. On one occasion Barrett had called up a goodly bunch of curlew and having killed a couple I observed the old man looking at me with considerable disappointment. I said, 'What's the matter, Barrett, I've got a right and left.' 'Don't you talk about no rightses and leftses,' answered he. 'Hap, yow'd shot along o' that there great ringe of them I'd ha' looked to fower or foive tumble, that I would indeed.'

There are also other occasions when his own curiosity or indignation will lead to the curlew's undoing. A little dog running along the muds - particularly if carrying a bird - is a pretty sure draw, but the sight of a dead relative or two bobbing in the tideway (with perhaps a winged bird screaming mournfully) is the deadliest lure for a curlew that I know, and the gunner may find himself for a few moments in a very warm corner indeed, with a perfect maelstrom of birds swooping around him at all angles and paces, the chief difficulty being to load up fast enough.



Observation of the Eurasian Stone-Curlew in the Brecks of East Anglia — Ben Potterton

The Eurasian Stone-Curlew *Burhinus oedipnemos* is a fascinating wader who's presence in East Anglia is often overlooked due to its secretive behaviour.

The current and accepted description of this bird and its haunts, suggest that it's a summer visitor to undisturbed heathland and that the best place to look for it would be from a distant hide overlooking dry grass in mid-summer. However in the 1978 book *The Birds of Suffolk* by William H Payn it is described as a bird of remarkable adaptability and a bird that occasionally overwinters. In 1978 Payn writes that the Stone-Curlew had been pushed away from the brecks due to afforestation and that birds were now nesting in corn, beet, peas, carrots, kale and amongst trees. He also notes that the population was decreasing and the species breeding range was fragmented, with the core population being around the large farming estates that can be found south of Thetford and north of Bury St Edmunds.



Stone-Curlew chicks - Ben Potterton



A July 2019 nest on a traditional site that is planted with pheasant cover - Ben Potterton

During the past 40 years the population of Stone-Curlew has fluctuated greatly, but despite vast conservation grants and thousands of man hours studying its behaviour our understanding of this enigmatic bird's habitat requirements are still open to debate.

Within the traditional core population area are Elveden, Euston, Rushford and Shadwell Estates. These estates are privately managed and combined, cover approximately 16,000 hectares of forestry, heath, grass and farmed land. All of the

estates monitor and protect endangered wildlife independently of any national charities.

On two of these sites the Stone-Curlew population has been intensively studied by volunteer bird ringers for several decades and the other two record birds informally with the support of game keepers and tractor drivers.

The focus of our farmland wader monitoring project is a 4050 hectare estate and within this area sugar beet is the preferred breeding habitat. However in one

specific area of the study site, birds have shown a stronger preference to nesting in free range pig and chicken fields, bringing them into direct conflict with livestock and causing constant disturbance from farm staff.



Typical Sugar Beet nest June 2019 - Ben Potterton



Two chicks outside a chicken unit; June 2019 - Ben Potterton

Stone-Curlews are known to nest in what we perceive as odd places, they have been documented nesting in rural gardens, in

Observation of the Eurasian Stone-Curlew in the Brecks of East Anglia — cont'd

conifer plantations and under beech trees. So perhaps nesting under electric fences in pig fields is an ideal spot as they have a ready supply of insect food and are afforded protection from foxes, badgers and the pigs. Birds nesting in and around pig units seem able to breed earlier and occasionally produce three clutches of eggs, extending the breeding period into September. The farm staff usually check the pigs twice daily and as these sites are not aesthetically pleasing, they are seldom disturbed by walkers or bird spotters. The pig units have also enabled birds to remain throughout the winter and small groups create day roosts in neighbouring fields before separating to forage at night.

The real surprise within our study area was the colonisation of the free range chicken paddocks by all of the farmland waders and the particular success of the Stone-Curlews.

The units are typically on free draining soil and surrounded by a wire stock and electric fence. Each paddock is filled with commercial laying hens and the hen houses are serviced by people and vehicles continuously throughout the day.

Stone-Curlews typically arrive in the paddocks during March, some birds winter in neighbouring arable fields, but it is unclear if these are the resident breeders.

Nesting choice within the paddocks tends to be associated with the fence lines, with birds nesting within 1m of the perimeter fence or the fencing that divides paddocks. Birds have occasionally nested amongst stinging nettles and eucalyptus trees within 4m of the chicken sheds and seem oblivious of the thousands of chickens that surround them.

The Stone-Curlews also seem to be tolerant of other breeding waders, often nesting in close proximity to Eurasian Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* and Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*.

Stone-Curlew productivity within the chicken paddocks is high. Fences prevent access for ground predators and the chickens seem to offer some sort of protection, possibly by confusing predators or offering easier food. However, other waders have not been as successful, due to avian predation and the parent birds' reaction to the threat. The two successful species are the Stone-Curlew and Oystercatcher, both species usually have two adult birds within sight of the breeding territory and quickly react to the presence of any perceived threat, giving



Stone-Curlew under electric fence - Ben Potterton

chicks time to hide.

Lapwings and Curlews are consistently preyed upon by Carrion Crows *Corvus corone*, Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* and Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*. Single pairs of Lapwing seem more susceptible to egg or chick predation and we have also witnessed adult mortality due to Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* and Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*. Curlew eggs are often preyed upon by Carrion Crows and the chicks are routinely preyed upon by Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls out in the open areas of the paddocks.

However the chicken paddocks might not be the safe haven that we first thought. Stone-Curlews don't routinely nest in every chicken unit, those with smaller paddocks are still utilised successfully by Oystercatchers but not by Stone-Curlews and a new avian threat has appeared in the paddocks. In the spring of 2019 gulls started to attack healthy adult chickens on a regular basis in the core wader breeding area. The increased gull and corvid population is directly linked to the accessibility of animal feed associated to the free range farming so we were awaiting the next breeding season with some trepidation.

Oddly the 2019 breeding season was not the huge success that we expected, numbers of pairs across the estates was lower than usual at approximately 70 pairs. Within the pig and chicken units adult birds did not return to territory and we are wondering what has happened to these birds, it's possible that they are nesting on neighbouring land, that they were shot on migration or that we just missed them. One

pair were finally located and they successfully reared two broods within close proximity to a huge new chicken house, the second brood being reared amongst 14,000 chickens and a family of Oystercatchers.

Our plan for 2020 is to identify the migration routes of our birds and we will be working with private landowners and the National Trust to formulate a plan to understand the missing links in the ecology of this fascinating species.



Oystercatcher chick in the chicken paddocks
- Ben Potterton

Ben Potterton coordinates the Breckland Stone Curlew Partnership, a voluntary association of independent landowners and conservationists that are working to protect waders in the Brecks of Norfolk & Suffolk.

Fueteventura 2nd – 9th March 2019 — Dave Jackson

A routine blood test revealed a vitamin D deficiency, so a hastily arranged trip to Fueteventura was arranged to get some late winter sun; for health purposes only of course!

It was my first visit to the island and a few potential lifers were in store, namely Houbara Bustard *Chlamydotis undulata* and Fueteventura Stonechat *Saxicola dacotiae* and a vagrant Dwarf Bittern *Ixobrychus sturmii* was over-wintering. One bird I'd read about in a Wader Quest newsletter was Canary Oystercatcher *Haematopus meadewaldoi* and whilst that is now extinct there were plenty of other waders I could point my camera at. Corralejo was chosen as a base, not least due to Nico's Belgian Beer House within walking distance of our Airbnb.

A beach north of the town provided good views of Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, Common Sandpiper *Actitis*



Common Greenshank - Dave Jackson

hypoleucos & Common Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* whilst a drive through rugged terrain brought us to El Cottle with Kentish *Charadrius alexandrinus* & Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*, Sanderling *Calidris alba*, Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* and Eurasian Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* all added to the list.



Kentish Plover - Dave Jackson



Eurasian Stone-Curlew - Dave Jackson

Kentish Plover was a bird I was keen to photograph, though a change of location away from the nudist beach was called for before I could comfortably raise my binoculars and camera with a 100-400mm lens attached. While my non-birding partner wandered off down the beach I positioned myself by a small bay and waited for the incoming tide. I was able to get some low angle shots and watch the action as several pairs fought for their territories before a lady and her dog who 'likes to play with the birds' put paid to my patient fieldcraft.

I watched as a parent bird hurried towards her 2 chicks and escorted them to

cover as the dog bounded by oblivious to their presence.

Cream-coloured Courser *Cursorius cursor* was a bird I'd only seen once before, on a golf course in Herefordshire, and Tindaya proved to be a reliable place to see this species along with Eurasian Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedipnemos* and Houbara Bustard.

A drive south to Barranco de Rio Cabras proved fruitless for the Dwarf Bittern that had been seen several days before, and after, my visit though waders present included a small flock of noisy Black-winged Stilts *Himantopus himantopus* and a single Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*.



Kentish Plover with two chicks- Dave Jackson

Fueteventura 2nd – 9th March 2019 — cont'd

More stilts were noted at Embalse de los Molinos along with Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*, Common Greenshank, Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* & Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* among the Ruddy Shelducks *Tadorna ferruginea* and Eurasian Spoonbills *Platalea leucorodia*.

With time before our flight on the last day a visit to Salinas del Carmen just south of the airport was disappointing as the salt pans were dry due to maintenance work; though a small flock of Eurasian Whimbrel on the beach rested before continuing their northward migration.

16 species of wader were seen with my personal highlight being the Kentish Plovers though not forgetting my 2 lifers of the trip - Houbara Bustard and Fueteventura Stonechat.

Dave is a member of the Northamptonshire Bird Club which is a Club Sponsor of Wader Quest.



Cream-coloured Courser - Dave Jackson

UK Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* influx; July/August 2019 — Josh Jones



Wood Sandpiper – Josh Jones

One of the stand-out ornithological events of 2019 so far was the major influx of Wood Sandpipers that took place in late July.

In the final week of the month, a heatwave brought record-breaking temperatures to many parts, topped by the highest-ever temperature recorded in Britain in Cambridge, at a casual 38.7°C, on the afternoon of Thursday 25th.

However, this proved short lived,

and a rapid breakdown in the weather over the following weekend (27-28 July) produced thunderstorms followed by much fresher conditions and plenty of heavy rain across the centre of Britain. As it transpired, this persistent band produced both a meteorological and avian deluge as the rainfall combined with a conveyor belt of strong easterly winds whipping out of Scandinavia to deliver one of the most

bountiful Wood Sandpiper arrivals on record.

Many hundreds descended upon sites, both coastal and inland, albeit showing the distinct eastern bias you'd expect for birds arriving from across the North Sea. Although a good influx took place on Saturday 27th, it was Sunday that produced the bulk of the birds – one can only imagine what the scrapes at Cley Marshes, Norfolk, must have looked like awash with the 110+

UK Wood Sandpiper invasion; July/August 2019 — cont'd

birds tallied there that afternoon.

Monday and Tuesday kept on giving as birds continued to either make landfall or move south following the rain abating on Sunday evening. Monday saw 30+ recorded at Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire, while nearby Freiston Shore bagged 40 on Tuesday, with Boldon Flats, Durham, hosting around 35 that day. Plenty of smaller double-figure counts were made, generally from established wetland sites, although ones and twos did make it into more unusual locations, such as farm ponds or temporary floods in otherwise unsuspecting tracts of English countryside. All in all, some 400 reports of the species were put out on the BirdGuides sightings service over the seven day from 24-30 July, representing a huge spike in occurrences that may not be matched for many years to come.

Influxes like this tend to be quite transient, and so it proved. The species remained very much prominent around Britain throughout the first week of August, although it was clear that the initial peak counts were never going to be matched. While 31 July-6 August once again produced over 400 reports, birds were much more spread out, penetrating further west and south-west than in the previous week and never being seen in such great



Wood Sandpiper - Elis Simpson

concentrations. Nonetheless, the lower half of the East Coast still retained some large

groups during the opening days of August, with 24 at Cley Marshes, Norfolk, 28 at Freiston Shore, Lincs, and 20 at Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, being the peak concentrations.

Numbers then gradually fell away back to more expected levels, with the period of 7-13 August producing 236 reports across Britain. Reports from the start of this seven-day block included 23 at Frampton Marsh and 16 at nearby Freiston Shore, but both sites saw their counts drop into single figures by 13th.

Prior to this sudden and massive arrival, there were no real indications that such a major event was about to unfold. Numbers had been average, if not below average in some areas. It seems that the weather conditions coincided with a big southward push of the species out of breeding grounds in Scandinavia, creating the 'perfect storm' for the remarkable events witnessed to unfold. It was interesting to note that many, if not most of the birds photographed were juveniles, perhaps suggesting that the number seen was also in part to a successful breeding season this summer.

Josh Jones runs the BirdGuides bird news service. Find out more at www.birdguides.com.



Wood Sandpiper – Josh Jones

Wader news from around the world in brief — Rick and Elis Simpson

USA

Haematopus 'oedipus'

A facebook report from Lorraine Margeson in Florida, USA, told an interesting tale of a young American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus*. This young Oystercatcher, like Oedipus the Greek hero, had a near death experience when he was very young. In Oedipus' case his father tried to kill him and in the case of our Oystercatcher he was the victim of severe overwash, caused by Tropical Storm Colin in 2016, which he somehow managed to survive. He was given the numbered ring Y42, and named Colin, in Fort De Soto Park bird sanctuary by Lorraine, Dr Elizabeth Forsys and biologist Amy Schwarzer.

This year, a USFW biologist at Egmont Key took a photograph of the young Oystercatcher, now an adult breeding bird, was seen to be attempting to pair with his mother who bears the ring TO. TO was incubating a nest at the time and her mate took a dim view of this intrusion and foiled Colin's plans.

Clearly this was an unwitting attempt to mate with his mother, just as Oedipus' marriage to his own mother had been unwitting. This though is probably not a one-off. Individual birds meeting their parents as adults really have no way of recognising them that we know of, and it is likely that this is more common than we might think, in wild birds. However, it does highlight one thing, and that is that ringing birds so we can identify them as individuals means we can find out so much more about their complex, and fascinating, lives.



TO and Y42 right after banding in 2016
- Lorraine Margeson

Also in Florida; Snowy Plovers doing well.

Another wader story, another beach and another hurricane involved, this time Hurricane Michael that passed through the Florida Pan Handle last year. The hurricane caused a poor year for the plovers with only 12 fledging. The previous average had been around 23 in the five years prior to the storm.

This year however the little birds have come back with a vengeance, rearing no less than 60 chicks to fledging along the 40 mile stretch white sugar sand from near Port St. Joe to St. Andrews State Park.

Thailand

News reached us some weeks ago, that on the 6th of September 2019 representatives from Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BCST) completed the purchase of the land at Pak Thale, Phetchaburi. The purchased land will be managed as a nature reserve for wintering Spoon-billed Sandpipers *Calidris pygmaea* and other migratory shorebirds in the long-term. It will also serve as a place for shorebirds and coastal ecosystem research and ecotourism. This purchase would not have been possible without the support from the Rainforest Trust, Suthirat Yoovidhya Foundation, Reutrakul family, Kanjanavanit family and everyone who has donated to this cause. That includes Wader Quest and therefore our supporters to who generously donated to our appeal to save the salt pans at Pak Thale.

That is not the end of the story however, the BCST is still accepting donations as the ongoing costs will still have to be met. Further support will be used to manage the land including landscaping and water management to create suitable habitat, construction of hides and other facilities and surveying of birds and biodiversity in the area. Moreover, it will be used for prevention of coastal erosion which is a serious threat to the whole Pak Thale landscape and has already eroded approximately 3.5 ha (out of 8 ha) of this property. Anyone wishing to donate to this cause can do so through Wader Quest by contacting us on info@waderquest.net and we will also be making further payments from time to time in support of this project that is very special to our hearts.



Pak Thale salt pans - Elis Simpson

New Zealand

In August 130 of the world's rarest wader, the Black Stilt *Himantopus novaezelandiae* or *kaki* were released into the Mackenzie Basin. This follows a massive predator control effort in the area. The multi-million-dollar predator control project, *Te Manahuna Aoraki* programme, which aims to make the Mackenzie Basin a predator free zone, has set more than 2,000 traps in the Cass Valley



Recently released Black Stilt - Elis Simpson

and the Godley and MacAulay river areas. The main predators in the area are; feral cats, rats, ferrets, stoats and weasels all of which can devastate the nests of ground nesting birds and prey on unfledged chicks.

64 birds were released at Mt Gerald Station, in the Godley and Cass river systems and 66 into the Tasman Valley.

Canada

71 pairs of piping Plovers *Charadrius melodus* were found in Ontario in 2019, up from 67 in 2018. This success, however, was not easily achieved. Higher than normal waters meant that available breeding space was reduced and territories smaller, with the remaining high ground still having to be shared with beachgoers.

One well known plover has been very productive. Captive reared in 2012, 'Worsley' has since bred on Wasaga Beach in 5 different years. In that time, he has reared 14 fledglings. This year he successfully raised 3 chicks.

As with all these intensive protection programmes this one utterly depends on its volunteers, without whom none of this would be possible. It also reminds us of that old saying; volunteers are unpaid, not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless!



Nesting Piping Plover - Elis Simpson

Featured Wader Photo: Sociable Lapwing — Aditya Roy



Location: Near the Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary, Gujarat, India. **Date:** 16 December 2018

Species: Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius*
Equipment: Nikon D7100 Nikon 200-500mm

f5.6 ED VR Lens
Details: 1/640 f/8 ISO 250

The story behind this photo is very interesting. This picture was taken of birds within a large flock of Sociable Lapwings about 20km from Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary, Gujarat, which is a RAMSAR site, of which it is the only one in Gujarat. The birds were first sighted by locals on the 11th of December and they stayed until February 2019, during which time Aditya Roy recorded between 98 and 113 individuals during his visits.

Aditya says that a sighting of such a large number of these birds in the area at once is unprecedented. This is the first time a flock of over 100 individuals has been recorded. On 16th December 2019, Aditya and his colleague Pavan Patel observed over 90 birds in a wheat field near Nalsarovar. This number of birds represents around 1% of the total world population.

Aditya also stated that it is of great importance that the State protects the fallow lands, grasslands and wetlands, of Gujarat. These habitats are critical for many species, not just the Sociable Lapwing, especially migratory species that winter in the area. Gujarat is a very important point along the Central Asian flyway and is a party to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).

Something about this photo caught our eye when choosing it from a series of images of the birds that Aditya sent us. The shot of the bird alighting gave the picture movement and drew the eye immediately to the bird. But as we looked, we began to see other birds in the picture, in the foreground, eventually finding eight birds in the frame in total. This highlights the effectiveness of the

birds' plumage in hiding them in the surrounding habitat.

Aditya is a qualified wildlife biologist and is currently pursuing his PhD on toxicology of vultures from Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Coimbatore. He has been into wildlife photography for 7 years and photographed over 350 species of birds across India. His photographs have been published in many books and photography magazines.

As a naturalist and tour leader for Soar Excursions www.soarexcursions.com he has led many birding, wildlife and adventure tours in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Western Ghats, South India and Central India. He has assisted National Geographic, Animal Planet and BBC in different documentaries.

WADERS NEED LOVE TOO! JOIN US FOR OUR WADER CONSERVATION WORLD WATCH - 2ND & 3RD NOVEMBER



See page 33 or [WCWW webpage](#) for details

Wader photo gallery — send us your favourite wader photos



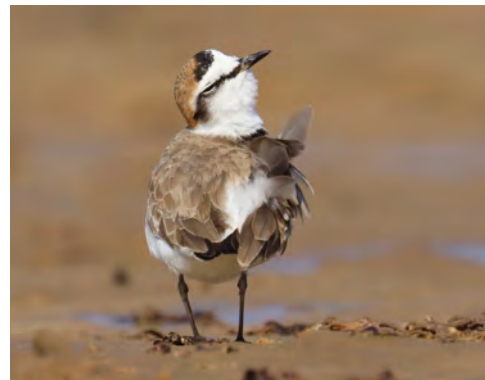
Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*
- Dave Jackson; UK



Red Knot *calidris canutus*
- Elis Simpson; UK



Crab Plover *Dromas ardeola*
- Aditya Roy; India



Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*
- Dave Jackson; Fuerteventura



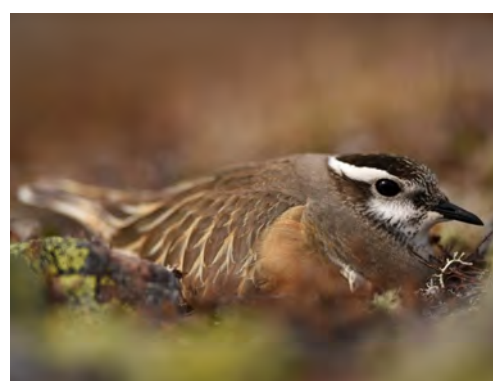
Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum*
- Aravind Venkatraman; USA



Asian Dowitcher *Limnodromus semipalmatus*
- Ayuwat Jearwattananok; Thailand



Grey (Red) Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*
- Tone Malm & Stein Ø Nilsen; Norway



Eurasian Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*
- Tormod Amundsen; Norway

Wader Conservation World Watch

WADER CONSERVATION



WORLD WATCH

2nd &/or 3rd NOVEMBER 2019



A Go out and see waders wherever you are in the world.



B Send us an email telling us what you have seen and where.



C Find your sightings on the species list and roll of honour.

STAND UP FOR WADER CONSERVATION AND SAY:



I CARE



THE NATURAL HOME FOR WADER LOVERS
WADERS NEED LOVE TOO!

waderquest@gmail.com

Guidelines for applications for Wader Quest Grants

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

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

Priority will be given to projects:

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

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

Download Application form [here](#) and send to applications@waderquest.net

We will be at the Northwest Birdwatching Festival again this year



Martin Mere November 16th & 17th



We will be giving two talks at 11:00 each day - *Wader Quest* (Saturday) and *An Inspiration of Waders* (Sunday)



WADER QUEST

THE NATURAL HOME FOR WADER LOVERS

Waders need love too!

Wader Quest is a registered charity in England and Wales No. 1183748

FRIENDS OF WADER QUEST AND SPONSORSHIP RATES

Friends of Wader Quest:

Individual	£10.00
Family	£15.00
Life	£200.00

Sponsors:

Club	£20.00
Corporate	£50.00

Rates effective from 06/04/2019

Wader Quest Trustee news.

Voluntary vacancies at Wader Quest;

Recent resignations mean we now have vacancies on the Board of Trustees. Interested parties please email info@waderquest.net for information.

New appointments;

1) We welcome Jannik Hansen to the Grants Panel (non-Trustee member). Andrew Whitelee (Trustee member) takes the Chair of the panel. Additional Trustee Rick Simpson.

2) Ian Dearing will take over as Secretary at the October AGM.

Next Trustee meeting;

26th Jan 2020. Venue TBA. 10.30am start.

Email: info@waderquest.net or waderquest@gmail.com
Website: www.waderquest.net

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/waderquest>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WaderQuest?fref=ts>

Instagram: [@wader_quest](https://www.instagram.com/wader_quest)

CORPORATE AND CLUB SPONSORS



The copyright of all photographs and artwork in this newsletter belongs to the named photographer or artist unless otherwise stated.

Please seek permission from the copyright owner before using them.

All opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Wader Quest.

Edited by Rick Simpson.

Wader Quest the newsletter

Page 36

Volume 6 Issue 3

