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GOSBELL, KEN. 2008. **Australasian Shorebird Conference, Newcastle, Australia, 2007.** *Stilt 54*: 1-12. (17 Banksia Court, Heathmont, Vic. 3135, Australia; EM: ken@gosbell.id.au)

ABSTRACTS OF TALKS

BARTER, MARK. 2008. **Land-claim activities along the Chinese coastline.** *Stilt 54*: 1. (21 Chivalry Avenue, Glen Waverley, Vic. 3150, Australia).

BARTER, MARK. 2008. **Shorebirds in East China during the non-breeding period.** *Stilt 54*: 2. (21 Chivalry Avenue, Glen Waverley, Vic. 3150, Australia).

BATTLE, PHIL., ROBERT E. GILL, LEE TIBBITS, DAN MULCAHY, BRETT GARTRELL & NILS WARNOCK. 2008. **Technology, communications and knowledge: advancing understanding of the world's greatest migrant, the Bar-tailed Godwit.** *Stilt 54*: 2. (Ecology Group, Massey University, Private Bag 11-222, Palmerston North, New Zealand).

FERRIS, JASON, CRISTINA DAVEY & VICKI CRONAN. 2008. **The partnership for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and the sustainable use of their habitats in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.** *Stilt 54*: 2-3. (Interim Flyway Partnership Secretariat, Migratory and Marine Biodiversity Section, Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources, GPO Box 787, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia).

GOSBELL, KEN & ROB CLEMENS. 2008. **Wader populations in Australia - where are they heading? A brief review and future monitoring needs.** *Stilt 54*: 3. (17 Banksia Court, Heathmont, Vic. 3053, Australia; EM: ken@gosbell.id.au)

HANSBRO, DR. PHIL., SIMONE WARNER, AERON HURT & JOHN CURRAN. 2008. **Carriage of avian influenza viruses by Shorebirds in Australia.** *Stilt 54*: 4. (School of Biomedical Sciences, University of Newcastle, NSW, Australia).

HARDING, SANDRA. 2008. **Managing and conserving wader roost habitat: Local government, the forgotten link.** *Stilt 54*: 4. (Queensland Wader Study Group, 336 Prout Road, Burbank. Qld. 4156, Australia; EM: pitta@gil.com.au)

HERBERT, CHRIS. & LIZ CRAWFORD. 2008. **Hunter Estuary shorebird habitats - the trouble with mangroves.** *Stilt 54*: 4-5. (Hunter Bird Observers Club, Newcastle, NSW, Australia).

HOWE, ALICE, JOSÉ RODRÍGUEZ & G. MACFARLANE. 2008. **Optimising Shorebird roost habitat by hydraulic manipulation.** *Stilt 54*: 5. (School of Engineering, University of Newcastle, Callaghan, NSW 2308, Australia; EM: alice.howe@studentmail.newcastle.edu.au).

KIM, RAKHYUN. 2008. **Is Ramsar meaningless in Korea?: Korea's implementation of and compliance with the Ramsar convention.** *Stilt 54*: 5-6. (School of Geography and Environmental Science, The University of Auckland, New Zealand).

MINTON, CLIVE, KEN KRAAIJEVELT, BIRGITA HANSEN, ROZ JESSOP, HEATHER GIBBS, ADRIEN REIGEN & CHRIS HASSELL. 2008. **The Red Knot conundrum.** *Stilt 54*: 6. (165 Dalgetty Road, Beaumaris, Vic. 3193, Australia; EM: mintons@ozemail.com.au).

MINTON, CLIVE, JOHANNES WAHL, ROZ JESSOP, CHRIS HASSELL, PETE COLLINS & HEATHER GIBBS. 2008. **Movements based on recoveries and flag sightings and**

particularly illustrating the key role of the Yellow Sea. *Stilt 54*: 6-7. (165 Dalgetty Road, Beaumaris, Vic. 3193, Australia; EM: mintons@ozemail.com.au).

MOORES, NIAL. 2008. **The Saemangeum Shorebird monitoring program: aiming to reverse the tide.** *Stilt 54*: 7. (Birds Korea, 1009 Ho, 3 Dong, Samik Tower Apt., Namcheon 2-Dong, Su-Young Gu, Busan 613762, Republic of Korea).

NEBEL, SILKE, JOHN PORTER & RICHARD KINGSFORD. 2008. **Long-term trends in Shorebird numbers in Eastern Australia.** *Stilt 54*: 7. (School of Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences, University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW 2052, Australia).

ROGERS, DANNY. 2008. **Selection of feeding areas by Waders at the Western Treatment Plant (Werribee Sewage Farm), Victoria, Australia.** *Stilt 54*: 7-8. (Arthur Rylah Institute, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Vic. Australia; EM: drogers@melbpc.org.au).

SPENCER, J.A. & R.T. KINGSFORD. 2008. **Does rehabilitation improve wetland habitat for Shorebirds.** *Stilt 54*: 8. (Centre for Restoration and Stewardship, Australian Catholic University, PO Box 968, North Sydney, NSW 2059, Australia; EM: jennifer.spencer@environment.nsw.gov.au).

SRIPANOMYOM, SIRIYA. 2008. **Past and current research on Shorebirds in the Inner Gulf of Thailand.** *Stilt 54*: 8-9. (Conservation Ecology Program, School of Bioresources and Technology, King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi [Thailand]).

WATKINS, DOUG. 2008. **Expanding the role of the AWSG and other NGOs in the conservation of migratory Shorebirds in the Flyway.** *Stilt 54*: 10. (Wetlands International - Oceania, PO Box 4753, Kingston, ACT 2606, Australia; EM: doug.watkins@wetlands-oceania.org).

YANG HONG YANG, ZANG ZHENGWANG & CHEN BING. 2008. **Research on the migration and habitat selection of migratory Shorebirds in Northern Bohai Bay, China.** *Stilt 54*: 9. (Key Laboratory for Biodiversity and Ecological Engineering, Beijing Normal University, Beijing 100986, China).

ZHANG GUANGMING. 2008. **Management at Yalu Jiang Wetland Nature Reserve, China.** *Stilt 54*: 9-10. (Environment Protection Bureau of Dandong City, Liaoning Province, China).

ZHARIKOV, YURI & DAVID MILTON. 2008. **Valuing coastal habitats: predicting Wader high tide roosting habitat occupancy.** *Stilt 54*: 10. (Centre for Wildlife Ecology, Department of Biological Sciences, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby BC, Canada V5A 1S6).

POSTER PAPERS.

AMANO, HITOA E. 2008. **A decrease of over 40%? Changes in Shorebird numbers during 20 years in Japan.** *Stilt 54*: 11. (WWF - Japan)

LOVIBOND, SARAH, ERIC J. WOEHLE & ELAINE STRATFORD. 2008. **Coastal bird inventory on King Island 2006/07.** *Stilt 54*: 11. (School of Geography & Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia).

STRAW, PHIL., & MARIKA CALFAS. 2008. **Port Botany expansion project - Expansion of Shorebird habitat as mitigation for industrial development.** *Stilt 54*: 11-12. (Avifauna Research & Services Pty Ltd; EM: PhilStraw@avifaunaresearch.com)

ANTONOV, ALEKSEY & FALK HUETTMANN. 2008. **Observations of Shorebirds during southward migration at Schastia Bay, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia: July, 23 – August, 8 2006 and July, 25 – August 1, 2007.** *Stilt 54*: 13-18. (Khingansky State Nature Reserve, Amur Region, Russia; EM: antonov@hingan.amur.ru)

MILTON, DAVID & SANDRA HARDING. 2008. **Shorebirds of the southern Great Barrier Reef islands: Lady Elliott and Lady Musgrave and the potential effect of tourism on their populations.** *Stilt 54*: 19-23. (Qld Wader Study Group, 336 Prout Road, Burbank, Qld. 4156, Australia).

Surveys were undertaken of the shorebirds and terns on the: Lady Elliot and Lady Musgrave Islands, two most southern islands on the Great Barrier Reef in Australia during December 2006 and January 2007. Low and high tide counts were made of the entire island and surrounding reef on Lady Elliot over three days and one day on Lady Musgrave Is. The highest count was 367 shorebirds on Lady Elliot Is, including 240 Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*. This count represents approximately 1.2% of the national population and is the only site supporting substantial Ruddy Turnstone numbers in the region. Shorebird species composition on Lady Musgrave Is was similar to that seen on Lady Elliot Is. However, the diversity and total numbers were lower, with a maximum count of 80 birds. Both islands experience a large volume of tourists during the summer non-breeding season when shorebird numbers were highest. On Lady Elliot Is, both Ruddy Turnstone and Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* have habituated to humans and forage freely around the buildings in the tourist resort. In contrast, disturbance from tourists may be contributing to the lower shorebird numbers on Lady Musgrave Is. Here, the birds have fewer options to roost in areas free from regular tourist activity and the terrestrial habitats are more closed. This presumably makes terrestrial foraging less attractive for Ruddy Turnstone and Pacific Golden Plover and thus has reduced the degree of habituation by these species.

CLOSE, D.H. 2008. **Changes in wader numbers in the Gulf St Vincent, South Australia, 1979-2008.** *Stilt 54*: 24-27. (30 Diosma Drive, Coromandel Valley, SA 5051, Australia; EM: david.close@flinders.edu.au).

This paper presents estimated average February numbers of waders in Gulf St Vincent, South Australia, in two periods, 1979-85 and 2000-08. Estimates were arrived at by sample counts of all roosting sites. Comparison of the results showed that numbers of 12 out of 14 species of palaeartic wader had decreased, the average decline for the 14 species being 50%. The numbers of six out of nine Australian-breeding species decreased greatly. Although, the average decline for the nine species was only 12%, this was because the most numerous of them the Banded Stilt *Cladorhynchus leucocephalus*, increased. There was relatively little observable change in wader habitat between 1979-2008. It was therefore concluded that the decline in populations of waders was due mainly to factors outside Gulf St Vincent.

PICKERING, ROBYN. 2008. **The behaviour of Black-winged Stilts *Himantopus himantopus* roosting at Thompson's Lake, Perth, Western Australia.** *Stilt 54*: 28-30. (5 Egret Place, Yangebup, WA 6164, Australia; EM: pickyang@smartchart.net.au).

WAINWRIGHT, PAUL & MAUREEN CHRISTIE. 2008. **Wader surveys at the Coorong and S.E. coastal lakes, South Australia, February 2008.** *Stilt 54*: 31-47. (16 Sheoak Road Crafters West, SA 5152, Australia; EM: osprey@bmail.com.au).

The Coorong 35° 50' S 139° 20' E and adjacent lakes Alexandrina and Albert in South Australia are listed as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention because they contain many aquatic habitats which support a diverse suite of flora and fauna. Shorebirds are an important component of this diversity with

almost a quarter of a million shorebirds being recorded in the early 1980's. Sadly the number of migratory shorebirds has shown dramatic declines over the last 20 years. In February 2008, ignoring the ephemeral species of Banded Stilt *Cladorhynchus leucocephalus* and Red-necked Avocet *Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*, the number counted was 25,889, the lowest on record since 1982. This represents an 85% reduction in migratory shorebirds since the early 1980's. The decline this year was notable for the absence of Red-necked Stint *Calidris ruficollis*, nominally the most abundant migratory wader species at the site. In contrast, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *C. acuminata* and Curlew Sandpiper *C. ferruginea* were present in higher numbers when compared with the 2007 data. Banded Stilt were highly abundant in the Coorong's Southern Lagoon, where a flock exceeding 250,000 was observed. This is possibly the largest recorded Banded Stilt flock in Australia.

Curlew Sandpiper numbers remain concerning, however the 2008 population of 3,988 birds indicated some form of recovery compared with the 2007 count (and record low abundance) of 2,171 birds. when compared with historical data, 1981 for example, Curlew Sandpiper abundance has declined more than 90%. While this needs to be put in the context of the flyway population declines, it does highlight the critical deterioration of the Coorong as a non-breeding site.

The distribution of birds along the length of the Coorong in 2008 confirmed a general movement to the northern lagoons for most species as a result of the hyper-salinity south of Parnka Point. Ignoring Banded Stilt, the southern lagoon supported few waders. The ecology of the Coorong has deteriorated significantly over the last eight years largely as a result of the lack of fresh water flows from the River Murray through the barrages.

Prior to the 2008 count, observational work showed that waders were moving between the Coorong and the lakes following tidal and wind patterns. Local drought conditions and record low-flows across the Murray-Darling Basin during 2007 caused the lake water levels to draw-down severely. Newly created lake edge habitat was hypothesized as an alternative for Coorong waders however aerial observations of the lake edges shortly after the survey suggested that recently uncovered sediments (in the main) were not particularly attractive to waders. A survey of the Southeast Coastal Lakes between the Coorong and Lake George found variable use by waders. All of these lakes have been substantially altered over time by drainage and farming practices. The drought has affected the ephemeral habitats associated with many of these lakes. and therefore the abundance of waders. Lake George appears to be slowly recovering from a period of deteriorating water quality, and invertebrate abundance, caused principally by algal toxicity.

It is essential that water quantity and quality are closely monitored throughout the Coorong because both are pivotal to the ecological recovery of the wetland. The communication of information should help land and water managers to improve this critical situation.

MURPHY, MICHAEL, J. 2008. **Survey of Shorebirds in the Moonee Creek estuary on the north coast of New South Wales, Australia.** *Stilt* 54: 48-50. (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Wellington Street, Baradine, NSW 2396, Australia).

Twenty seven low-tide surveys in the small (20 ha) lower estuary of Moonee Creek, New South Wales, Australia over a 12 month period in 1996-1997 recorded small numbers of three migratory shorebirds, Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*, Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus* and Eastern Curlew *Numenius madagascarensis*, three resident shorebirds of conservation concern in New South Wales, Beach Stone-curlew *Esacus magnirostris*, Australian Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus longirostris* and Sooty Oystercatcher *H. fuliginosus* and one common resident shorebird Masked Lapwing *Vanellus miles*. This study demonstrates that minor estuaries can make a small but nevertheless valuable contribution to supporting shorebird communities.

NEWMAN, MIKE. 2008. **Australian Pied Oystercatchers breeding at Mortimer Bay, Tasmania, Australia 1977-2000.** *Stilt 54*: 51-53. (7 Glenurie Close, Woodville, NSW 2321, Australia).

KEARNEY, BRIAN, ANGIE HASLEM & ROB CLEMENS. 2008. **Report on population monitoring counts 2007 and Summer 2008.** *Stilt 54*: 54-68. (Birds Australia, Suite 2-05, 60 Leicester Street, Carlton, Vic. 3053, Australia).