

WEAVING CONNECTIONS: Celebrating Migration, Traditional Knowledge, and Innovation across our Flyway



12th Meeting of Partners of the East Asian–Australasian Flyway Partnership 8-14 November 2025 • Cebu, Philippines

EAAFP MOP12 Reporting Template for Non-Government Partners

Dear Partners,

To report on the progress of the implementation of the EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019-2028, a Reporting Template was developed at the 10th Meeting of Partners (MOP10) in Hainan, China which was subsequently used to gather progress from Partners for MOP11 held in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.

The EAAFP Secretariat has amended the reporting template to account for the feedback gathered at MOP11 as well as the MOP11 decisions specifically Key Results Areas 1.2 and 1.6. To streamline the process and reduce the length of the reporting document, three separate templates have been created: for (1) Government Partners, (2) Non-Government Partners, and (3) Working Groups, Task Forces, and the Technical Sub-committee.

The "Reporting Questions" are linked to Key Result Areas to enable an assessment of progress with the implementation of each element of the Strategic Plan. Indicators have been provided to facilitate reporting and assess our achievements.

As this Reporting Template was developed in alignment with the Strategic Plan, some questions may appear to overlap. However, completing them all will provide comparability with the previous Partner Reports submitted for MOP11.

While the total number of questions for Non-Government Partners is 43, the number of questions for each Partner Group, and each mechanism of the Partnership, is shown below:

> Government 50 Questions

> Non-Government 43 Questions

Working Groups, Task Forces &

27 Questions Technial Sub-committee

This Reporting Template has been sent to the Focal Point of each Partner, the Chair and Vice-Chair of each Working Group and Task Force, and the Chair of the Technical Sub-committee.

Thank you,

Jennifer George

Chief Executive, EAAFP Secretariat

The EAAFP Reporting Questions

General Information

Name of Reporting Partner	Australasian Wader Studies Group – BirdLife Australia		
Reporting Group	☐ Inter-Government	al Organisations (IGO)	
	☐ International Organisation (IO)		
	☐ International Private Enterprise		
	☐ Other (please specify:)		
Designated EAAFP Focal Point	Name	: Dr Birgita Hansen	
	Position	: AWSG Chair	
	Department/Unit	:	
	Street Address/	: C/- Federation University, University Drive	
	P.O. Box		
	Postal Code/City	: Mt Helen, Ballarat 3350	
	Country	: Australia	
	E-mail address	: b.hansen@federation.edu.au	
	Phone Number	:	
	Website	: www.awsg.org.au	
Additional Designated EAAFP	Name	:	
Focal Point (Optional)	Position	:	
	Department/Unit	:	
	Street Address/	:	
	P.O. Box		
	Postal Code/City	:	
	Country	:	
	E-mail address	:	
	Phone Number	:	
	Website	:	
Additional Designated EAAFP	Name	:	
Focal Point (Optional)	Position	:	
	Department/Unit	:	
	Street Address/	:	
	P.O. Box		
	Postal Code/City		
	Country		
	E-mail address		
	Phone Number		
Danaut Campilar	Website Name	: . Dr Birgita Hansan	
Report Compiler	Position	: Dr Birgita Hansen : AWSG Chair	
		. AVV30 Citali	
	Department/Unit Street Address/	: : C/- Federation University, University Drive	
	P.O. Box	. Or I edelation only elsity, only elsity brive	
	Postal Code/City	: Mt Helen, Ballarat 3350	
	Country	: Australia	
	E-mail address	: b.hansen@federation.edu.au	
	Phone Number	:	
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Reporting on the implementation of the EAAFP Strategic Plan

Reporting Period: 2023 - 2025

OBJECTIVE 1 Develop the Flyway Network of sites of international importance for the conservation of migratory waterbirds, building on the achievements of the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy, with the ultimate goal of establishing a sufficient and efficient network of sites with sustainable management. (FSN page: https://www.eaaflyway.net/the-flyway/flyway-site-network/)

- Supplementary information: <u>EAA Flyway Network Sites Overview Report 2013</u>, <u>EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019-2028</u>

KRA 1.1 A comprehensive and coherent Flyway Network of Sites is developed for migratory waterbirds, including sites that are not currently Protected Areas.

Indicator 1.1.1 The Flyway Site Network has expanded to include at least 40 additional strategic internationally important sites for migratory waterbird conservation, some of which may not currently be a national Protected Area.

 1. Has your organisation documented any additional internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds in the EAAF (see <u>EAA Flyway Network Sites Overview Report 2013</u>)? If yes, please provide details on these sites. 	☐ Yes ☑ No ☐ Planned	
Additional information:		
2. Has your organisation supported Government Partners with their identification of high-priority sites for the potential nomination of the new Flyway Site Network? If yes, please provide details of your support and the associated sites.	✓ Yes☐ No☐ Planned	
Additional information:		
Through results and ongoing data insights from the National Shorebird Monitoring Program and the near-completion of the second National Habitat Directory by BirdLife Australia. BirdLife Australia hosts the National Migratory Shorebird Conservation Steering Committee, which is made up of national and statement government representatives. This is an important forum for exchanging information on regional and national activities.		

KRA 1.2 National and Site Partnerships have been developed to coordinate the implementation of the EAAFP at national and local levels.

Indicator 1.2.2 At least 50% of Government Partners have an active <u>National Partnership</u> and <u>Site Partnerships</u> have been developed for at least 50% of the Flyway Network sites.

3. Has your organisation supported national meetings of Flyway Network Site Managers? If so, please describe the support you have provided (e.g. organising meetings, funding, etc.). Additional information:	☐ Yes ☑ No ☐ Planned
4. Have you supported Flyway Network Site managers in developing work plans related to EAAFP Strategic Objectives? If so, please describe the support you have given (e.g. technical support, funding etc.).	☐ Yes ☑ No ☐ Planned
Additional information:	
Indicator 1.3.1 At least 50% of Flyway Network Sites have current management platobjectives for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats and that a implemented. Management plans have stakeholder participation and are approved 5. Have you supported developing or updating Management Plans of Flyway Network Sites? If so, please describe the support you have given (e.g. technical support, funding	re being adequately
etc.). Additional information:	
Indicator 1.3.2 At least 50% of Flyway Network Sites recognise the Flyway Site Networks conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the EAAF. 6. Has your organisation supported the promotion of the "Flyway Site Network" brand (e.g. information boards, advertising, etc.)? *Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications. Additional information:	work as a brand for the Yes No Planned

Indicator 1.3.3 All Partners are using and complying with International standards (International Finance Cooperation or equivalent) for development within and adjacent to FNS and other internationally important waterbird sites.

waterbird sites.	
7.	
Please provide brief details on any sites of international importance for migratory	waterbirds that may be
adversely impacted by a proposed development and describe the assessment pro	ocess that was used or is
anticipated to be applied.	
*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications	S.
Your Response:	
Queensland	
The Proposal by the Walker Corporation to construct a residential and retail c	
Ramsar site at Toondah harbour has been successfully opposed by BirdLife A	ustralia and QWSG (along
with many other organisations).	
Victoria and South Australia	
Offshore wind farms proposals in East Gippsland and at Discovery Bay, Victor	is and the SE of South
Australia continue to pose potential threats to important shorebird areas. The	
project will provide data to inform shorebird use of the Discovery Bay area. Or	•
Victoria and Tasmania also pose threats to shorebirds at key sites.	isilore willularilis ili
violona and lasmania also pose tineats to shorebilds at key sites.	
Western Australia	
Exmouth gulf salt works proposal "Ashburton Salt Project" going through EPA	process in the eastern
half of the gulf, will potentially threaten shorebirds particularly eastern curley	
man or the gain, the potentially through one control particularly custom current	•
8.	
Have any public consultation processes been implemented when a site of	⊠ Yes
international importance for migratory waterbirds could be adversely impacted	
by a proposed development?	□ Planned
If yes, please provide brief details on the site(s) and if the development was	□ Not known
approved.	
Additional information:	
In Victoria, the offshore wind energy development Star of the South will be se	eking public submissions
as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. The VWSG and AWSG will b	e asked to provide

expertise in relation to potential shorebird impacts.

Point henry geelong...

KRA 1.4 Where appropriate, Flyway Network Sites are being sustainably used to support subsistence livelihoods of the local community.

Indicator 1.4.1 Where local communities at Flyway Network Sites depend on the natural resources of the site to support subsistence livelihoods, this is occurring without adverse impacts on migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

9. Has your organisation worked with and/or supported local communities in any Flyway Network Sites that are dependent on the Site's natural resources to support subsistence livelihoods? If yes, please indicate details on the kind of support you have provided.	☐ Yes☒ No☐ Planned☐ Not known
Additional information:	

KRA 1.5 Partners and local stakeholders are engaged in responding to activities which may threaten Flyway Network Sites.

Indicator 1.5.1 The level of engagement of EAAFP Partners and local communities in responding to threats to Flyway Network Sites is reflected in the number of meetings and events held and the participants attending.

Are you aware of any Flyway Network Sites or other sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds that are under threat? If yes, please provide details of the sites and the threats and what response you or your local stakeholders have undertaken.	□ Yes ⊠ No
Additional information:	

KRA 1.6 The EAAFP Sister Site Programme has expanded.

Indicator 1.6.1 At least five new EAAFP Sister Site relationships have been developed.

11.

What involvement has your organisation had in connecting Flyway Network Sites in different countries? *Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

12.

Does your organisation have resources (e.g. funding or in-kind support, etc.) available to enable Sister Site relationships?

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

Not currently. However, it is anticipated that AWSG and BirdLife Australia will aim to support future initiatives

OBJECTIVE 2 Enhance communication, education, participation and public awareness (CEPA) of the values of migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

KRA 2.1 The achievement of the elements in the EAAFP CEPA Strategy and Action Plan (2023-2028)

Indicator 2.1.1 The CEPA Action Plan has been monitored, reviewed and updated as necessary to inform the EAAFP.

13. Does your organisation have a CEPA Programme addressing migratory waterbirds and internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds? If yes, please provide brief details of the programme.	✓ Yes☐ No☐ Planned	
Additional information (website links if any):	<u>'</u>	
BirdLife Australia Migratory Shorebird staff member and AWSG committee me currently the Co-chair of the EAAFP CEPA WG. Dr Kidd is supported by Phil Strathe AWSG on the CEPA WG. Birdlife Australia has commenced a project with F Services NSW in relation to the Hunter Ramsar Wetlands Community Engager project will focus on the delivery of community engagement and evaluation accommunity outreach and field surveys. AWSG creates the Tattler Newsletter wannually to shorebird stakeholders.	aw whom also represents Iunter Local Land nent and Evaluation. The stivities including	
14.	⊠ Yes	
Has your organisation made use of the <u>EAAFP CEPA Action Plan 2023-2028</u> when	□No	
planning and implementing the CEPA activities?	□ Planned	
Additional information (give examples of how the Action Plan was reflected e.g. in Flyway Network Sites, targeting the public, etc.):		
AWSG and BirdLife Australia are represented on the CEPA Working Group and review of the Action Plan 2019-24. All of our CEPA Activities work towards the Objectives.		
15.	□ Communication	
What CEPA activities has your organisation supported in Flyway Network Sites?	⊠ Education	
	□ Participation	
Additional information (list of events and/or news/report links):		
The Hunter Ramsar Wetlands Community Engagement and Evaluation project		
delivery of community engagement and evaluation activities including commu	-	
surveys. The project also includes the design and development of a threat ass		
tool/protocol within the Birdata app and the creation of a targeted educationa	ı video about disturbance	

and threats to migratory shorebirds.

16.	□ National and local governments
Has your organisation developed, and/or been implementing	☐ Education Department/Ministry
awareness-raising programmes, particularly at Flyway	⊠ Site Managers
Network Sites, with the following groups (check all that	⊠ General public
apply)?	Schools/students
	☑ Indigenous communities
	□ None
	□ Planned

Additional information (please provide a detailed description of the programme(s) including target groups, aims, and major achievements):

Some National CEPA awareness-raising programmes through the reporting period include:

- The completion of a migratory shorebird kids activity book 'The Wing Thing', with over 26,000 booklets in circulation.
- The creation and distribution of shorebird badges of 2 different species attached to educational backing cards (over 2000 in distribution).
- Continued scientific support for shorebird visual art projects such as 'The Flyway Print
 Exchange' and 'The Over Wintering Project' which have been shown through the flyway by print
 media artist Kate-Gorringe Smith.

This year (2025) marks the 8th year of the Overwintering Project, a print-based environmental art project designed to engage artists and communities around Australia and New Zealand with their local migratory shorebirds and migratory shorebird habitat. Through its duration, the project, which began as an idea to create an open-call art portfolio inspired by our migratory shorebirds and migratory shorebird habitat that could be exhibited in galleries, has grown to include multiple projects for participants of all ages that can be exhibited in any venue and to support any shorebird-related event. Since the project's beginning in 2017, over 50 shorebird and habitat themed exhibitions have occurred around Australia and in New Zealand, involving hundreds of artists and thousands of visitors. Sale of prints has also generated over \$50,000 in donations to the AWSG, to support key species tracking projects and more recently, the Mark Barter Award. The project has been supported by members of the AWSG and other birding groups around Australia, who have taken artists on site visits to shorebird habitat and generously shared their knowledge. The artists then create works inspired by that knowledge. This partnership has created rich relationships between the artists and scientists, but also between the artists, their communities, and the birds and their habitat all around Australia and New Zealand. It is a great example of how art can strengthen and support the environmental messages of the scientific community by engaging the broader community. For more information and images of the artworks please visit www.theoverwinteringproject.com.

In Queensland, many shorebird identification days were undertaken during 2023 and 2024, in the south east of Queensland mostly at Manly Boat Harbour, Kakadu Beach and Toorbul roost. A shorebird introduction course was attended by 30 people. In addition, many talks were given to local groups.

Rangelands NRM in North West Australia organised a shorebird-themed workshop in October 2024, as part of the school holiday program, with partners Kimberley Arts Network and the Broome Shire. This

workshop is designed to encourage Broome primary school children to enter this year's ANSTO shorebird competition (details here: https://www.ansto.gov.au/education/primary-school/shorebirds-2024-flight-for-survival). This has resulted in the Shorebird Postcard project This year, there was a Postcard competition and there were 22 cards were made by children with representatives from all Broome's Primary schools. These have been professionally printed and made into gift packs, and have them posted to recipients throughout the EAAF and to other parts of the world.

Another key engagement project by Rangelands NRM is the Oriental Pratincole Project - ' Have you seen this bird' which commenced in 2022/23 season and is ongoing.

There has been a range of other engagement and knowledge sharing workshops and events in North West Australia that Rangelands NRM has been involved in

The Northern Territory Shorebird community has been busy since the last MOP.

- Darwin-Garramilla Shorebird Festival held in 2023 and 2024. ABC news article.
- Farewell Shorebirds event held in March 2024. See our <u>BirdLife Top End facebook</u> for photos and posts.
- Darwin Harbour Shorebird Summit held in July 2024. This was an event to launch the Darwin Harbour Migratory Shorebird Site Action Plan. NT Independent article.
- Shorebird Identification Workshop held in August 2024.
- Save Our Shorebirds Campaign in collaboration with BirdLife Australia held in April 2025.
 Campaign link.
- Far Eastern Curlew advocacy article in the Guardian Australia, April 2025. Link to <u>article</u> and to <u>youtube video</u>.

17. Has your organisation hosted or supported events for World Migratory Bird Day, World Wetlands Day or other international awareness-raising events since MOP11 (March 2023)?	✓ Yes☐ No☐ Planned	
Additional information (list of events and any news/report links):		
We continue our annual support for World Migratory Bird Day events around Australia, including the provision of resources and presentations by BirdLife Australia staff. This includes event awareness raising through communications to the membership and social media posts.		

18. Please add below, the success stories you would like to share (e.g. promoting bird friendly livelihoods, active involvement of Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), youth groups, citizen scientists, etc.) *Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications. Your Response: Birdlife Australia has recruited a Senior Advisor First Nations position to facilitate closer engagement and collaboration with Indigenous Australians. The National monitoring program Summer Count ran from 1st November to 28th Feb. Approximately 1,910 hours were spent completing 1,673 surveys. These shorebird surveys recorded 1,620,236 individual birds of 339 total species, with 29 migratory shorebird species observed. The Exmouth Gulf project with BirdLife Australia staff and AWSG members has been joined by the local

OBJECTIVE 3 Enhance flyway research and monitoring activities, build knowledge and promote exchange of information on waterbirds and their habitats.

KRA 3.1 National monitoring systems to assess the status of migratory waterbirds and their habitats are established, maintained and further enhanced.

Traditional Owner groups to assist with catching and surveying.

Indicator 3.1.1 A standardised monitoring methodology for migratory waterbirds and their habitat is developed and used in nationally coordinated monitoring programmes.

In what countries is your organisation involved in migratory waterbird and/or site monitoring (select all that apply)? Please provide details on the monitoring programme(s) and monitoring efforts since MOP11 (March 2023). Note: Countries are listed in order of joining the Partnership.	 △ Australia ☐ Indonesia ☐ Japan ☐ Philippines ☐ Republic of Korea ☐ Russia ☐ Singapore ☐ United States of America ☐ Cambodia ☒ China ☐ Bangladesh ☐ Thailand ☐ Mongolia 	 New Zealand Malaysia Myanmar Viet Nam Democratic People's Republic of Korea Papua New Guinea Brunei Darussalam Lao People's Democratic Republic Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste None
Additional information:		
The Australian Shorebird Monitoring Program, coordinated by BirdLife Australia, is a long-term monitoring program of shorebird populations across Australia. This program delivers critical data on shorebird populations and informs conservation priorities and decision-making.		

The National monitoring program Summer Count ran from 1st November to 28th Feb. Approximately 1,910 hours were spent completing 1,673 surveys. These shorebird surveys recorded 1,620,236 individual birds of 339 total species, with 29 migratory shorebird species observed.

North West Australia Wader and Tern expeditions

The AWSG continues to run the North West Australia expeditions. These expeditions are critical for monitoring demographic changes in shorebird populations, estimating juvenile recruitment for survival analyses, deploying leg flags and tracking devices for migration studies, taking biological samples for Avian flu and other disease monitoring, and training participants in shorebird capture techniques. The 38th Wader and Tern Expedition in Roebuck Bay and on 80 Mile Beach will take place in January-February 2026.

MYSMA

Monitoring Yellow Sea Migrants in Australia: This monitoring program involves carefully designed and repeatable high tide shorebird counts on the shores of north-western Australia. The counts are a substantial undertaking, requiring teams of ~9 experienced counters who access remote areas by off-road 4WD and sometimes by boat or helicopter. The surveys were initiated in 2004 and now involve one summer and one winter count each year. From 2004-2015 there were two summer surveys per year, but the second survey was dropped to reduce costs, following analysis demonstrating that loss of the second survey would only have a modest impact on the capacity of the surveys to detect changes over time (Rogers et al. 2020). Occasionally when funds allow the MYSMA program also carries out surveys of (from Cape Keraudren to Coulomb Point, including all of Eighty Mile Beach and the sites between Eight Mile Beach and Roebuck Bay). Such surveys have been carried out in 2000, 2007 and 2015.

The surveys are carried out at Roebuck Bay (northern shores and Bush Point), and the most shorebird-rich 60 km stretch of Eighty Mile Beach. Collectively in summer counts this area routinely supports ~ 300,000 shorebirds that forage on tidal flats, and tens of thousands more shorebirds that forage on grasslands and use the tidal flats and beaches as thermal refuges in hot weather. It is the most important non-breeding region for migratory shorebirds, and arguably in the EAAAF. More detailed information on the survey program can be found in Rogers et al. (2020).

Recent MYSMA surveys have been supported with funding and vehicles from the WA Department of Conservation, Biodiversity and Attractions. Since the last MOP, MYSMA summer counts surveys have been carried out in North-western Australia in Nov-Dec 2023 and 2024, and June-July 2024 and 2025. The surveys went smoothly and no sudden changes in shorebird numbers or diversity were detected. However the last full analysis of population trends in the area was carried out data up to 2016, and the last complete survey of the entire NWA coast was carried out in 2015.

AWSG/GFN Resighting

In NWA, predominately Roebuck Bay and the Anna Plains Sanctuary Zone of 80 Mile Beach, the resighting component of the AWSG capture and marking programme is led by Chris Hassell. C Hassell collects data for AWSG while working for Global Flyway Network (GFN) during GFN field work in China, and he collates the data in the AWSG database as a volunteer.

Resighting work for AWSG and GFN marked birds is carried out regularly in NWA with a focus on the months when birds are returning form the northern hemisphere (mid-August to mid November) and prior to their return migrations (mid-February to late-April). Thousands of resightings are made every

year, and collated in the respective databases and all uploaded to BIRDMARK. These sightings are the base of analytical work and also present opportunities for outreach with stories of very long-lived birds or birds that make rapid movements between widely spaced sites in NWA and East Asia.

In addition to the resightings from NWA, GFN spend around 2 months in the northern Yellow Sea at a key staging site in Bohai Bay. This is primarily to collect GFN data and scan for leg flag resightings. In 2024 the team recorded 1288 marked shorebirds of 12 species from 21 marking locations in the EAAF and even CAF – 134 were from North-west Australia. As of May 2025, there had been 809 marked bird resightings from 20 banding locations.

All the sightings are sent to the banders to assist with their projects. Most of this work is conducted voluntarily. Effort at this site and collaborations with many organisations and local government have led to the establishment of a Wetland Park giving some protection to the mudflats and some managed ponds.

Queensland

Monthly counts are conducted at various roosts sites on the Queensland Coast and at the Port of Brisbane. A proposed survey of the Gulf of Carpentaria, in conjunction with the CLCAC, was postponed at the last minute because of flooding. A new survey is set down for March 2026. Cannon netting and mist netting has been conducted at a range of sites and leg flags plus GPS trackers have been attached a number of species. Since December 2023, 4,260 records of individually identified leg flags have been shared with Deakin for flyway survival analysis as part of the a National Environmental Science Program project.

Northern Territory

Shorebird Monitoring continues every month with a dedicated team of volunteers counting 6 sites across Darwin Harbour. All activities were/are done by volunteers and events were run by volunteers using small grants from BirdLife Australia, Wader Quest and regional community initiatives (Inspiring NT and Regional Arts Fund). There is no shorebird catching in Darwin and has not been since 2021. There is currently no money in the NT directed at shorebird conservation action.

New South Wales

HBOC members monitor several key sites monthly including the Hunter and Lake Macquarie estuaries, and the main shorebird roost site in Port Stephens. Whole-of Port Stephens surveys are done twice-yearly (summer, winter) – that survey requires six boats and supported by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. HBOC also conducts monthly surveys a roost site at Teralba – it's not part of the Hunter Estuary but sometimes sharp-tailed sandpipers and other generalist shorebirds. Since 2017 HBOC members have been participating in the Latham's Snipe Project surveys in September, November and January. HBOC receives no financial or in-kind support with the exception of boat support for Port Stephens surveys.

Victoria and South Australia

Victorian Wader Study Group (VWSG) has monitoring programs conducted annually in Victoria, South Australia (in partnership with Friends of Shorebirds South East) and Tasmania. The VWSG and FOSSE continue to support the Sanderling and Pied Oystercatcher tracking studies at Discovery Bay in southwest Victoria. This will be extended to Bar-tailed Godwit in Port Phillip Bay and Hooded Plover at

Discovery Bay.

VWSG and FOSSE have conducted two annual expeditions November and April targeting turnstone and sanderling with the VWSG. Very successful with good catches of sanderling. In November 2024, 20 Sanderling were released with trackers attached via leg-loop harnesses (3 in Port Fairy and 17 at Danger Point). To date we have received data from 19 of these Sanderling. This study forms part of Annie Broadway's PhD research (Deakin University).

Oystercatcher monitoring has extended to Kangaroos Island with financial support from the South Australia Shorebirds Foundation (support for ferry travel and accommodation). Oystercatcher banding at Kangaroo Island, 4 visits since December 2023 with the most recent trip in May 2025 successfully cannon netting oystercatchers.

King Island Tasmania – a 17 year project by VWSG of deployment and retrieval of geolocators on Ruddy Turnstone on King Island to develop a good understanding of migration tracks of Turnstone and some other species. During the November 2024 expedition, finding suitable catching locations was challenging and 10 turnstone were captured, bringing the total for the entire project to 4241 (since 2007). Population counting is also conducted during expeditions and 379 turnstone were recorded on this expedition.

The VWSG will be sampling for Avian Influenza in October 2025 when the adults arrive back, and again in Exmouth Gulf (Western Australia) in October or November (pending funding support).

KRA 3.2 Conservation status reviews for waterbird populations are produced and updated to set and adapt priorities for action.

Indicator 3.2.1 Data describing waterbird population estimates, trends and distributions are available to the Partnership.

20.

Please report briefly on data management of your organisation in relation to migratory waterbird population estimates, trends and distributions.

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

BirdLife Australia is custodian of the Australian Shorebird Monitoring Program database (housed within Birdata), which represents over 50 years of continuous shorebirds monitoring by AWSG volunteers in Australia. This database is the key source of information for the AWC from Australia.

Indicator 3.2.2 Two updates of waterbird population estimates have been produced and published.

21.

Please report on your planned contribution to the migratory waterbird Conservation Status Review II. Please see the <u>CSR I Report</u> for further reference.

Your Response:

BirdLife Australia has provided a major update of available shore- and waterbird monitoring data with the Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) database, predominantly centred on our long-term efforts of counting migratory and resident shorebirds. The AWC is one of the largest citizen science programmes of its kind. Every January, thousands of volunteers across Asia and Australasia visit wetlands in their country and count waterbirds. As the count organiser, BirdLife coordinated an export of all shorebird and waterbird data into the AWC database. As part of this process, we coordinated data from other affiliates and collaborators (for example Universities) who separately undertake key monitoring efforts to make sure their data are also included in our database. The data update included over 160,000 shorebird and waterbird recovers across 150 shorebird areas, representing over 12.5 million birds that will be critical to flyway wide conservation efforts.

The Birdmark database continues to be the primary data system for banding and leg flagging in Australia. It is hosted and maintained by Prof. Marcel Klaassen and his team at Deakin University. Birdmark also includes resightings information. This system is being used to provide foundational movement and survival data for the AviFluMap portal.

BirdLife Australia and Prof. Rich Fuller at the University of Queensland were engaged by Mark Carey (DCCEEW, Australian Government) in 2022-2023 to undertake a new revision of the EAAF population estimates for Australia. This report is nearly complete and is due for release in October 2025.

KRA 3.3 Updated list of sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds for conservation management and prioritisation.

KRA 3.4 A stronger understanding is developed on the anticipated impacts of climate change on waterbirds and their habitats and this is informing planning and site management.

Indicator 3.4.1 Improved knowledge about threats, including climate change impacts, on waterbirds and their habitats is shared and appropriate action taken where possible.

22.

Please provide details on key research your organisation is involved in on climate change impacts on migratory waterbirds and wetlands in the EAAF, published since MOP11 (March 2023). Please also share any recent similar research programmes, both regionally and globally, that you are aware of.

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

Birdlife Australia have contributed to multiple Climate Change preparedness workshops and vulnerability assessments in Victoria. This included supplying mapping layers of important shorebird areas and participating in workshops to devise projects for building resilience to shorebird habitat to mitigate future impacts of rising sea levels.

Some recent publications:

- Lilleyman, A., & O'brien, G. (2025). Half a century of conservation work by volunteers: History of shorebird monitoring, research, and management actions in Darwin-Garramilla, Northern Territory, Australia. Wader Study, 131(3), 190-194.
- Tobias A. Ross, Junjie Zhang, Tonje G. Skaalvik, Robyn Atkinson, Roz Jessop, Alexandros G. Asimakopoulos, Veerle L.B. Jaspers, Marcel Klaassen, Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) do not accumulate with age or affect population survival in ruddy turnstone (Arenaria interpres). Science of The Total Environment, Volume 955, 2024, 176790, ISSN 0048-9697, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2024.176790
- An, S., Kuang, F., Wu, W., Hassell, C.J., Coleman, J.T., Gao, Z., Sun, X., Yuan, Y., Maglio, G., Kar-Sin K. Leung, K., Feng, X, and Zhijun Ma, Z. (2024). Individual consistency in spatiotemporal characteristics of migratory Whimbrels in the East Asian–Australasian Flyway. Avian Research, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avrs.2024.100191.
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KRA 3.5 Collaborative research programmes are established to provide effective support for conservation and sustainable management efforts, particularly the sustainable use of resources for local livelihood benefits.

Indicator 3.5.1 Research programmes on improving conservation and sustainable management outcomes have increased.

23.

Please provide brief information on areas of collaborative research programmes your organisation is involved in since MOP11 (March 2023) about the improvement of conservation and sustainable management outcomes at internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds. Please also share any recent similar research programmes, both regionally and globally, that you are aware of.

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

BirdLife Australia and the AWSG are compiling a revised National Habitat Directory for important shorebird sites in Australia. The report will update the existing 'Directory of Important Migratory Shorebird Habitat in Australia' (Birdlife/AWSG, 2020) with updated shorebird population estimates and habitat, including provision of GIS spatial layers and associated metadata. The report will be available as a user-friendly, online spatial interface.

The AWSG and WA based BirdLife Austalia staff have undertaken a shorebird catching trip in November 2024 in the southern Exmouth Gulf. The trip is a continuation of research that was funded by Woodside (this partnership finished in Nov 2024), and is also supported by Edith Cowen University, the WA Government WAMSI and Deakin University.

The AWSG, VWSG and QWSG are contributing thousands of banding and flagging records, and leg flag resightings, to 2 national-scale projects funded under the National Environmental Science Program: Project 4.17 "Supporting recovery and management of migratory shorebirds" and Project 4.26 "Modelling shorebird migration to assess disease risk amid global change". Key project partners include Deakin University and the University of Queensland, with whom the AWSG already collaborates extensively. https://www.nespmarinecoastal.edu.au/project/4-17/ and https://www.nespmarinecoastal.edu.au/project/4-26/

AWSG data were integral to completing a recent population trends analysis (Rogers, Amano, Fuller 2023 https://www.nespmarinecoastal.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Project-1.21_Final-report.pdf)

The VWSG and AWSG are collaborating with Deakin University on the Sanderling tracking program

The VWSG and AWSG are collaborating with Max Planck Institute and the New Zealand Government Department of Conservation on the Double-banded Plover tracking project

Birdlife Australia and AWSG have collaborated on an online tool designed to support wildlife managers and biosecurity stakeholders in assessing and responding to the risk of H5 avian influenza (H5 bird flu) in Australia's wild bird populations. Initiated by Wildlife Health Australia (WHA) and developed by Deakin University in collaboration with Birdlife Australia, this new online tool AviFluMap demonstrates how rigorous, long-term data collected by citizen scientists can be used to address biodiversity issues

as well as the increasing intersection with human health and agriculture. Link to AviFluMap here: https://hpairisk.deakin.edu.au/

AWSG participated in a November field Expedition in partnership with BLA in Nov 2024, providing field support to collect blood samples for HPAI through Deakin.

Dr Andrea Griffin at University of Newcastle is leading a research and monitoring program that utilises automated tracking with their Motus array.

Dr Birgita Hansen (AWSG Chair), based at Federation University is leading the Latham's Snipe Project, which is in its 11 year and has generated important information on the distribution, abundance, migration and movement ecology of the species. Information generated from this project was integral to the 2024 uplisting of Latham's Snipe to Vulnerable under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act*.

In October 2023, a joint project between Princeton University, Beijing Normal University, Global Flyway Network, and the AWSG captured migratory shorebirds and fitted 107 them with 'tags'. This included 29 Black-tailed Godwits (solar powered GPS/4G transmitters), and 31 Red Knots, 29 Great knots, and 18 Bar-tailed Godwits (solar powered GPS loggers). Project aims were to investigate the migration routes, breeding territories and non-breeding movements of the melanuroides subspecies of Black-tailed Godwit. And to gain a more detailed understanding in the variation and consistency in the distribution and habitat preferences of Bar-tailed Godwits, Great and Red Knots at coastal stopover sites along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway throughout the annual movement cycle, to facilitate effective habitat conservation and management practices at both local and regional scales, through identifying local shorebird hotspots and regional conservation gaps. It was a very successful collaborative project and data continues to be generated by the tags. Funding is available for analysis to be conducted.

Indicator 3.5.2 Knowledge generated is being applied in at least 50% of internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds.

24.

Please give examples of how knowledge generated through research programmes on the improvement of conservation and sustainable management outcomes is being applied at internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds.

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

All activities that AWSG, BirdLife Australia and all regional groups are underpinned by the need to addressing conservation and sustainable management needs for migratory shorebirds

QWSG has long standing research collaborations with the Fuller Lab at the University of Queensland. AWSG, VWSG and Deakin University have been active in the development of an integrated database encompassing banding, leg-flagging, tracking and resighting data, and are now collaborating to undertake detailed survival and disease risk (including Avian flu) analyses.

KRA 3.6 Best practice guidelines for waterbird and habitat conservation programmes, including the incorporation of traditional knowledge, are developed and made available.

Indicator 3.6.1 Best practice guidelines are available on the EAAFP website.

25.

Please provide brief details on the development and application of national-level best practice guidelines your organisation is involved in for waterbird and habitat conservation, including the application of traditional knowledge, published/made available since MOP11 (March 2023). Please also share any recent similar research programmes, both regionally and globally, that you are aware of.

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

Birdlife Australia and AWSG contributed to the online tool designed to support wildlife managers and biosecurity stakeholders in assessing and responding to the risk of H5 avian influenza (H5 bird flu) in Australia's wild bird populations, AviFluMap here: https://hpairisk.deakin.edu.au/

Birdlife Australia and AWSG have created an Identification booklet for Migratory shorebirds that regularly visit Australia. The template and artwork and template are free to use by other groups. See the booklet here:

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f573d9a9d70eb09a8e9ec77/t/607257eb0e3f7802d7a25cb3/1 618106437225/14-Shorebirds-Identification-Booklet-Birdlife-Australia.pdf

BirdLife Australia and AWSG representatives have contributed to the Monitoring Protocol Development Session online as part of the 1st EAAFP Flyway Science Symposium in Beijing

Guidelines for the management and restoration of Latham's Snipe wetland habitat were released in early 2025. These can be accessed at https://doi.org/10.25955/28139495.v1

26.

In what ways have you considered, or already included traditional knowledge, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), or citizen science in your work?

Additional information:

Indigenous Rangers remain active in monitoring shorebirds throughout Australia, including Northern Australia

All monitoring and catching undertaken by volunteers and citizen scientists.

OBJECTIVE 4 Build the habitat and waterbird management capacity of natural resource managers, decision makers and local stakeholders.

KRA 4.1 EAAFP promotes the use of the range of available training tools and provides assistance to address challenges at Flyway Network Sites.

Indicator 4.1.1 All Partners and Secretariat have mechanisms for capacity building in place to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, tools and experience.

snaring of knowledge, tools and experience.	
27. Has your organisation been involved in <u>identifying/developing</u> capacity building activities and materials about migratory waterbird and habitat management? If yes, please provide some details.	☑ Yes☐ No☐ Planned
Additional information:	
BirdLife Australia have conducted around 40 training workshops on how to count sho	rebirds and get involved in
the monitoring program. VWSG and AWSG members contributed. QWSG are very act	ive in regional training and
support to volunteers and community.	
28.	⊠ Yes
Has your organisation implemented capacity building activities and materials for	□ No
migratory waterbirds and the management of their habitats?	
If yes, please provide feedback on their values.	□ Planned
Additional information:	
As per Q 27. QWSG regularly provides training days for prospective citizen scie	ntists to gain shorebird
monitoring skills. The QWSG also provides training in the capturing, banding, f	lagging and attachment
of PTTs to advance a pool of skilled volunteers at local sites.	
•	
Indicator 4.1.2 Partners and the Secretariat include capacity building assessment i	n project proposals.
29.	
	☐ Yes
Has your organisation included a training needs assessment or survey in projects	□No
you have developed, funded, and/or implemented since MOP11 (March 2023)?	□ Not applicable
If yes, please provide some additional information.	□ Planned
Additional information:	
L III A AAATI EAAED III A LII LII LII LII LII LII LII LII L	
Indicator 4.1.3 The EAAFP online technical training manual for Flyway Site manager	
by at least 50% of Flyway Site Managers.	nent is supported and used
by at least 50% of Flyway Site Managers. 30.	
• •	□Yes
30. Has your organisation used the <u>EAAFP online technical training materials</u> for	□ Yes ⊠ No
30.	□Yes
30. Has your organisation used the <u>EAAFP online technical training materials</u> for Flyway Site management? Please provide some additional information on the	□ Yes ⊠ No

KRA 4.2 Capacity of Partner Focal Points and site managers to pursue the EAAFP objectives has increased.

Indicator 4.2.2 At least one meeting of Partner Focal Points, including site managers, is held per annum.

31.		
Has your organisation been able to participate in any meetings of EAAFP Partner	⊠ Yes	
Focal Points? (e.g. Science Symposium, AFN workshops, CMS COP etc.)	□No	
If yes, have any new collaborations with other EAAFP Partners been developed	□ Planned	
from these meeting(s)? Please provide details.		
Additional information:		
The AWSG was represented by Phil Straw at the EAAFP Science Symposium in Beijing. Dr Lindall Kidd and Phil Straw have also attended meetings of the CEPA working group, and Chris Hassell has attended meetings of the Shorebird Working Group.		

KRA 4.3 Corporates with operations impacting on migratory waterbirds are engaged in delivering better outcomes for the conservation of waterbirds and their habitats.

Indicator 4.3.1 An increased number of internationally important sites and programmes, in which Corporates are contributing to positive outcomes for migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

32.

Please provide details you have on corporate engagement at internationally important sites and in programmes to develop positive outcomes for migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

From 2022-2024 Woodside funded a research project in the Internationally significant Exmouth Gulf.

AWSG and BirdLife collaborated to add a new catching site for migratory shorebirds in northwest

Western Australia, supported by Woodside. As part of this project, 273 migratory shorebirds were fitted with leg flags and 10 Bar-tailed Godwits were fitted with satellite (GPS) tags.

OBJECTIVE 5 Develop, especially for priority species and habitats, flyway wide approaches to enhance the conservation status of migratory waterbirds.

KRA 5.1 Partners are actively collaborating to develop approaches to conserve migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the EAAF across national boundaries.

Indicator 5.1.1 At least 50% of Partners are collaborating across national boundaries initiatives for the conservation of migratory waterbirds, particularly for threatened migratory waterbirds.

33.

Please provide brief details on your organisation's transboundary involvement in international collaborative initiatives for threatened migratory waterbirds (e.g. NEASPEC, AFN, bilateral agreements, AMBI, Sister Sites etc.).

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

In Queensland, The QWSG hosted a delegation from South Korea that represented groups and local governments that were concerned in the establishment of the Getbol World Heritage sites. They were given talks on how waders are protected in Queensland, plus they visited many areas around Moreton Bay. As a result of this event the QWSG was invited to give a presentation at the first Getbol Conference that was held in Incheon South Korea.

The QWSG helped the Brisbane City Council in hosting a visit to Brisbane of members of the Narashino Council, Chiba, Japan, and the Yatsu-higata Nature Observation Centre. This four-day visit is a long-standing exchange and the group was guided around Moreton Bay and partook in many activities.

In New South Wales, GEF-China's International Learning Exchange Visit to Australia and New Zealand in December, 2024 was hosted by the Hunter Bird Observers Club at the Hunter Wetlands Centre.

34.

What does your organisation consider to be the key innovative and/or improved approaches to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats particularly across national boundaries since MOP11 (March 2023)?

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

Monitoring of shorebirds to support is a high priority and this should continue with better funding support – baseline population data must be the highest priority especially with reducing government support over time for monitoring.

KRA 5.2 Threatened migratory waterbirds are protected from threats and populations are stable or increasing.

Indicator 5.2.1 The Partnership, with leadership from IUCN, BirdLife International & Wetlands International, is updating and maintaining a list of threatened migratory waterbird populations and encouraging Government Partners to protect these threatened populations under national legislation.

35.

Please provide information on the development of a list of threatened migratory waterbird populations in the EAAF in which your organisation has been involved in.

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

National Habitat Directory

In January 2024, monitoring data was used to support the uplisting of 7 shorebirds species. There are now 16 listed species.

36.	
Has your organisation been involved in taking actions to reduce threats to	⊠ Yes
migratory waterbirds?	□No
If yes, please provide some examples of measures taken (e.g. addressing	□ Planned
negative impacts of renewable energy, habitat restoration, etc.)	

Additional information:

- BirdLife's role in response to the threat of High Path Avian Influenza (HPAI) preparedness can be
 considered in two elements; 1. Providing advice on threat of incursion and spread via wild bird
 populations in space and time, and 2. Identifying and prioritizing conservation threats and assisting
 in species or site-based emergency response planning.
- Birdlife prepared a submission on the proposed conditions for the exploratory permit for wrack harvesting on western Eyre Peninsula to ensure conditions around identifying shorebirds and avoiding disturbance can be achieved.
- Birdlife continues to work with stakeholders in South Australia to reduce the threat of disturbance through recreational vehicle use on beaches. Birdlife have played an extensive role, together with Birds SA, in identifying sites with high shorebird value and high impact of off-road vehicles for a beach closure trial.
- We are supplying data layers and advice for BirdLife International's Avistep team who are developing a sensitivity map for Australia's onshore and offshore renewables environments.
- Birdlife initiated another floating roost trial in the Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria, comprising 4 roosts at 2 locations. The projects seeks to temporarily address roost deficiencies in the area caused by increased disturbance and mangrove incursion.
- The Beach-nesting bird monitoring in SA has been important to track impacts on shorebirds and
 other marine life from deteriorating beach condition caused by recent storms and erosion.
 Furthermore, there has been recent severe algal blooms from Fleurieau Peninsula and Kangaroo
 Island as far south-east as Robe, which has killed a huge number of organisms. There is great
 concern for beach nesting birds like oystercatchers and plovers that feed on potentially poisoned
 marine invertebrates.

Indicator 5.2.2 Single Species Action Plans are developed and implemented for threatened migratory waterbird species in the EAAF.

37.

Please outline the contribution your organisation has made to the development and implementation of Threatened Species Action Plans since MOP11 (March 2023) (e.g. Far Eastern Curlew, Masked Finfoot, Blackfaced Spoonbill, Spoon-billed Sandpiper).

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

BirdLife Australia will establish Recovery Coordinators for existing Priority Bird recovery teams (or analogue groups), to support effective governance, coordination, registration, resourcing, and recovery action, aligned to best practice guidelines. The project will also initiate steps to establish recovery teams for 3 Priority Birds including Far Eastern Curlew. See also response from Australian Government with input from BirdLife Australia.

Indicator 5.2.3 Populations of threatened migratory waterbirds are either stable or increasing.

38. Has your organisation been involved in any programme(s) to assess changes in the status of populations of threatened waterbirds? If yes, please provide details.	✓ Yes☐ No☐ Planned	
Additional information:		
AWSG and BirdLife have collected all foundational data to support both trends analyses and conservation status changes at state and federal levels. As part of a national trend analysis to determine whether shorebird declines had decelerated, we partnered with University of Queensland researchers to provide 30 years of shorebird data for analyses. Following this, we submitted comments to the Federal Government updating the official conservation status for shorebirds. Our feedback was incorporated in the EPBC Act listing assessments released in January 2024.		
KRA 5.3 Regional Action Plans are developed and implemented for priority geograp	hic regions of the EAAF.	
Indicator 5.3.1 Development and implementation of Regional Action Plans for geogeommon critical threats in the EAAF.	graphical regions with	
39. What has been your organisation's involvement in the development and implement	ntation of Regional Action	

What has been your organisation's involvement in the development and implementation of Regional Action Plans (e.g. SPREP, AFN, AMBI)?

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

We have completed 21 Site Action Plans developed in collaboration with land managers. These site-specific management plans highlight management priorities at a local scale for important shorebird areas around Australia. A Site Action plan for Darwin Harbour was developed within this reporting period. This action plan made productive use of existing frameworks and was entirely volunteer driven. Access available here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1y8c32V_-

mtaMUX9_Yrx6ameTu4DQMjbW/view?fbclid=IwY2xjawKs1ehleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETFUWWU4Znp EMXhlVjF1NVVBAR488XxR9Hb5Q_5xgKQ_n-

FxABwWWLJdNveaMEgZACDg9m3qLe9ufZDESB_FhA_aem_LcQcxqINwbwcX9sNoL_u2A

KRA 5.4 Measures to reduce and, as far as possible eliminate, illegal hunting, take and trade of migratory waterbirds are developed and implemented.

Indicator 5.4.1 All Government Partners have mechanisms in place to reduce and, as far as possible, eliminate, illegal hunting, take and trade of migratory waterbirds.

40.

What work has your organisation done to reduce and, as far as possible, eliminate illegal hunting, taking and trade of migratory waterbirds?

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

KRA 5.5 The conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats is mainstreamed into national legislation and/or policy instruments including adaptation to the impacts of climate changes.

KRA 5.6 The conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats is integrated into relevant multilateral and bilateral agreements and other regional mechanisms.

Indicator 5.6.1 Relevant environmental agreements recognise the EAAFP as an effective regional framework to conserve migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

41.

Please provide any suggestions your organisation has on strengthening existing multilateral regional and bilateral agreements, and other regional mechanisms to deliver better outcomes for migratory waterbirds and their habitats.

*Please provide weblinks if available online or references for relevant publications.

Your Response:

Others

42.

Please provide any feedback you have on this Partner Reporting Template.

Your Response:

The template could be considerably shortened to capture key information in less questions – for example, 1-2 questions in each section on flyway site networks, CEPA, data, status and trends, and threat management. I would recommend the secretariat review how this information is being used and prioritise what information is absolutely necessary to meet future obligations.

This template requires a clear justification up front as to why so much information is being harvested, and access to reports or publications showing how previously harvested information was used.

43.

Please add any additional information you would like to share with us.

Your Response: