

## Shorebirds Competition 2020

### Background Information and Threatened Shorebirds

Shorebirds are also called “waders” and they make up about 10% of Australia’s bird species. They are a group of birds that wade in shallow water and look for food on coastal mudflats, estuaries and along the edges of inland wetlands. They have long legs in relation to their bodies and unlike seabirds, don’t have webbed feet and don’t swim. They live their lives entirely on shores and are highly vulnerable to disturbance from domestic animals, vehicles, people and coastal development.

Most of Australia’s shorebirds, 37 species in total, are *migratory*. They breed in the Northern Hemisphere and when it starts to get cold fly over 10,000 km to our shores, arriving in September-October. They “overwinter” on our shores until April- May, then fly back to the Northern Hemisphere to breed and repeat the cycle. The route they travel is called the *East Asian-Australasian Flyway* and each year millions of shorebirds make this journey. Some shorebirds (15 species) live on Australian shores all year round – these are called *resident* shorebirds.

Shorebirds are comprised of plovers, oystercatchers, lapwings, sandpipers, stints, stilts, snipe, curlews, knots and godwits. Some shorebirds are now listed as “threatened” in Australia, which means that they face the threat of extinction. Threatened species can fall into three categories: Critically Endangered (the most likely to become extinct), Endangered, and Vulnerable.

Threatened shorebird species listed by the Australian and state governments are shown below. Bird names in black font are migratory shorebirds, bird names in blue font are resident shorebirds.

Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy.

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) List of Threatened Fauna:

<b>Critically Endangered Shorebirds</b>	Effective	<b>Endangered Shorebirds</b>	Effective	<b>Vulnerable Shorebirds</b>	Effective
Curlew sandpiper	May 2015	Red Knot	May 2016	Greater Sand Plover	May 2016
Great Knot	May 2016	Lesser Sand Plover	May 2016	Bar-tailed Godwit (baueri)	May 2016
Bar-tailed Godwit (menzibieri)	May 2015	Australian Painted Snipe	May 2013	Hooded Plover (eastern)	Nov 2014
Eastern Curlew	May 2015				

NSW Government Office of Environment & Heritage, Threatened Species:

<b>Critically Endangered Shorebirds</b>	<b>Endangered Shorebirds</b>	<b>Vulnerable Shorebirds</b>
Beach Stone-curlew Hooded Plover	Bush Stone-curlew Curlew Sandpiper Pied Oystercatcher Australian Painted Snipe	Sanderling Great Knot Greater Sand-plover Lesser Sand-plover Sooty Oystercatcher Broad-billed Sandpiper Black-tailed Godwit Terek Sandpiper

Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning, Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988, Threatened List (April 2018):

**Threatened Shorebirds:** Great Knot, Curlew Sandpiper, Grey-tailed Tattler, Eastern Curlew, [Painted Snipe](#), [Hooded Plover](#), Terek Sandpiper.

Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning, Advisory List of Threatened Vertebrate Fauna in Victoria, 2013:

<b>Critically Endangered Shorebirds</b>	<b>Endangered Shorebirds</b>	<b>Vulnerable Shorebirds</b>
<a href="#">Australian Painted Snipe</a> Greater Sand Plover Grey-tailed Tattler Lesser Sand Plover	<a href="#">Bush Stone-curlew</a> Curlew Sandpiper Great Knot Red Knot Terek Sandpiper	Black-tailed Godwit Common Greenshank Common Sandpiper Eastern Curlew <a href="#">Hooded Plover</a> Marsh Sandpiper Pacific Golden Plover Ruddy Turnstone Whimbrel Wood Sandpiper

**Near threatened shorebirds:** Latham's Snipe, Long-toed Stint, Pectoral Sandpiper, Sanderling, [Sooty Oystercatcher](#).

Queensland Government Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006:

<b>Endangered Shorebirds</b>	<b>Vulnerable Shorebirds</b>
Lesser Sand-Plover <a href="#">Australian Painted Snipe</a> Red Knot Curlew Sandpiper Great Knot Northern Siberian Bar-tailed Godwit Eastern Curlew	<a href="#">Beach Stone-Curlew</a> Greater Sand Plover Western Alaskan Bar-tailed Godwit

South Australia National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972, Version 1.1.2020:

<b>Endangered Shorebirds</b>	<b>Vulnerable Shorebirds</b>
Lesser Sand-Plover <a href="#">Australian Painted Snipe</a> Red Knot Curlew Sandpiper Great Knot Far Eastern Curlew	<a href="#">Hooded Plover</a> <a href="#">Banded Stilt</a>

Western Australian Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016:

<b>Critically Endangered Shorebirds</b>	<b>Endangered Shorebirds</b>	<b>Vulnerable Shorebirds</b>
Curlew Sandpiper Great Knot Bar-tailed Godwit (Northern Siberian) Eastern Curlew	Red Knot Lesser Sand Plover <a href="#">Australian Painted Snipe</a>	Greater Sand Plover Bar-tailed Godwit (Western Alaskan)

**Specially Protected Species, but not Threatened:** Common Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Sanderling, Pectoral Sandpiper, Red-Necked Stint, Long-toed Stint, Double-banded Plover, Little-Ringed Plover, Oriental Plover, Latham's Snipe, Swinhoe's Snipe, Pin-tailed Snipe, Oriental Pratincole, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Asian Dowitcher, Black-tailed Godwit, Little Curlew, Whimbrel, Pacific Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Wood Sandpiper, Common Greenshank, Marsh sandpiper, Common Redshank, Terek Sandpiper.

**Priority Species – Rare, Near Threatened and other species in need of monitoring:** [Hooded Plover](#), Grey-tailed Tattler

Tasmanian Threatened Species Protection Act 1995:

**Endangered Shorebird:** Eastern Curlew

A selection of news headlines:

**First Australian shorebirds on critically endangered species list**  
The Sydney Morning Herald, 29 May 2015

**Losing Ground: What's Behind the Worldwide Decline of Shorebirds?**

Living Bird magazine, Autumn 2018

**The plight of migratory shorebirds**

ABC Newcastle, 13 May 2015

**Conservationists plan a food drop to save migratory shorebirds from starvation**

ABC News, 12 April 2018

**Australian populations of threatened bird species halves in 30 years**

**Migratory shorebirds populations down by average of 70% from 1985 to 2015**

The Guardian, 28 Nov 2018

**Shore birds population facing dramatic decline in face of habitat destruction, UQ scientists say**

ABC News, 17 April 2016

**The bird and the businessman: A billionaire developer's plan to build on a protected wetland**

Radio National (RN) feature, 9 December 2018

News feature, *Nature (journal)*, 6 Jan 2017

**WHAT'S KILLING THE WORLD'S SHOREBIRDS?**

**Eastern curlew, a visitor from Siberia and Alaska, draws calls for help to save it from extinction**

ABC Newcastle, 10 May 2018