

WILDLIFE DIARY

February 2016
Commemorating 21 years of Curlew Watch

Great Finds

Curlew monitoring data (some past data)

1998 WPSQBB & local community field survey.
Coochiemudlo Island - 33 adult birds and 13 young
Lamb Island – 16 adult birds
Macleay Island – 43 adult birds and 4 young

2000 WPSQBB & local community field survey.
Cleveland (G.J. Walter Park) – 10 adults (May)
Macleay Island – 56 adult birds
Peel Island - 15 adult birds
Lamb Island - 28 Adults & 4 young and 2 eggs (Nov)

2001 WPSQBB & local community field survey.
Coochiemudlo Island - 56 adults and 16 chicks (Feb)

Population

“Nevertheless so profound is our ignorance, and so high our presumption, that we marvel when we hear of the extinction of an organic being; and as we do not see the cause, we invoke cataclysms to desolate the world, or invent laws on the duration of the forms of life!”

— Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*.

What does a Bush Curlew eat?

Mainly insects, molluscs, spiders, frogs and lizards. We have observations of dog and cat food being exploited, as have human handouts.

What do they need? Ecology

Bush Stone curlews require sparsely grassed, lightly timbered open forest or woodland.

What threatens our Bush Curlews

Loss of habitat and natural food sources, un-supervised domestic pets, foxes, lawn mowers, unwary walkers in parks. What can you do. If you see a cat or dog nearby, warn the owner or if no owner, chase the animal away.

Do Bush Curlews move about?

Sedentary when breeding, however, there may be local movement after breeding. There are records of birds congregating into small flocks after breeding. These flocks may roam over a 100 km², and recent research shows movement of curlews between the mainland and islands.

Did you Know?

Did you know Curlew Watch started 21 years ago and if you include the great work undertaken by BOCA, (Bird Observers Club Australia) the founders of “Friends of Stone Curlew”, it’s a lot longer. We need to thank Doreen Payne a former executive member of Wildlife Queensland Bayside who in 1995 initiated the idea by taking the BOCA curlew program and starting a similar project in the Redlands.

Did you know the first record in our first electronic database was the 5/07/1996. Since then we have progressed to using more sophisticated online databases, such as iNaturalist. http://www.inaturalist.org/observations/new?project_id=4157

Did you know Wildlife Queensland conducted many curlew education and survey training workshops across the Redlands in 2000. Perhaps it’s time to do more?

Did you know there is a grey and rufous morph. The grey morph is found in the Redlands. The rufous morph is found in Northern Australia. The rufous morph has boldly streaked rufous brown upper parts. Neck browner, forehead rufous brown, breasts, flanks and upper belly rufous brown

Great Walks



The best walks to see Bush Curlews are. Just about most major parks in the Redlands will support one or two Bush Curlews. Coochiemudlo Island has perhaps the largest population of curlews

that are readily accessible to most people. Walk around the island and you will surely see many Bush Curlews.

Web Sites

WPSQ Coastal Community Science
<http://wpsqccs.wordpress.com/>

Curlew Watch

<https://wpsqccs.wordpress.com/curlew-watch/>

Record your Bush Curlew sighting

<http://www.inaturalist.org/projects/bush-curlew-sighting>

Redland Planning issues?

<http://carp-redlands.org/>

21years of Wildlife Queensland Curlew Watch

Join the effort to save curlews in Redlands

WATCH out for curlews. That's the message of wildlife groups striving to safeguard the Bush Stone Curlew which has become extinct in many southern areas of Australia.

The Redlands, particularly the southern areas of the Shire and Bay Islands, continues to support many breeding Bush Stone Curlew pairs, but encroaching urbanisation is taking its toll.

"Unfortunately, we are seeing the same patterns of decline in southern states being repeated in the Shire, particularly the northern areas of the Shire, where urban infill and expansion are resulting in habitat loss, increased road-kills and likelihood of domestic animal attack," secretary of the Bayside Branch of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland, Simon Baltais said.

"Their eggs, which are laid on bare ground, and their young are susceptible to predators such as feral animals and foxes.

"This is such a shame. Research has shown that these birds adapt quite well to the presence of people, if given a chance.

"A patch of bushland, some un-mown grassland, controlled pets and careful night driving are all they need.

"In fact, street lighting brings a smorgasbord of night insects and these form a major part of the curlew's diet."

The Wildlife Preservation Society has formed a Curlew Watch group to try to save the curlew in the Redlands.

About 30 local volunteers have been busy locating birds and studying their habits and recording data on them.

"Such information is valuable, as it allows us to inform government agencies about matters which affect the survival of these wonderful birds."



Baltais said. "Survival is very much a major issue, with the curlew now extinct in many areas in the southern states."

For those interested, Curlew Watch continues to provide free information, offering details about some simple steps that can be taken that will help make all the difference to the curlew's survival in the Redlands.

"Curlew Watch 1999 will continue to encourage anybody to send in details about any curlews they see or hear. It's all valuable information," Mr Baltais said.

"We will provide survey sheets and associated details on their use.

"Of particular interest this year is what these birds are doing during the non-breeding season of January to May.

"We are also increasing our attention on the Beach Stone Curlew (*Esacus neglectus*), listed as vulnerable under the Queensland Nature Conservation Act, as this species is in real trouble, even in Queensland and particularly in the Redlands."

For details about Curlew Watch contact the WPSQ Bayside Branch at PO Box 427, Capalaba 4157.



EVEN when you know where they are, the Bush Stone Curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*) can be extremely hard to find (at left). With clever camouflage and the ability to remain totally motionless, these native birds can just simply melt into the background of the surrounding bush. Many times it's their call, an eerie, mournful wail made at night during the breeding season, that is the only indication they are around.

Photo by **ELLIE CURSBIDGE** Drawing from "The Field Guide to the Birds of Australia"



WPSQBB
2001 Curlew Map - Redlands

14/09/1998 15:28 61-3-9802-2677 BIRDS AUSTRALIA PAGE 01

With Compliments To: 5
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4554P 1998. 14 pa

Simon - attached GALAH plus the

Post Office Box 185 Nunawading, Vic. 3131 Australia Telephone: 03-9877 5342 Fax: 03-9894 4048

17 December 1998

Dorcas Payne Wildlife Preservation Society of Qld - Bayside Branch 7 Anzika Road THORNLANDS Qld 4164

Dear Dorcas

re Friends of Stone-curlews

Thank you for your letter which contained such interesting news. It is good to hear of the possibility of further information about this species coming to light from different parts of the country. If it would be possible, I would like to have copies of the newspaper where you launched the idea, as it is always useful to see what local papers will print. This varies enormously in different areas.

WINTER REFUGE FOR BUSH STONE-CURLEWS

Post Office Box 185 Nunawading, Vic. 3131 Australia Telephone: 031 9877 5342 Fax: 03 9894 4048

BIRD OBSERVERS CLUB OF AUSTRALIA
A.C.N. 005 068 842
183 Springvale Road, Nunawading, Victoria, 3131

1 August 1996

Dear Friend of Stone-curlews

Welcome to our group. We are very happy to tell you that the number of Friends of Stone-curlews is growing steadily, and we hope that you will be able to take part in several different projects to assist these vulnerable birds.

We are currently gathering information about the habitat requirements of both species of stone-curlews, and we expect that the Friends of Stone-curlews will play a key role in establishing a network of contacts 'on the ground' to ensure that the information is directed to where it will be most effective.



Bush Curlew 2016 distribution based on Wildlife Bayside database records



CURLEW WATCH
(Both Thick-knee, Eastern Shore Curlew or Bush Curlew)

Information Sheet No 5

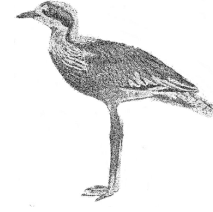
INTRODUCTION

DESCRIPTION

REPRODUCTION

STATUS

CONTACT



Never doubt that a small, group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

- Margaret Mead



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