



# Wash Wader Ringing Group 2010-2011 Report



## **AIMS OF THE WASH WADER RINGING GROUP**

The group aims to monitor waders using the Wash to provide a better understanding of their biology. This will allow decisions which may affect these waders to be taken in the light of factual information.

Work concentrates on eleven target species (Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Grey Plover, Knot, Sanderling, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew, Redshank and Turnstone), studying:

- the patterns of migration and origin of each species and any known populations;
- the importance of the Wash as a whole;
- the importance of sub-areas of the Wash;
- the use of biometrics and other techniques to understand how birds use the Wash;
- long-term population dynamics.

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Knot, Redshank (Cathy Ryden), Black-tailed Godwit (Rob Robinson), mist net setting (Lucy Wright).

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- The Royal Estate for generously allowing us to use their buildings for storage of equipment.
- Members of the public who have come across us in the field and have co-operated to help with our catching operations.

## INTRODUCTION

This report covers the Group's activities in the years 2010 and 2011. The most significant development was the introduction of colour-marking schemes for Grey Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit to improve our monitoring of these species. As well as fitting the colour mark (a flag with a unique two character combination engraved on it) during the Group's catching sessions, several members have visited the Wash at other times to provide follow up sightings of these birds.

Catching fortunes were mixed during the two years under review with considerably fewer waders caught in 2011 than in 2010. Nevertheless the totals are similar to the average in recent years. The small mesh nets introduced a few years ago have helped considerably in enabling catches to be made in circumstances where catching with large mesh nets would be impractical. The biggest disappointment is the inability to catch Dunlin in any number, reflecting the fact there are far fewer of this species now present on the Wash. Indeed, in 2011, the Group only managed to catch 373 Dunlin, probably the first time the annual total has been less than a thousand. Conversely during mist-netting sessions, Redshank now often overtakes Dunlin in numbers caught.

One gratifying aspect of the period covered by this report is the level of support for the Group both existing Group members and new participants.

Indeed, for reasons of accommodation available and having an adequate mix between experienced and inexperienced participants, it has, regrettably, been necessary to turn down would-be participants. Training is an important aspect of the Group's work and the larger team sizes has allowed more to be done.

For most of the fieldwork, the Group continues to be based at the Old School House in Terrington, which offers the most salubrious accommodation the Group has ever had, and may well contribute to the level of support the Group is currently enjoying. During the summer fieldwork sessions in both years, a team was based in Lincolnshire and were grateful for the use of Friskney Village Hall, again a great improvement from the barns and derelict buildings used on some occasions in the past.

The Group has vast quantities of data, all of it collected in paper form. Whilst the basic ringing data has long been entered on to computer, significant strides have now been made in adding all the other biometric data for all the birds the Group has 'processed'. Many members have assisted with this process but special mention must be made of Richard du Feu whose technical expertise has reformatted data to allow it to be transferred. Also John Bonell has continued his sterling work of transferring the data on our field recording sheets to computer file each year.

Yet again the Group's activities attract favourable media coverage. Filming for 'The One Show' at the end of 2011 was screened in January 2012.

Finally, although the Group has 'wader' in its title, it does not mean we do not take an interest in other species. Of particular interest has been the Outer

Bund and whilst just one wader catching attempt has been made there (333 Oystercatchers caught in 2002), at least 500 nestling gulls have been ringed on the bund every year since 2001 supported by Natural England, although this contract has now come to an end.

## FIELDWORK

### 2010 Fieldwork

Fieldwork for the year started on the earliest possible date, with a small team assembling on New Year's Day. Recces had not promised much so it was good to find both Oystercatchers and grey waders near the nets. However, in the event just 22 birds were caught to start the year. Deteriorating weather caused the abandonment of mist-netting and the team headed home early. A second fieldwork session at the end of the month wasn't any more successful and also had to deal with high winds and snow. Just five birds were caught, but the Group's AGM was held during the weekend.

Unsuitable tides for catching for most of February and March meant there was an enthusiastic team for a mist-netting session on the first day of Spring (21 March). Unfortunately, once again, the weather did not cooperate, but it was possible to make a limited catch of 15. The following day's weather proved much better and many people stayed on for very productive resighting of colour rings for the Group's projects.

The annual visit to the Outer Bund to ring a sample of chicks from the gull colony took place on the last weekend in June. A total of 318 Lesser Black-backed and 250 Herring Gull nestlings were ringed. The rest of the weekend was spent carrying out maintenance on the Group's base and socialising.

Mini Wash Week in mid-July started promisingly for both teams, the Lincolnshire team catching no fewer than 767 Dunlin and the Terrington-based team catching 158 Oystercatchers in the Snettisham area. After this, success decreased with just one more cannon-net catch being made (of 99 Oystercatchers at Wrangle). Both teams did attempt a mist-net catch albeit in rather light conditions, Terrington being more successful with 17 birds compared with the Lincolnshire team's one bird!

Mid-August saw two teams assemble for Main Wash Week. Both teams were able to make significant catches; the Lincolnshire team caught just over 400 Oystercatchers on the Wainfleet islands and followed this up the next day with 329 Bar-tailed Godwit. Meanwhile the Terrington-based

team had success on Snettisham beach with a catch of over 700, mainly consisting of Dunlin and Sanderling in the ratio 1:4. Holbeach provided the venue for another good catch, nearly 200 Black-tailed Godwit, although the weather turned very wet whilst dealing with the catch. Other catches were of double, rather than treble, figures but the final morning's catch did include 33 Grey Plover, the largest catch of the species for some years. Both teams were able to mist net on the final evening, Redshank proving a good proportion of the birds caught at both sites.

Early September saw some huge predicted tides and a long fieldwork session was arranged to take advantage of these. In the event only limited opportunities for cannon-netting were available, but did result in two catches totalling over 200 Sanderling. One of the objectives was to recapture birds fitted with geolocators in 2009. This was successful for one bird but unfortunately it had lost the geolocator! Mist-netting proved very successful on two evenings, with over 450 birds in total, the majority being Redshank.

Two visits to the Wash were made in October. The first, early in the month, was just a mist-netting session and is most notable for the tide coming higher than anticipated. Regardless of this 81 waders were caught, of which the majority were Redshank. The second visit, later in the month, was a conventional full weekend, but the vagaries of weather and tide meant that nothing was caught on the Saturday. However a very satisfactory catch of 198 waders of six species was made on the Sunday. This included 39 Grey Plover, one of the largest catches of this species in recent years, apart from the catch of 33 in August. The value of this catch will hopefully be seen for many years to come as all the Grey Plover, and the Bar-tailed Godwit caught at the same time, were flagged with individually coded leg flags as part of the Group's project to colour mark these species.

This was the final catching for the year as, although Christmas Day was included on the Group's fieldwork programme, there were insufficient people available to form a team.

## 2011 Fieldwork

The year started with a successful catch of 173 Oystercatchers at Snettisham, although the weekend will probably be mainly remembered for various problems with the Group's trailers. The weather prevented mist-netting on the Saturday evening and Peregrines spooked the birds on Sunday morning.

February was another weekend affected by the weather and it was not until the Sunday morning that any birds were caught. This, however, was a very successful catch of 238 Sanderling, of which no fewer than 51 already wore rings and the oldest was at least 12 years old.

Mid-March saw the team assembling again and successful catches were made on two of the three tides. The Saturday morning catch mainly consisted of Oystercatchers. Sunday morning was another attempt to catch Sanderling which should have had geolocators attached but, frustratingly, although one of them was caught, it, like the one caught last September, had also lost the unit.

The Group's next activity was the annual visit, in late June, to the Outer Bund to ring samples of the Lesser Black-backed and Herring Gulls nesting there. As has become custom, this was combined with maintenance of both the Group's catching equipment and of the base.

Mini Wash Week was not until the very end of July. There were enough people to deploy two teams, based respectively in the Old School House and Friskney Village Hall. Both teams had their only three-figure catch early in the period and then struggled to make any other significant catch. The best was 63 Curlew by the Terrington-based team and a further 26 Curlew by the Lincolnshire team. Main Wash Week in late August/early September proved particularly frustrating for the Terrington-based team as various cannon-netting attempts failed, the only birds being caught this way being

17 Curlew. Mist-netting on two evenings at the end of the period were more rewarding with reasonable sized catches. Particularly noticeable was the relative lack of Dunlin in these catches. Meanwhile the Lincolnshire team were having rather more success, the highlights being 350 Knot on the Wainfleet islands, and 105 Bar-tailed Godwit. They also made a number of double-figure cannon-net catches. Their single mist-netting attempt netted 60 birds, including two Whimbrel.

High predicted tides in late September led to an extended weekend being scheduled. In the event it was mist-netting which fared best with two sessions totalling 200 birds on Terrington Marsh. Cannon-netting proved disappointing with just 30 Curlew on the Saturday and 68 Dunlin on the Sunday morning.

The Group's year ended with a weekend trip towards the end of November. This was marked by strong winds and the presence of a film crew from the BBC's 'One Show'. Although the film crew had originally hoped we would catch Knot, they understood this was unlikely and in the event had to settle for a catch of just five Grey Plover. Nevertheless they went away happy, especially as one of the birds caught was 20 years old. The programme was screened in January 2012. Continuing wind resulted in a change of plan from mist-netting on the Saturday evening to a rising tide catch of Oystercatchers on the same Snettisham beach. With the Group now colour-marking a number of species, follow up observations are very useful so, with no realistic cannon-netting option on Sunday morning the whole team was deployed in trying to make sightings.

Although a 'possible' mist-netting session was on the dates sheet for Christmas Eve, this was again frustrated by strong winds.

**Phil Ireland**

Sanderling catch 20 March (Ruth Walker)



## TOTALS

Totals of birds caught in 2010 and 2011 are given in Table 1, with details by catch in Tables 2 and 3. In Tables 2 and 3 the top line records the catching site using a three character code. The first two characters identify the general area (see next page) and the third character identifies the exact location. The second line gives the day and month of the catch and the third line gives cannon nets fired or mist nets set (shown in brackets).

**Table 1: TOTALS – 2010, 2011 and Grand Total**

	2010			2011			Grand Total 1959-2011 (newly ringed)
	Newly ringed	Retrap	Total	Newly ringed	Retrap	Total	
Oystercatcher	619	120	739	372	158	530	36,889
Avocet	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Stone Curlew	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Little Ringed Plover	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Ringed Plover	23	2	25	32	0	32	1,205
Golden Plover	0	0	0	0	0	0	379
Grey Plover	66	10	76	24	3	27	6,311
Lapwing	0	0	0	0	0	0	70
Knot	107	1	108	572	6	578	53,447
Sanderling	278	115	393	515	167	682	11,788
Little Stint	0	0	0	0	0	0	50
Pectoral Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Curlew Sandpiper	5	0	5	3	0	3	313
Purple Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	43
Dunlin	1,552	67	1,619	368	5	373	135,388
Broad-billed Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ruff	0	0	0	0	0	0	109
Jack Snipe	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Snipe	0	0	0	0	0	0	60
Black-tailed Godwit	203	4	207	14	1	15	1,659
Bar-tailed Godwit	345	22	367	125	20	145	7,408
Whimbrel	6	0	6	2	0	2	192
Curlew	36	6	42	195	33	228	4,976
Common Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	55
Green Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Spotted Redshank	1	0	1	0	0	0	81
Greenshank	1	0	1	1	0	1	216
Wood Sandpiper	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Redshank	488	5	493	141	2	143	14,835
Turnstone	30	5	35	30	8	38	7,340
<b>TOTAL Waders</b>	<b>3,760</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>4,117</b>	<b>2,394</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>2,797</b>	<b>282,844</b>
Black-headed Gull	1	0	1	0	0	0	
Lesser Bb Gull – pulli	318	0	318	228	0	228	
Herring Gull – pulli	250	0	250	271	0	271	
Common Tern	1	0	1	0	0	0	
<b>TOTAL Non Waders</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>499</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>4,330</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>4,687</b>	<b>2,893</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>3,296</b>	

**Table 2: Catch totals for 2010.** Site codes used: AF, TM = Terrington; FM = Friskney; HE = Heacham; HM = Holbeach; LV = Leverton; SN = Snettisham; WM: Wainfleet; WT: Wrangle.

Site Code	SNX	HEW	AFS	HEH	LVD	WTF	AFS	FMU	AFS	WTV	HET	WMV	SNX	FMK	HMB	LVS	AFS	WTV	AFT	SNX	HEW	AFT	AFS	AFS	AFS	
Date	2.1	31.1	20.3	15.7	15.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	11.8	11.8	11.8	11.8	12.8	12.8	13.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	15.8	9.9	10.9	11.9	11.9	12.9	9.10	
Nets fired / (set)	1	1	(14)	2	3	1	(6)	(8)	2	1	2	2	1	1	4	1	(15)	(14)	1/2	1	1	1/2	(17)	(13)	(16)	
Newly ringed																										
Oystercatcher				130		86					54	348								1						
Ringed Plover		1											19							3						
Grey Plover	3																		32					1		
Knot	3		1											3	1		2	18	2		1		13	39	4	
Sanderling	1										2		112							60	94					
Curlew Sandpiper																							2	3		
Dunlin	14		6		735		4	1				1	537				17	13	71	4		5	18	17	17	
Black-tailed Godwit			3												190		1						3	6		
Bar-tailed Godwit	1								1		3			307			3	5					7	11	4	
Whimbrel										1							4						1			
Curlew			1					20							9		3						1	1	1	
Spotted Redshank																							1			
Greenshank																								1		
Redshank		1	1				11									21	69	10	2				145	176	50	
Turnstone		2	2										1				5	1					2	6	4	
TOTAL	22	4	14	130	735	86	15	1	21	1	59	349	669	310	200	21	104	47	107	68	95	5	192	262	80	
Site Code	SNX	HEW	AFS	HEH	LVD	WTF	AFS	FMU	AFS	WTV	HET	WMV	SNX	FMK	HMB	LVS	AFS	WTV	AFT	SNX	HEW	AFT	AFS	AFS	AFS	
Date	2.1	31.1	20.3	15.7	15.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	11.8	11.8	11.8	11.8	12.8	12.8	13.8	14.8	14.8	14.8	15.8	9.9	10.9	11.9	11.9	12.9	9.10	
Nets fired / (set)	1	1	(14)	2	3	1	(6)	(8)	2	1	2	2	1	1	4	1	(15)	(14)	1/2	1	1	1/2	(17)	(13)	(16)	
Retraps/Controls																										
Oystercatcher				28		13					23	56														
Ringed Plover		1											1													
Grey Plover																			1							
Knot																		1								
Sanderling													24							5	67					
Dunlin			1		32		1						21										1	1	1	
Black-tailed Godwit															4											
Bar-tailed Godwit											2			20												
Curlew								5															1			
Redshank																		1					3		1	
Turnstone																										
TOTAL	0	1	1	28	32	13	1	0	5	0	25	56	46	20	4	0	0	2	1	5	67	0	5	1	2	
ALL WADERS	22	5	15	158	767	99	16	1	26	1	84	405	715	330	204	21	104	49	108	73	162	5	197	263	82	



Table 2: Catch totals for 2010 (continued)

Site Code	SNX	AFS	TOT
Date	24.10	26.12	
Nets fired / (set)	2	(5)	
<b>Newly ringed</b>			
Oystercatcher			619
Ringed Plover			23
Grey Plover	30		66
Knot	18	2	107
Sanderling	9		278
Curlew Sandpiper			5
Dunlin	89	3	1,552
Black-tailed Godwit			203
Bar-tailed Godwit	3		345
Whimbrel			6
Curlew			36
Spotted Redshank			1
Greenshank			1
Redshank		2	488
Turnstone	7		30
TOTAL	156	7	3,760
<b>Retraps/Controls</b>			
Oystercatcher			120
Ringed Plover			2
Grey Plover	9		10
Knot			1
Sanderling	19		115
Dunlin	9		67
Black-tailed Godwit			4
Bar-tailed Godwit			22
Curlew			6
Redshank			5
Turnstone	5		5
TOTAL	42	0	357
ALL WADERS	198	7	4,117

Non waders

	TMZ	AFS	AFS	TOT
	27.6	16.7	14.8	
		(6)	(15)	
Lesser Black-backed Gull – pulli	318			318
Herring Gull – pulli	250			250
Black-headed Gull		1		1
Common Tern			1	1
NON-WADERS	568	1	1	570



Knot head and bill measurement (Cathy Ryden)

**Table 3: Catch totals for 2011.** Site codes used: AF, TM = Terrington; FM = Friskney; HE = Heacham; HM = Holbeach; LV = Leverton; SN = Snettisham; WM: Wainfleet; WT: Wrangle.

Site Code	SNX	HEW	HEW	SNX	HEW	LVS	WMV	HET	SNK	SNK	FMK	LVD	WMU	WMV	WMU	WTV	HEK	LVE	WMD	WMS	AFS	LVU	LVU	AFS	WTV	
Date	22.1	23.1	20.2	19.3	20.3	31.7	31.7	1.8	1.8	2.8	3.8	3.8	28.8	29.8	29.8	30.8	30.8	31.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.9
Nets fired / (set)	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	(7)	(15)	2	(8)	(15)	1	
Newly ringed																										
Oystercatcher	94	2		62										59	48			1								
Ringed Plover								1					30											1		
Grey Plover				3												4					1			1	10	
Knot		1		13			107							342						5	27	7	13	24		
Sanderling			187		68		2	204					11													
Curlew Sandpiper																								2		
Dunlin							45	2				9	35		3	6				2	10		21	15	2	
Black-tailed Godwit																								4		
Bar-tailed Godwit										2	6					1					2	88	9	5	1	
Whimbrel																							2			
Curlew						1			16	58	25					1	12	11	7		2	39	1	2		
Greenshank																								1		
Redshank																8					21		11	45	10	
Turnstone				1	20			1													2		2	4		
∞ TOTAL	94	3	187	79	88	1	154	208	16	60	31	9	76	401	51	20	12	12	7	7	65	134	59	104	23	
Site Code	SNX	HEW	HEW	SNX	HEW	LVS	WMV	HET	SNK	SNK	FMK	LVD	WMU	WMV	WMU	WTV	HEK	LVE	WMD	WMS	AFS	LVU	LVU	AFS	WTV	
Date	22.1	23.1	20.2	19.3	20.3	31.7	31.7	1.8	1.8	2.8	3.8	3.8	28.8	29.8	29.8	30.8	30.8	31.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.9	
Nets fired / (set)	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	(7)	(15)	2	(8)	(15)	1	
Retraps/Controls																										
Oystercatcher	77			17										15	6											
Grey Plover																									2	
Knot							1							5												
Sanderling			51		89			24																		
Dunlin							1					1								1						
Black-tailed Godwit																								1		
Bar-tailed Godwit				1																		17	1			
Curlew									4	5	1						5	1				5				
Redshank					6																				2	
Turnstone				2																						
TOTAL	77	0	51	20	95	0	2	24	4	5	1	1	0	20	6	0	5	1	0	1	0	22	1	1	4	
ALL WADERS	171	3	238	99	183	1	156	232	20	65	32	10	76	421	57	20	17	13	7	8	65	156	60	105	27	

**Table 3: Catch totals for 2011 (continued)**

Site Code	AFS	HEK	AFS	AFT	SNX	AFS	SNX	SNX	TOT		TMZ	TOT
Date	30.9	1.10	1.10	2.10	29.10	29.10	26.11	26.11			3.7	
Nets fired / (set)	(15)	2	(15)	1	1	(15)	1	2				
<b>Newly ringed</b>												
Oystercatcher								106	<b>372</b>			
Ringed Plover									<b>32</b>			
Grey Plover			1				4		<b>24</b>			
Knot	23		10						<b>572</b>			
Sanderling					43				<b>515</b>			
Curlew Sandpiper			1						<b>3</b>			
Dunlin	48		58	67	19	25	1		<b>368</b>			
Black-tailed Godwit	5		5						<b>14</b>			
Bar-tailed Godwit	4	3	1		1	2			<b>125</b>			
Whimbrel									<b>2</b>			
Curlew	2	18							<b>195</b>			
Greenshank									<b>1</b>			
Redshank	40		4			2			<b>141</b>			
Turnstone									<b>30</b>			
<b>6 TOTAL</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>2,394</b>			
Site Code	AFS	HEK	AFS	AFT	SNX	AFS	SNX	SNX	TOT			
Date	30.9	1.10	1.10	2.10	29.10	29.10	26.11	26.11				
Nets fired / (set)	(15)	2	(15)	1	1	(15)	1	2				
<b>Retraps/Controls</b>												
Oystercatcher								43	<b>158</b>			
Grey Plover							1		<b>3</b>			
Knot									<b>6</b>			
Sanderling					3				<b>167</b>			
Dunlin			1	1					<b>5</b>			
Black-tailed Godwit									<b>1</b>			
Bar-tailed Godwit						1			<b>20</b>			
Curlew		12							<b>33</b>			
Redshank									<b>2</b>			
Turnstone									<b>8</b>			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>403</b>			
<b>ALL WADERS</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>2,797</b>			

**Non waders**

Lesser Black-backed Gull – pulli	228	<b>228</b>
Herring Gull – pulli	271	<b>271</b>
NON-WADERS	499	<b>499</b>



Weighing a Redshank (Cathy Ryden)

## SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

The WWRG Scientific Committee regularly reviews and develops our catching priorities, facilitates the use of WWRG data for research and conservation purposes and considers proposals for requests for WWRG involvement in specific projects. Below are details of the work of the committee that took place during 2010 and 2011.

### Annual catching & monitoring targets

The major development that has taken place in WWRG monitoring activities in recent years has been the development of new colour-mark schemes and resighting activities. While ring-recapture data are invaluable for monitoring the movements, migration, age ratios and biometrics of species using the Wash, these data are rarely sufficient to allow analyses of demographic

patterns such as changes in survival rates. Consequently, colour-mark schemes have now been implemented for Grey Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit and Curlew, alongside the longer-running colour-ringing of Turnstone and Black-tailed Godwit. Colour-marking provides the opportunity for much greater frequencies of recording of marked individuals through resightings, and thus regular resighting efforts have been built into the fieldwork programme alongside catching efforts. These activities have been highly successful, and we are rapidly developing substantial and important databases of observations of individually-marked birds. We are very grateful to Jen Smart and Phil Atkinson for their efforts in administering WWRG colour-mark databases. Current annual monitoring targets are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Current annual monitoring strategy targets**

Species	Overall	West Shore	South Shore	East Shore
Oystercatcher	600	200		300 (W)
Grey Plover	250	75	75 (+C/R)	100 (+C/R)
Knot	1000	-	-	-
Sanderling	400	-	-	50 (W), 300 (S)
Dunlin	1500	500	500	500
Black-tailed Godwit	100 (30 C/R)	-	100 (30 C/R)	-
Bar-tailed Godwit	300	100	100	100 (+C/R)
Curlew	150	50	100	100 (+C/R)
Redshank	400	100	300	-
Turnstone	75	-	-	75 (20 C/R)

(W) = Winter: September to March

(S) = Spring: March to May

C/R = individually colour-ringed

### WWRG Projects

#### ***Geolocator-tagging of Sanderling***

During the winter of 2009, WWRG undertook a short project on the use of geolocator tags on Sanderling. This arose as a result of a request from the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Recovery team who were considering the use of geolocator tags to try and unravel the spring migration route of this now critically endangered species. However, geolocator tags had not previously been used on small waders, and so the potential value of this technology was explored by fitting seven tags to Sanderling at Heacham in November 2009. Two of these birds were recaptured after they had returned

from migration in the winter of 2010-2011; both were in good condition, but had lost their tags. Geolocator technology is developing extremely rapidly, and the information gathered by WWRG contributed to a workshop on the use of this technology (chaired by Nigel Clark) at the Wader Study Group conference in Portugal in 2010. The tag loss issue has meant that geolocators are no longer planned for use on Spoon-billed Sandpipers.

#### ***Using stable isotope markers to identify migratory origins***

In early 2011, WWRG were asked to collaborate on a research project with a team at the Museu



Nacional de História Natural in Lisbon, headed by Dr Teresa Catry, which aims to use analyses of stable isotope ratios to identify the wintering origins of migratory waders on stopover sites. The isotope ratios from Dunlin and Grey Plover captured on the Wash will be compared to those captured elsewhere in Europe, in an effort to identify links between winter sites and migratory stop-over sites on spring migration.

#### **Data archives**

The many group members who have been involved with inputting and checking the group's historical archives have now managed to complete much of the checking of biometric data, and we are at the stage of ongoing checking of newly collected data and gradually correcting the older data. Biometric data are now merged for years 1994-2009 and include around 42,000 records of birds with biometrics recorded. The group are extremely grateful to John Bonell who has undertaken the

task of inputting the data, and to Jackie Clark, Richard du Feu, Phil Ireland, Sarah Dawkins and the many other group members who have helped with the data-checking/cleaning process.

#### **Publications**

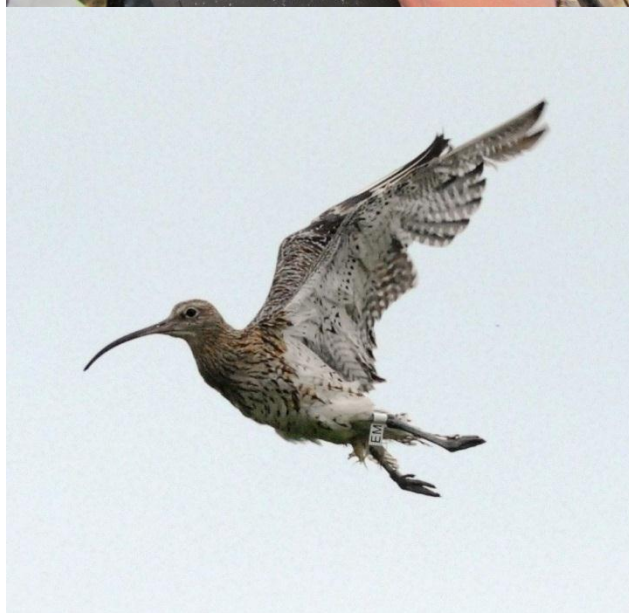
Recent publications in which WWRG data have featured are listed below.

Alves, J.A., Lourenço, P.M., Piersma, T., Sutherland, W.J. & Gill, J.A. (2010) Population overlap and habitat segregation in wintering Black-tailed Godwits. *Bird Study* **57**, 381-391.

Atkinson, P.W., McLean, I.M. & Clark, N.A. (2010) Impacts of shellfisheries and nutrient inputs on waterbird communities in the Wash, England. *Journal of Applied Ecology* **47**, 191-199.

**Jennifer Gill**

**Chair, WWRG Scientific Committee**



Flagging and resighting birds for the new colour-mark schemes (Lucy Wright, Cathy Ryden, Ruth Walker).

## WWRG ON TOUR - DELAWARE 2012

In May 2012, I was lucky enough to be able to join nine other members of WWRG on their annual trip to study waders in Delaware Bay in America. Members of the group have been travelling to the USA since 1997, when they were invited to join an international effort to understand more about the population status of migrant waders.

The waders that use Delaware Bay, as a staging area on their migration from their wintering grounds in South America to their breeding grounds in the Arctic, are heavily dependent on Horseshoe Crab eggs for food. In 1997, it became apparent that the Horseshoe Crabs were being over-harvested, threatening the waders' food source. As large numbers of waders spend such a short amount of time in North America, local ringers have little opportunity to gain experience. The expertise that WWRG can offer is, therefore, very useful. Since 1999, WWRG and the BTO have played a major role in undertaking fieldwork and training volunteers on the Delaware side of the Bay. Clive Minton, who formed WWRG in 1961, is heavily involved in the sister project on the New Jersey side of the Bay.

Each May, eight to ten members of WWRG travel to America to join the project for two or three weeks. On 19 May I met Lucy, Rob and Sarah at Heathrow to take my first trans-Atlantic (and first long-haul) flight out to Philadelphia to join Nigel, Jacquie, Richard, Graham, Lys and Dave, who had already been out there for a week. We were met at the airport by Greg, one of the Americans working on the Delaware Shorebird Project and were soon on our way to Slaughter Beach, our home for the next two weeks. On arrival, we took a quick detour to the Dupont Nature Centre, to allow the newbies (Lucy and me) our first view of Mispillion Harbour. No sooner had we stepped out of the car than we were greeted by Kevin Kalasz (Wildlife Biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Division and Delaware Shorebird Project leader) and some of the other members of WWRG who were there helping out with a public event.

Project work involves catching and flagging birds, counting the numbers of birds using each of the beaches and re-sighting the colour-flagged birds. The project aims to catch 350 individuals of each target species (Red Knot, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling and Semipalmated Sandpiper) annually. Approximately every three days, attempts are made to catch 'samples' of 50 birds of each species. Samples of Dunlin and Short-billed Dowitcher are also measured when they are caught and occasionally, other birds such as Semipalmated Plover and Least Sandpiper will also find their way into a catch and are ringed.

When not catching, team members visit the key beaches along the Bay shore to find and read leg flags. Re-sighting colour-flagged birds gives information on arrival and departure dates of individual birds, movements of birds within the Bay, and the survival of individual birds. Approximately 10% of the Red Knot population passing through the Bay is estimated to be flagged, along with smaller percentages of Turnstone, Sanderling and Semipalmated Sandpiper. The colour of the flag indicates which country the bird was flagged in. In the US, lime coloured flags are used, Canada uses white, Argentina orange, Brazil blue and Chile red. Percentage counts are also taken of Knot and Turnstone to ascertain the proportion of birds in the group that are flagged e.g. 50 birds whose legs are clearly visible will be counted and the number of flagged and unmarked birds noted. Researchers can then extrapolate from these data to estimate the percentage of birds flagged and see how this changes through the season.

The above, in a snapshot, is what I spent my two weeks in America doing. It all started on the Sunday morning with an early morning boat trip out to Back Beach. When the other team members suggested that the four newly arrived Brits should do the early boat trip as our body clocks would be out of sync with US time and we would therefore be awake at silly o'clock, I was a little sceptical. But, right on cue at 4am, I found myself wide awake and raring to go! The birds had arrived *en mass* a few days previously and the numbers in Mispillion Harbour that morning were truly astounding. I had been told that colour ring re-sighting would be a little different and a little easier than in the UK but I was not prepared for just how close the birds tolerated us. Once in position, the birds were happy to come within just a few feet of us which made re-sighting very easy!



Birds come very close in Delaware so resighting is easier – lift off on Back Beach (Ruth Walker).

The morning took an unexpected twist when I spotted a gull that I couldn't identify loitering on the beach amongst the Laughing Gulls. I asked Kevin



what it was and he phoned a friend who excitingly identified it from the description as a Sabine's Gull! It turned out to be only the third record for the state of Delaware. The bird proceeded to hang around the harbour for a week and proved quite popular with the ensuing twitchers!

That afternoon, I had my first chance to ring (band) birds the American way. The walk-in traps on Slaughter Beach had caught 64 Semipalmated Sandpipers, three Short-billed Dowitchers and one Semipalmated Plover. I was lucky enough to be able to ring half the semis and one of the dowitchers, whilst Richard ringed the plover. Two new species ringed on my first full day there was a nice start to the trip.

On Tuesday, we decided to go for a cannon-net catch on Osprey Beach. The setting team headed out in the boat, whilst the rest of us walked along the beach to base camp, flipping the Horseshoe Crabs that were stranded on their backs as we went. The birds soon found their way into the catching area and we took a catch of 90 Knot, 20 Turnstone, three Sanderling, 83 Semis, 86 Short-billed Dowitcher and 40 Dunlin. The catch took an interesting twist whilst processing the Dunlin. I was ringing the birds and passing them directly to Jacquie as the lead processor on the team and all was well until Jacquie received a bird and exclaimed "what the hell is this?" An initial look determined that this was no ordinary Dunlin! On closer inspection (and having called the resident Dunlin expert, Nigel, back to the beach) it was concluded that the bird was a hybrid Dunlin x White-rumped Sandpiper! Lots of photos were taken and a couple of feathers were bagged for DNA analysis to confirm its ID.



Hybrid calidrid (suspected Dunlin x White-rumped Sandpiper), left, and Dunlin, right (Ruth Walker).

Wednesday saw us spending the day re-sighting in very foggy and humid conditions whilst on Thursday I was introduced to the concept of the aerial survey. Ground counts are taken of the birds on key beaches every 15 minutes for an hour before the survey plane arrives. The plane then flies low over the area flushing the birds to enable

the counters on board to estimate numbers from the air. All very spectacular!

Before I knew it, I had been there for a week and it was nearly time for four of the other Brits to head home. Not wanting to let them have too easy a time of it on their last morning, we went up to Ted Harvey beach for a cannon-net catch. After a lot of twinkling and gentle persuasion, the birds cooperated and we took a nice catch of 50 Turnstone, 64 Knot, two Semis and one Dowitcher. Our findings from earlier in the week were confirmed here; the Knot were really, really fat! The target weight for a Knot to reach before it leaves Delaware Bay is 180g. Of the 64 caught, 35 were above this weight, the heaviest being 208g! The Turnstone were similarly rotund, the heaviest being somewhere around the 175g mark! An evening boat trip to Back Beach found few Knot left; most of the re-sightings we were getting were now of Turnstone and Sanderling.

The second week comprised much the same fieldwork as the first. Towards the end of the week, most of the Knot had headed off for colder climes and the remaining species were beginning to follow them. As the birds left, the project started to slow down and the remainder of the time was spent obtaining as many flag re-sightings as possible. This also meant that there was some free time for birding, which included taking a couple of short trips down to the beautiful Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge and a fantastic day's birding at Redden State Forest and Cape Henlopen (to see the gorgeous Piping Plover).

Provisional figures put the total number of birds ringed in 2012 at 1,139. Nearly 16,000 colour ring re-sightings were recorded from 3,561 individual birds. Not bad for three weeks! I would like to thank Kevin and Nigel for giving me the opportunity to join the project team and everyone involved in the trip for making it a fabulous and rewarding experience. It was a real privilege to be involved in the project and to work with such a dedicated and knowledgeable team.



WWRG ringers on tour in Delaware.

**Ruth Walker**

## SUMMARY OF RECOVERIES RECEIVED

The following tables summarise the total numbers of recoveries generated by the group. The tables include all recoveries from 1909 to 2011 that had been reported to the BTO by the end of April 2012. In each case the number before the / is the birds that were ringed on the Wash and found in the county or country and the number after the / is the birds ringed elsewhere and found on the Wash.

**Table 1: Movements of the Wash study species between the Wash and elsewhere in Britain & Ireland**

County	O'catcher	Ringed Plover	Grey Plover	Knot	Sanderling	Dunlin	Black-t Godwit	Bar-t Godwit	Curlew	Redshank	Turnstone
Antrim	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/2	2/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Avon	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	21/9	-/-	-/-	1/-	1/-	-/1
Bedfordshire	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/-	-/-
Berkshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Borders	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Cambridgeshire	5/-	3/-	-/1	1/7	-/-	3/-	16/-	-/-	1/1	9/3	-/-
Central	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Cheshire	-/-	1/-	-/-	7/11	4/6	27/20	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Cleveland	5/2	4/-	2/1	56/27	18/2	20/40	-/-	-/2	-/-	4/5	1/1
Clwyd	-/5	2/-	-/-	5/8	10/3	11/29	2/-	-/-	-/-	1/2	-/1
Cornwall	-/1	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	5/6	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Cumbria	1/1	5/-	-/-	5/10	3/3	21/31	-/-	-/1	-/-	1/-	1/-
Derbyshire	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Devon	3/7	5/-	-/-	-/2	-/-	10/10	2/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/10
Dorset	2/7	2/1	-/-	-/2	-/3	8/14	-/-	-/1	-/1	2/-	-/-
Down	-/-	3/-	-/-	2/-	-/-	2/6	2/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Dumfries	3/1	-/-	-/-	4/11	7/1	11/22	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/1	-/-
Durham	4/-	1/-	-/-	1/-	6/1	4/2	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/-	-/-
Dyfed	-/2	-/-	2/-	-/-	-/-	7/7	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-
E Ulster	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	5/3	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-
England	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Essex	9/3	4/-	2/-	3/1	3/-	5/9	17/-	-/-	-/-	7/-	1/-
Fair Isle	3/6	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	1/-	-/5	-/-	-/1	-/-	1/-
Fife	3/-	2/-	-/-	20/17	-/-	4/9	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/3	-/-
Glamorgan	5/10	1/-	-/-	3/2	-/-	16/4	-/-	-/-	-/-	3/5	-/-
Gloucestershire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/7	-/-	-/-	-/1	1/1	-/-
Gtr London	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-
Gtr Manchester	4/3	6/-	-/-	23/26	7/2	9/9	-/-	-/-	1/-	3/-	-/-
Grampian	12/3	-/-	-/-	3/6	-/-	2/22	-/-	-/-	-/-	6/9	-/-
Gwent	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	16/25	-/-	-/-	1/-	1/-	-/-
Gwynedd	9/7	4/2	-/-	5/2	-/-	118/	-/3	-/-	2/1	5/4	-/-
Hampshire	3/1	1/-	2/1	3/1	-/-	17/17	6/-	-/-	-/-	8/2	-/-
Hereford & Worcs	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-
Hertfordshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-
Highland	6/1	1/1	-/-	23/35	-/-	11/16	-/-	-/2	-/-	7/11	-/-
Humberside	19/7	8/1	1/1	8/2	-/-	7/22	25/-	1/1	-/1	5/2	-/-
Isle of Man	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Kent	9/1	-/-	1/-	1/2	13/2	5/43	8/-	-/1	1/-	3/2	1/-
Lancashire	2/1	8/-	-/-	57/47	5/-	37/41	7/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	1/-
Leicestershire	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/2	2/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-
Lincolnshire	502/	27/1	85/-	132/2	10/-	168/3	6/-	69/-	79/2	187/1	31/-
Londonderry	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-
Lothian	2/1	1/-	-/-	5/2	-/-	4/2	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/1	-/-
Merseyside	3/-	-/-	-/-	12/10	6/-	18/10	3/-	1/-	-/-	2/1	-/1
N Yorkshire	6/-	3/1	1/-	5/4	3/-	19/37	1/-	1/-	-/3	5/5	-/1
Norfolk	699/	111/1	185/-	304/-	98/-	359/4	30/-	37/-	113/-	439/1	154/-
Northampton	-/3	-/-	-/-	1/3	-/-	-/2	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-
Northumberland	8/-	6/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/5	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/1	-/-
Nottingham	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/2	-/-
Orkney	6/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	5/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-
Powys	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
S Yorkshire	-/-	4/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Shetland	26/8	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/2	-/3	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Shropshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/2	-/-	-/-
Somerset	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	41/8	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-
Staffordshire	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Strathclyde	1/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	3/4	1/2	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-
Suffolk	25/11	5/-	1/-	6/1	-/-	18/34	18/-	1/-	1/-	12/5	1/-
Surrey	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-
Sussex	3/-	-/-	-/-	2/-	-/-	1/2	3/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-
Tayside	3/3	-/-	1/-	2/5	1/-	-/2	-/-	-/-	-/-	8/6	-/-
Tyne & Wear	1/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	2/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-
Western Isles	1/-	1/-	-/-	1/1	-/-	1/9	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/3	-/1
W Yorkshire	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Warwickshire	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	2/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
West Midlands	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-
Grand Total	1,398 / 132	222 / 11	283 / 4	703 / 250	196 / 26	1,047 / 633	153 / -	110 / 10	201 / 14	738 / 81	194 / 6





**Table 2: Movements of other species between the Wash and elsewhere in Britain & Ireland**

County	Little R Plover	Golden Plover	Lapwing	Curlew S'piper	Purple S'piper	Ruff	Snipe	Whimbrel	Common S'piper	Green S'piper	Green- shank	Wood S'piper
Antrim	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Avon	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Bedfordshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Berkshire	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Borders	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Cambridgeshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	2/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Central	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Cheshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Cleveland	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Clwyd	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Cornwall	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Cumbria	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Derbyshire	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Devon	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Dorset	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Down	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Dumfries	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Durham	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Dyfed	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
E Ulster	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
England	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Essex	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-
Fair Isle	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Fife	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Glamorgan	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Gloucestershire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Gtr London	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Gtr Manchester	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Grampian	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Gwent	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Gwynedd	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Hampshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-
Hereford & Worcs	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Hertfordshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Highland	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Humberside	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Isle of Man	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Kent	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Lancashire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Leicestershire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Lincolnshire	1/1	-/-	5/1	4/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	4/-	1/-	2/-	-/1
Londonderry	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Lothian	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Merseyside	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
N Yorkshire	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Norfolk	1/1	1/-	7/1	1/-	1/-	2/-	6/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	1/-	-/-
Northampton	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Northumberland	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Nottingham	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Orkney	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Powys	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
S Yorkshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Shetland	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/2	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Shropshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Somerset	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Staffordshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Strathclyde	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Suffolk	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Surrey	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Sussex	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Tayside	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Tyne & Wear	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Western Isles	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
W Yorkshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Warwickshire	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
West Midlands	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Grand Total	4/3	1/-	12/3	5/1	1/-	6/-	13/-	-/2	5/1	1/-	3/1	-/1

**Table 3: Movements of the Wash study species between the Wash and other countries**

Country	O'catcher	Ringed Plover	Grey Plover	Knot	Sanderling	Dunlin	Black-t Godwit	Bar-t Godwit	Curlew	Redshank	Turnstone
Algeria	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Arctic Ocean	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	2/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Austria	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Belgium	5/2	-/-	-/-	2/-	-/-	2/6	-/-	-/-	-/6	2/-	1/-
Benin	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Canada	-/-	-/-	-/-	9/2	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/2
Channel Islands	2/-	2/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	4/8	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-
Former Czech'vakia	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Denmark	23/1	1/-	12/-	29/-	1/1	52/59	1/-	4/-	8/1	2/-	2/-
English Channel	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Faroe Islands	31/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-
Finland	2/-	-/1	1/-	-/-	1/-	86/115	-/-	1/-	36/40	1/-	5/8
France	156/-	38/-	17/2	47/8	16/-	104/35	25/4	4/1	8/-	43/-	7/1
Gabon	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Gambia	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-
Germany	19/3	1/3	3/2	65/39	2/-	63/90	1/-	14/8	3/4	-/2	2/2
Ghana	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	2/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/-
Greece	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-
Greenland	1/-	-/1	-/-	73/-	-/1	-/2	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	4/-
Guinea	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	1/-
Guinea Bissau	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/1	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	2/-
Hungary	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Iceland	9/-	-/-	-/-	106/40	3/2	6/5	33/3	-/-	-/-	31/9	7/1
Italy	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/40	1/1	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Lesser Antilles	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Lithuania	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Liberia	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-
Mali	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Mauritania	-/-	-/-	-/-	3/-	-/2	11/15	-/-	3/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Morocco	2/-	1/-	3/-	1/-	11/-	22/13	1/-	-/-	-/-	2/-	3/-
Netherlands	183/22	8/2	1/1	75/22	2/-	31/18	12/-	11/5	5/5	4/3	4/1
North Atlantic	-/-	-/-	1/-	1/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
North Sea	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	1/-	-/-
Norway	767/122	3/1	-/-	41/87	1/11	9/319	-/-	1/7	1/1	-/-	2/11
Poland	-/-	-/-	1/1	3/6	1/-	52/71	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/1
Portugal	-/-	-/1	-/-	1/-	2/-	53/16	2/-	-/-	-/-	2/-	1/-
Rep. of Ireland	2/-	23/-	-/-	2/-	-/-	20/20	6/-	-/-	2/-	1/-	-/-
Senegal	-/-	1/-	-/-	4/-	3/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-
South Africa	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/1	2/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Spain	1/-	3/-	1/-	2/-	4/-	39/14	2/-	1/1	-/-	3/-	1/-
Sweden	9/1	-/1	-/-	1/6	-/-	248/354	-/-	-/-	10/12	-/-	-/2
Tunisia	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Former USSR	8/-	1/-	3/-	1/-	2/-	9/38	-/-	12/1	6/-	-/-	1/-
Western Sahara	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Grand Total	1220/151	84/10	43/6	472/212	57/21	820/1200	83/7	53/24	80/69	94/14	51/32



Releasing a Black-tailed Godwit (Rob Robinson).

**Table 4: Movements of other species between the Wash and other countries**

County	Little R Plover	Golden Plover	Lapwing	Curlew S'piper	Purple S'piper	Ruff	Snipe	Whimbrel	Common S'piper	Green S'piper	Spotted R'shank	Green- shank	Wood S'piper
Algeria	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Arctic Ocean	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Austria	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Belgium	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Benin	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Canada	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Channel Islands	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Former Czech'vakia	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Denmark	-/-	1/-	1/10	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-
English Channel	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Faroe Islands	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Finland	-/-	-/-	-/2	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
France	-/-	1/-	9/-	4/-	-/-	3/-	9/-	3/-	4/-	2/-	-/-	2/-	3/-
Gabon	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Gambia	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Germany	-/-	-/-	-/3	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Ghana	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Greece	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Greenland	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Guinea	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Guinea Bissau	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Hungary	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Iceland	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Italy	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	5/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-
Lesser Antilles	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Lithuania	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Liberia	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Mali	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Mauritania	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Morocco	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/-	1/-	-/-
Netherlands	-/-	2/2	1/7	-/-	-/-	1/3	-/2	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	2/1	-/-
North Atlantic	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
North Sea	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Norway	-/-	1/-	-/1	1/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Poland	-/-	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Portugal	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	1/-	4/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Rep. of Ireland	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	3/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Senegal	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
South Africa	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Spain	1/-	-/-	3/-	1/-	-/-	2/-	5/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Sweden	-/-	-/-	-/2	-/1	-/1	-/-	-/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Tunisia	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Western Sahara	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Former USSR	-/-	-/-	3/1	-/-	-/-	1/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Grand Total	1/1	5/3	18/28	7/2	-/1	19/3	24/4	3/-	7/-	2/-	3/-	6/1	3/-

The summaries of movements are produced from data supplied by the BTO Ringing Scheme. The Scheme is funded by a partnership of the British Trust for Ornithology, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (on behalf of: Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside, the Countryside Council for Wales, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage), The National Parks and Wildlife Service (Ireland) and the ringers themselves.

### Jacque Clark & Rob Robinson



WWRG fieldwork team on the Bund, August 2011 (Cathy Ryden).

## NOTABLE RECOVERIES

Below is a selection of the more notable recoveries (reports of ringed birds) received in 2010 and 2011. Details of each recovery are given, with a brief explanation of its importance. A new feature in this report is recovery maps showing the movements of the waders that use the Wash. Maps show recoveries outside Britain & Ireland during 1909-2011. We have included maps for just a few species here - look out for more maps in future reports. Compare the maps shown here to those for birds ringed throughout Britain and Ireland available on the BTO website ([www.bto.org/ringing-report](http://www.bto.org/ringing-report) and go to the **Recovery Summaries by Species** section). The following codes are used for recoveries.

### Ringing Scheme

Only given if not BTO

DKC Denmark, Copenhagen  
ESI Spain, Madrid (ICONA)  
FRP France, Paris  
NLA The Netherlands, Arnhem  
NOO Norway, Oslo  
NOS Norway, Stavanger

### Condition at recovery

X found dead  
XF found freshly dead or dying  
XL found dead (not recent)  
+ shot or intentionally killed by man  
+F shot or intentionally killed by man - fresh  
S sick or injured - not known to have been released  
V alive and probably healthy, caught and released but not by a ringer  
VV alive and probably healthy, ring or colour marks read in the field but not by a ringer  
R caught and released by a ringer  
RR alive and probably healthy, ring or colour marks read in the field by a ringer  
// condition on finding completely unknown

### Age at ringing

1 pullus (nestling or chick)  
2 fully grown, year of hatching unknown  
3 hatched during calendar year of ringing  
4 hatched before calendar year of ringing, exact year unknown  
5 hatched during previous calendar year  
6 hatched before previous calendar year, exact year unknown  
7 definitely hatched two calendar years before ringing  
8 hatched more than two calendar years before year of ringing

## OYSTERCATCHER

SS76952 3 25.08.68 Snettisham  
XL 11.04.10 King's Lynn

12 KM SSW

The development of rocket-netting in the late 1960s saw a large increase in the numbers of Oystercatchers ringed on the Wash. Birds from this early era have continued, albeit now infrequently, to be found or recaptured, so it seemed only a matter of time before the Oystercatcher longevity record was extended beyond 40 years. When news was received of this bird being found, we thought we had finally reached this landmark, but, alas, the corpse of this bird was reported as 'not fresh' when found, and so the record cannot stand, as the date of death cannot be assessed accurately.

SS58540 1 14.06.70 Friskney  
=FC15938 R 22.11.87 Friskney  
=FP99170 R 16.07.10 Wrangle

LOCAL

However we only had to wait three more months before the 40 year mark was officially reached, and what's more, this bird has been re-ringed (for the second time) and continues to go strong. Oystercatcher, therefore, becomes only the fourth species (and the first wader) from the BTO ringing scheme to be recovered over 40 years after ringing – joining Manx Shearwater, Razorbill, and Fulmar.

FV28045 3 05.09.75 Terrington  
X 25.12.10 Snettisham  
FV50026 3 27.08.80 Friskney  
=FA47359 R 10.01.93 Terrington Bund  
XF 07.06.11 Sutton Bridge

14 KM NE

32 KM S



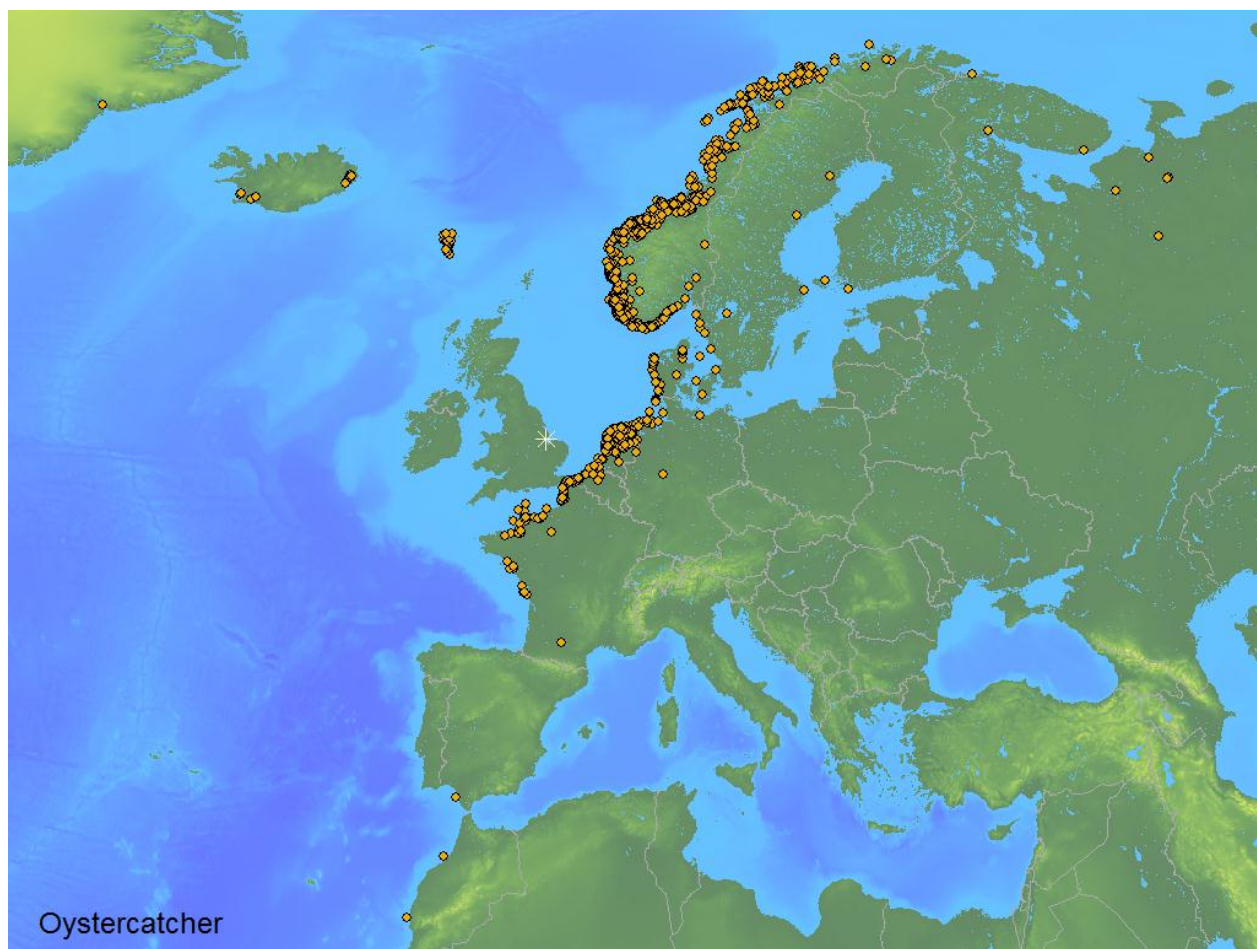
Two other Oystercatcher exceeded 30 years of age, although, sadly, both of these individuals were found dead.

NOS	1	13.06.10	Forus, Sola, Rogaland, <b>NORWAY</b>	58 53'N 05 41'E	
5166249	R	16.07.10	Wrangle		735 KM SSW
NOS	1	01.07.10	Sta Vsengvannet, Nordland, <b>NORWAY</b>	66 10'N 12 13'E	
5155756	R	11.08.10	Wainfleet		1,597 KM SSW

Typical examples of pullus-ringed Oystercatchers from the Norwegian breeding grounds – however, both these individuals had fledged and reached the Wash within six weeks of having been ringed. The latter represents the longest distance Oystercatcher control of 2010-11.

FP99021	6	18.10.08	Snettisham		
XF		06.08.11	Gjogv, Eysturoy, Eysturoya, <b>FAROES</b>	62 20'N 06 57'W	1,138 KM NNW

Only a small percentage of the Oystercatchers wintering on the Wash come from breeding grounds in the Faeroes and Iceland. This is the 31<sup>st</sup> Oystercatcher recovery to the Faeroe Islands.



## RINGED PLOVER

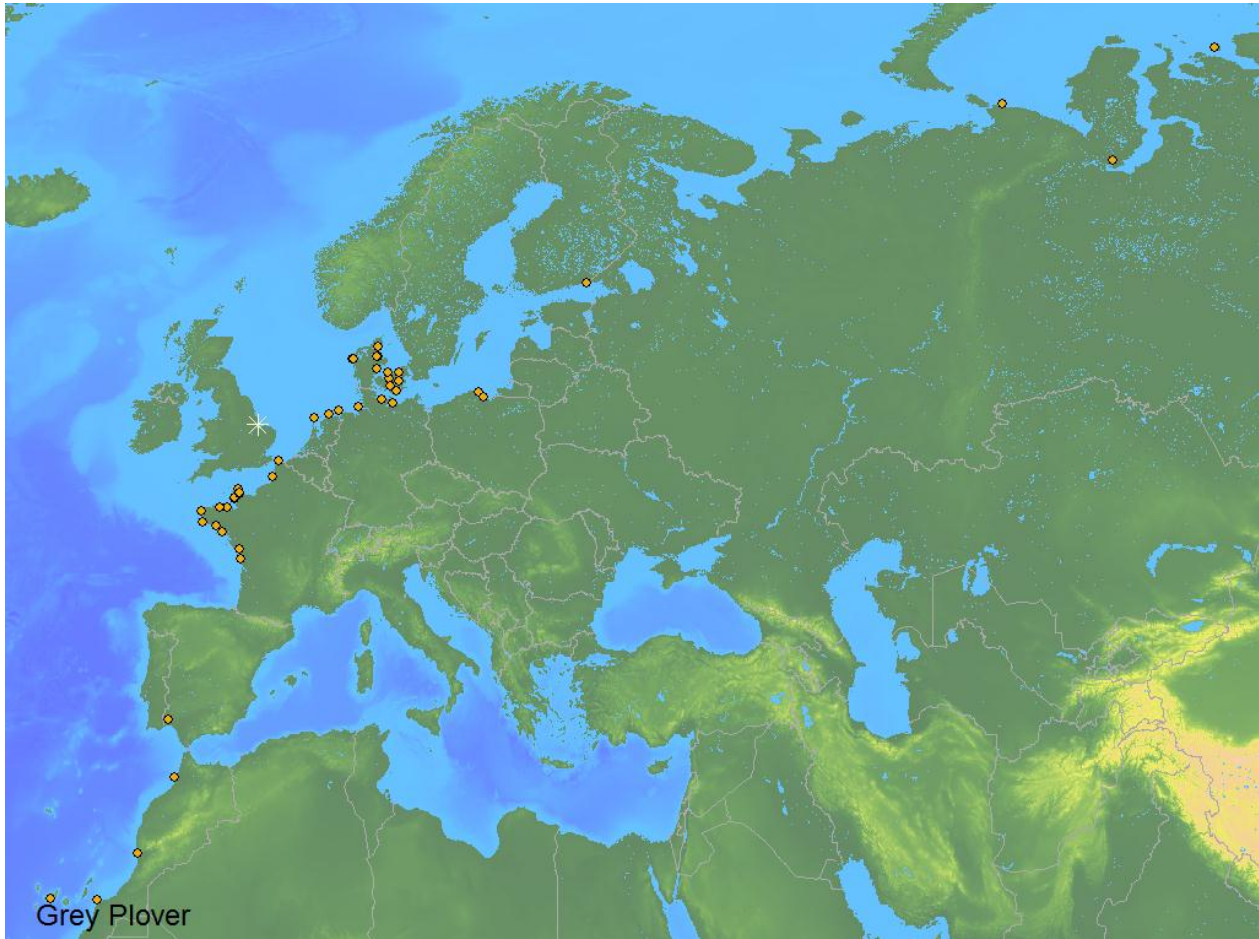
NW00022	1	05.07.99	Easington, YORKSHIRE		
	R	12.08.10	Snettisham		87 KM SSE
NW05301	4	12.08.10	Snettisham		
	R	23.01.11	Whiteford Sands, Gower, Swansea, GLAMORGAN		349 KM WSW

The only Ringed Plover controlled on the Wash during 2010-11 was a pullus-ringed bird from Yorkshire. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Ringed Plover from the Wash to be found in south Wales was also reported.

## GREY PLOVER

FRP 6 15.06.07 Reserve Naturelle de Moëze, **FRANCE** 45 54'N 01 02'W  
 FS59501 RR 10.10.10 Holme 794 KM N

Relatively few Grey Plover are ringed in France, and this field record of a colour-ringed bird is only the second Grey Plover ringed in France to be found in the Wash area, although 17 Wash-ringed birds have been recovered (sadly, mostly shot) in France.



## KNOT

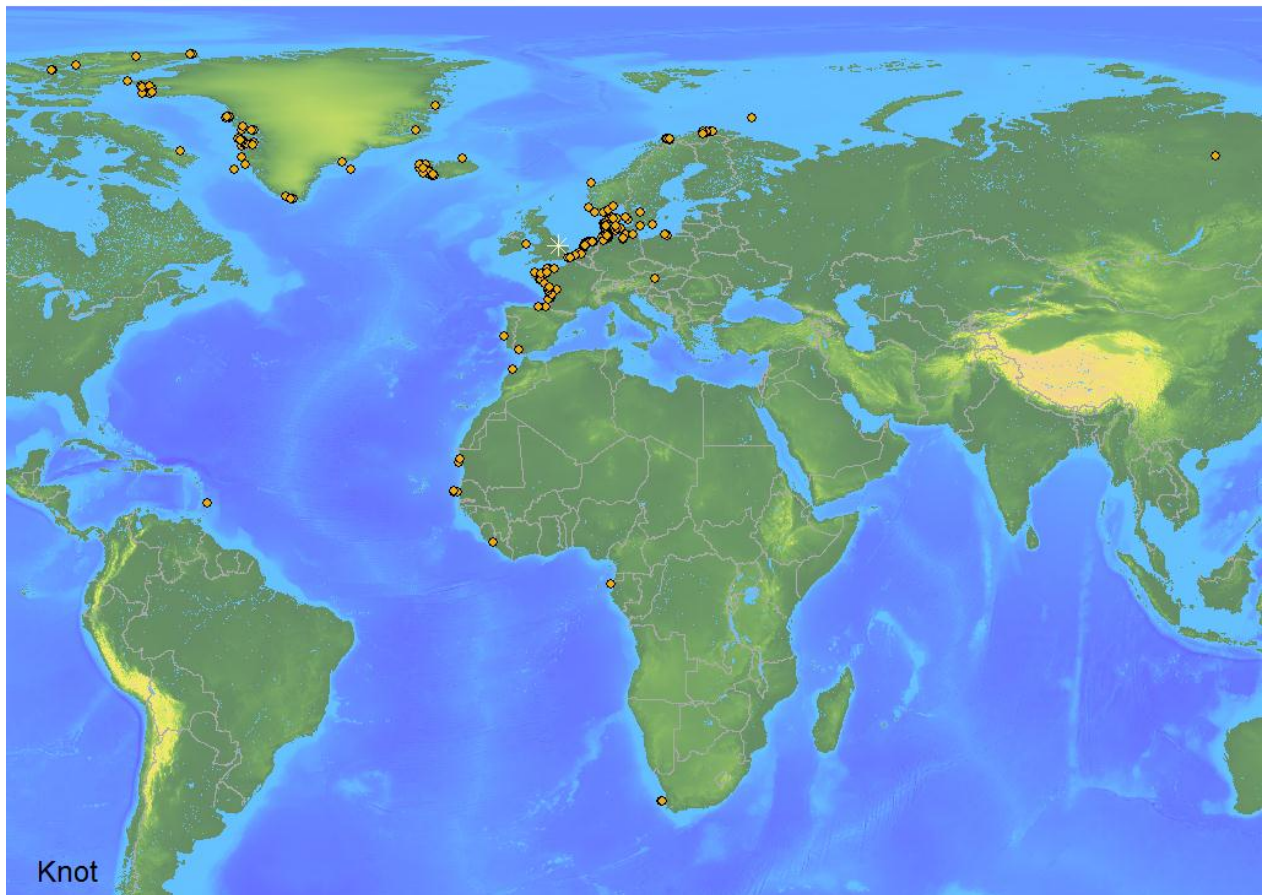
SX70060 4 30.08.08 Wainfleet  
 R 26.05.09 Marnes, Porsanger, Finnmark, **NORWAY** 70 24'N 25 32'E 2,315 KM NE  
 NOS 4 19.05.06 Igaldas, Porsanger, Finnmark, **NORWAY** 70 13'N 24 56'E  
 7469597 R 28.02.09 Snettisham 2,300 KM SW

These birds are likely to be of the *islandica* race *en route* to their breeding grounds in northern Greenland or Arctic Canada; staging via northern Norway is the shortest route for this migration.

SX19907 3 17.10.04 Heacham  
 R 25.05.06 Hlidsnes, Alftanes, Kjos, **ICELAND** 64 05'N 22 02'W 1,792 KM NW  
 XS92339 4 31.07.88 Wainfleet  
 R 26.05.07 Hlidsnes, Alftanes, Kjos, **ICELAND** 64 05'N 22 02'W 1,770 KM NW  
 SX37149 4 23.08.01 Wainfleet  
 R 25.05.06 Hlidsnes, Alftanes, Kjos, **ICELAND** 64 05'N 22 02'W 1,771 KM NW  
 R 26.05.07 Hlidsnes, Alftanes, Kjos, **ICELAND** 64 05'N 22 02'W 1,771 KM NW

Others, as might be expected given their scientific race name, pass through Iceland. Note the consistent timing of the migration through Iceland in several years, and the site-faithfulness of one of the birds.





## SANDERLING

NLA 6 28.11.05 Baie d'Aouatif, Banc d'Arguin, **MAURITANIA** 19 52'N 16 18'W  
H289234 R 01.08.11 Heacham 3,946 KM NNE

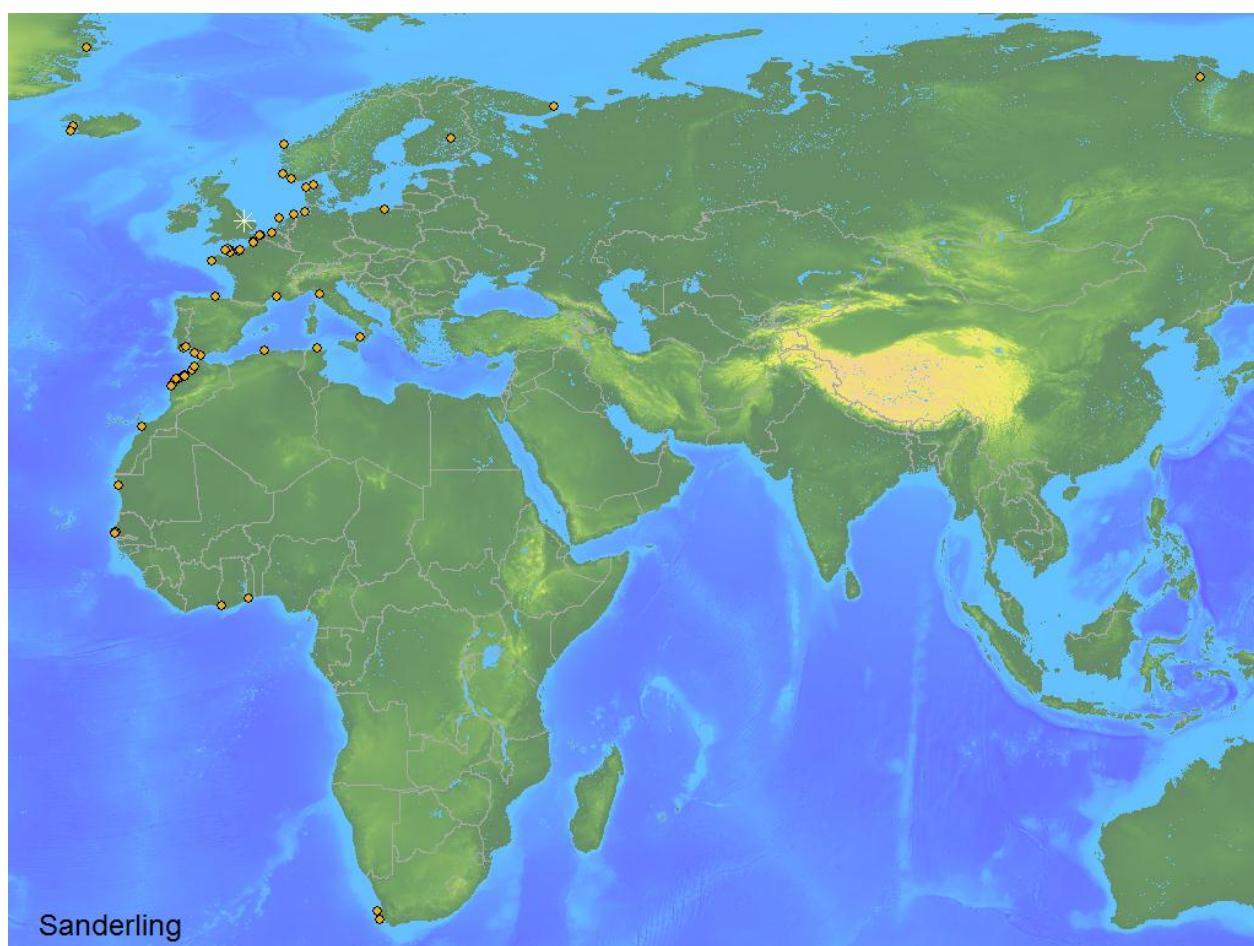
This is the sixth Sanderling ringed in Mauritania to be found in Britain, and the Group's second, both controlled at Heacham. Sanderling are known to be long-distant migrants, breeding in the high Arctic, and migrating to winter in Britain and southwards as far as South Africa.

NT75794 4 24.07.05 Heacham  
R 14.05.10 Ardivachar, South Uist, WESTERN ISLES 705 KM NW

Our first Sanderling interchange with the Western Isles, this bird will have been caught whilst on northward migration towards its breeding grounds in the high Arctic.

NT8800\_ 4 20.08.09 Snettisham  
VV 03.06.11 Moustierlin, Fouesnant, Finistère, **FRANCE** 47 50'N 04 02'W 645 KM SSW

The only overseas Sanderling recovery reported during 2010-11, and our 16<sup>th</sup> in France.



## DUNLIN

DKC	1	25.07.99	Zackenber, East Greenland, <b>GREENLAND</b>	74 30'N 20 30'W	
8231732	R	31.08.99	Terrington		2,587 KM SSE

Details only recently received; this pullus-ringed Dunlin of the *arctica* race, was ringed near the Danish-run Zackenber research centre, and is only the second Greenland-ringed Dunlin to be found on the Wash.

ESI	3	04.09.04	Dena, Meano, Pontevedra, <b>SPAIN</b>	42 27'N 08 46'W	
T064567	R	24.07.09	Butterwick		1,342 KM NNE
ESI	6	06.05.08	Rio Arillo, San Fernando, Cadiz, <b>SPAIN</b>	36 27'N 06 12'W	
T079362	R	12.08.10	Snettisham		1,899 KM NNE

The 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Spanish-ringed Dunlin recovered on the Wash. On passage when controlled on the Wash, both these birds are also likely to have been on passage when originally caught in Spain – the first heading south and the second northbound.

NT61904	4	02.08.03	Terrington		
	R	12.05.10	Ardivachar, South Uist, WESTERN ISLES		708 KM NW
BT01012	6	07.05.06	Cuinabunag, Benbecula, WESTERN ISLES		
	R	15.07.10	Leverton		686 KM SE

Exchanges with the Western Isles, demonstrating the timing of spring passage of Dunlin.

NT53304	4	02.08.04	Terrington		
	R	15.11.09	near Iwik, <b>MAURITANIA</b>	19 52'N 16 18'W	3,934 KM SSW
NT54624	4	02.08.03	Terrington		
	R	21.11.11	Baie d'Aouatif, Banc d'Arguin, <b>MAURITANIA</b>	19 54'N 16 16'W	3,929 KM SSW

The 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Wash-ringed Dunlin to be recovered in Mauritania, controlled on their West African wintering grounds.

NT57431	3	09.09.10	Easington, YORKSHIRE		
	R	12.09.10	Terrington	94 KM	S

A nice example of rapid movement during autumn migration.

## BLACK-TAILED GODWIT

EP85013	6	02.08.96	Terrington		
	VV	26.03.10	Ouderkerek aan de Amstel, <b>NETHERLANDS</b>	52 17'N 04 59'E	323 KM E

Only the 12<sup>th</sup> Wash-ringed Black-tailed Godwit to be reported in the Netherlands, where the European nominate *limosa* race predominates, though many birds of the *islandica* race stage there during migration.

EP85275	4	09.09.02	Holbeach		
	X	26.05.11	Vesturardalur, Vopnafjordur, <b>ICELAND</b>	65 41'N 05 01'W	1,657 KM NNW

However, colour-ringing has shown that the majority of the Black-tailed Godwit using the Wash originates from the Icelandic breeding grounds. This, the only Icelandic recovery notified during 2010-11, being a typical example.

EP85471	4	09.09.02	Holbeach		
	VV	04.12.08	Montportail, Charente-Maritime, <b>FRANCE</b>	45 56'N 01 04'W	
	VV	20.01.09	Saint-Froult, Charente-Maritime, <b>FRANCE</b>	45 55'N 01 03'W	
	VV	25.02.09	Tirançon, Charente-Maritime, <b>FRANCE</b>	45 50'N 01 04'W	
	VV	31.08.09	Les Portes-en-Ré, <b>FRANCE</b>	46 15'N 01 29'W	
	VV	14.10.09	Les Portes-en-Ré, <b>FRANCE</b>	46 15'N 01 30'W	
	VV	28.10.09	Fiers d'Ars, Ars-en-Ré, <b>FRANCE</b>	46 13'N 01 31'W	
	VV	06.02.10	Reserve Naturelle de Moëze, <b>FRANCE</b>	45 54'N 01 02'W	779 KM S

The colour rings on this particular individual have led to its subsequent wanderings around wintering grounds in the Charente-Maritime region of western France being well documented.

FRP	3	30.09.06	Le Duer, Sarzeau, Morbihan, <b>FRANCE</b>	47 31'N 02 46'W	
FS64421	R	13.08.10	Holbeach	629 KM	NNE

Whilst, perhaps surprisingly, this is only the fourth French-ringed Black-tailed Godwit to be controlled on the Wash.

## BAR-TAILED GODWIT

DK73504	4	31.08.03	Leverton		
	XF	01.05.10	Alrø, Horsens Fjord, Jylland, <b>DENMARK</b>	55 50'N 10 06'E	717 KM ENE
NOO	4	14.05.10	Igaldas, Porsanger, Finnmark, <b>NORWAY</b>	70 13'N 24 56'E	
KA03258	R	12.08.10	Friskney	2,287 KM	SW

Only the fourth Wash-ringed Bar-tailed Godwit to Denmark, and sixth to the Wash from Norway respectively.

The Norwegian bird was ringed within the known breeding area for Bar-tailed Godwit at what would have been the very beginning of the short breeding season.



DD15517 4 14.08.06 Ken Hill, Heacham  
+ 10.05.10 Tumistshe Island, Karelia, **RUSSIA** 64 30'N 34 59'E 2,356 KM ENE

Bar-tailed Godwit occurring on the Wash are mostly of the nominate *lapponica* race which breed from northern Scandinavia eastwards across western Siberia to the Taimyr Peninsula. This individual, shot on the shores of the White Sea was in a known staging area and is the 12<sup>th</sup> Wash-ringed Bar-tailed Godwit to Russia, but the first to be reported to us since 1995.

DD73651 3 30.09.11 Terrington  
RR 19.11.11 Iwik, **MAURITANIA** 19 53'N 16 17'W 3,932 KM SSW

Some of the Bar-tailed Godwit occurring on the Wash in the autumn continue to more southerly wintering grounds. This individual, however, is only the third BTO-ringed Bar-tailed Godwit to be found in Mauritania, its flag being read in the field just seven weeks after having been ringed at Terrington. This is one of the first resightings of a flagged Bar-tailed Godwit from our new project, and nicely demonstrates the value of marking birds in this way.

## WHIMBREL

EL09666 4 02.09.11 Leverton  
XF 19.09.11 Holywell Bay, CORNWALL 467 KM SW

Only the fourth recovery of a Wash-ringed Whimbrel – the other three all involving birds shot in France. Note the rapid movement of this individual.

## CURLEW

FP98586 4 30.08.07 Ken Hill, Heacham  
XL 01.03.10 Verdal, Nord-Trondelag, **NORWAY** 63 51'N 11 39'E 1,379 KM NNE  
FA32821 4 10.04.91 Freiston  
XF 25.05.10 Morup, Halland, **SWEDEN** 56 51'N 12 33'E 907 KM ENE

Sadly, both these birds suffered a similar demise – falling victim to farm harvesters. The first of these, surprisingly the first Wash-ringed Curlew to be found in Norway, was found 'long dead', presumably as the harvester was being prepared for a new season, whilst the Swedish individual, the eighth to be reported in Sweden, fell victim whilst on a nest with four eggs.

FP08519 4 01.09.00 Wainfleet  
XF 30.05.10 Storsien, Kalix, Norrbotten, **SWEDEN** 66 03'N 23 03'E 1,916 KM NE  
FP98567 4 30.08.07 Ken Hill, Heacham  
XF 19.04.11 Degernas, Vasterbotten, **SWEDEN** 63 46'N 20 15'E 1,665 KM NE

Two further Curlew recoveries (ninth and tenth) to Sweden; the first example is from the north of the breeding range, whilst the second may well have still been on passage prior to being found dead.

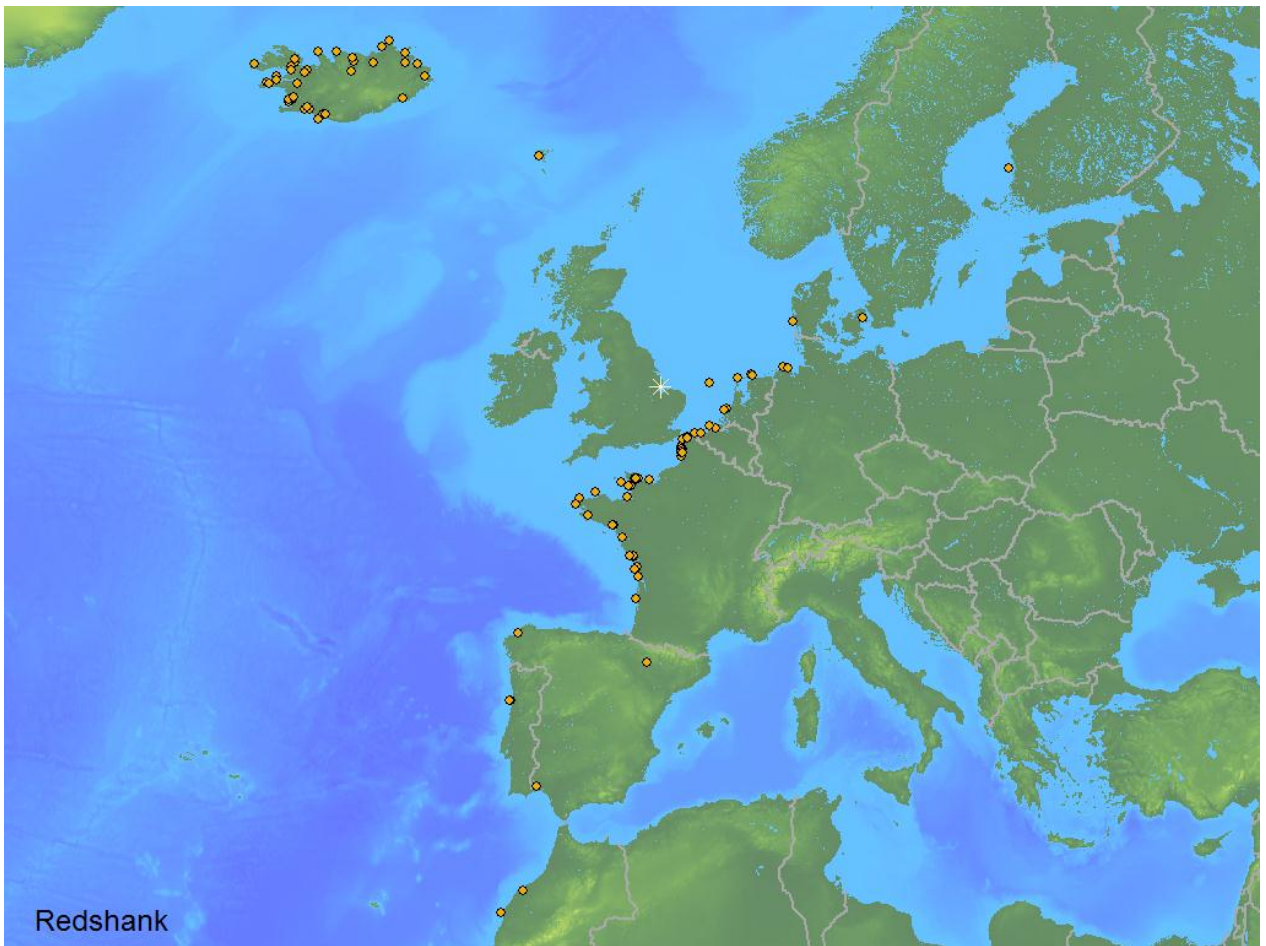
FP99285 4 28.08.07 Leverton  
XF 14.03.11 Nieuwleusen, Overijssel, **NETHERLANDS** 52 35'N 06 17'E 416 KM E

Perhaps surprisingly, only the fifth Wash-ringed Curlew to be found in the Netherlands.

## REDSHANK

DK73438 3 31.08.99 Terrington  
+ 30.10.09 Ile Grande, Côtes-du-Nord, **FRANCE** 48 48'N 03 34'W 522 KM SSW  
DB61279 4 28.08.03 Terrington  
+ 12.12.09 Blainville-sur-Mer, Manche, **FRANCE** 49 04'N 01 34'W 436 KM SSW

The only Redshank overseas recoveries reported during 2010-11. Sadly, as is too often the case when our waders are recovered in France, both were shot.



# TURNSTONE

SX36818	6	26.02.00	Port Sutton Bridge	
	VV	21.05.09	Húsavík, Suður-Pingeyjar, <b>ICELAND</b>	66 03'N 17 21'W 1,770 KM NNW

Demonstrating the added value of the application of colour rings as part of the study of Sutton Bridge Turnstones, this bird was re-sighted in Iceland – the seventh Wash-ringed Turnstone to be found there. It will have been on northward migration towards breeding grounds in Greenland or NE Canada.

## BLACK-HEADED GULL

EJ41681	4	17.11.85	Heacham		
	XF	28.10.11	Lowestoft, SUFFOLK	97 KM	ESE

Black-headed Gulls have only been caught by the Group as 'incidental' species amongst wader flocks. This individual, already an adult when ringed, was found freshly dead in Suffolk nearly 26 years after being ringed. The national longevity record for Black-headed Gull is 29 years 3 months.

## LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

GC79141	1	22.06.08	Outer Bund	
	S	01.02.11	Marbella, Malaga, <b>SPAIN</b>	36 30'N 04 52'W 1,858 KM SSW

GC99338	1	27.06.10	Outer Bund	
	VV	21.11.10	Quarteira Port, Faro, <b>PORTUGAL</b>	37 04'N 08 06'W 1,869 KM SSW

GC99476	1	27.06.10	Outer Bund	
	+	28.08.11	Gijon, Asturias, <b>SPAIN</b>	43 32'N 05 39'W 1,121 KM SSW

As with similar examples from previous years; typical southward movements for juvenile Lesser Black-backed Gulls in their early life – the first making its way into the Mediterranean, the second from the north coast of Spain in its second summer, and the third from southern Portugal.

GC79544	1	21.06.09	Outer Bund			
	VV	03.07.11	Tampere, Tarastejarvi, Tame, <b>FINLAND</b>	61 29'N 23 46'E	1,707 KM	ENE

Relocating to more northern latitudes to breed, this is the second Lesser Black-backed Gull from the Outer Bund colony to be found in Finland.

## HERRING GULL

GC79793	1	21.06.09	Outer Bund				
	XF	02.04.10	Vierpolders, Zuid-Holland, <b>NETHERLANDS</b>	51 53'N 04 10'E	287 KM	ESE	

GC99523	1	03.07.11	Outer Bund			
	R	29.10.11	near Blackborough End, King's Lynn, NORFOLK		22 KM	SE
	VV	19.11.11	Wangford Landfill Site, SUFFOLK		109 KM	ESE
	VV	26.11.11	Wangford Landfill Site, SUFFOLK			
	VV	29.12.11	Blaringhem, Nord, <b>FRANCE</b>	50 41'N 02 24'E	282 KM	SSE

The only overseas recoveries from the Outer Bund Herring Gull colony during 2010-11; the second is a nice example of multiple sightings tracking this bird's first winter movements, after it was colour-ringed when recaptured by other ringers at a local landfill site.

## WADER LONGEVITY RECORDS

Listed below are all known longevity records for all species where the group has ringed 25 or more individuals since 1959. The BTO-ringed records have been extracted from annual ringing reports in *Ringing & Migration*. Some of the species ringed by WWRG have had few recoveries and so no significant longevity has been noted. Where a bird ringed on the Wash holds the BTO record, the details appear in *italics*.

**Table 1: Longevity records for BTO-ringed birds and those ringed by WWRG**

Species	BTO-Ringed			Ringed by WWRG		
<i>Oystercatcher</i>	<i>SS58540</i>	<i>40yr</i>	<i>1m</i>	<i>SS58540</i>	<i>40yr</i>	<i>1m</i>
<i>Ringed Plover</i>	<i>BV85945</i>	<i>19yr</i>	<i>8m</i>	<i>BV85945</i>	<i>19yr</i>	<i>8m</i>
Golden Plover	2072773	12yr	0m	DN77939	6yr	5m
<i>Grey Plover</i>	<i>DR33258</i>	<i>25yr</i>	<i>1m</i>	<i>DR33258</i>	<i>25yr</i>	<i>1m</i>
Lapwing	DS30355	21yr	1m			
Knot	CE25745	27yr	3m	CK68568	24yr	0m
<i>Sanderling</i>	<i>BB52147</i>	<i>17yr</i>	<i>7m</i>	<i>BB52147</i>	<i>17yr</i>	<i>7m</i>
Little Stint	KR8--	3yr	11m			
Curlew Sandpiper	NB15296	12yr	11m			
Purple Sandpiper	CV58657	13yr	11m	BV89291	11yr	11m
Dunlin	NS64038	19yr	3m	NR32469	18yr	11m
Ruff	CC91720	9yr	0m	CE33211	6yr	7m
Snipe	XC34292	16yr	0m			
Black-tailed Godwit	EF90838 (previously controlled by WWRG)	23yr	5m			
<i>Bar-tailed Godwit</i>	<i>DS66917</i>	<i>33yr</i>	<i>11m</i>	<i>DS66917</i>	<i>33yr</i>	<i>11m</i>
Whimbrel	EK92102	24yr	1m			
Curlew	FS40887	31yr	5m	FV43050	27yr	9m
Common Sandpiper	NV54164	14yr	0m			
<i>Spotted Redshank</i>	<i>DR28508</i>	<i>7yr</i>	<i>5m</i>	<i>DR28508</i>	<i>7yr</i>	<i>5m</i>
Greenshank	DR70162	16yr	0m	DR96000	5yr	11m
Redshank	DR74213	20yr	1m	P10010 DN20546	17yr 17yr	0m 0m
Turnstone	XS24645	22yr	3m	CC88754	19yr	2m

Controlled = recaptured by a ringer away from the original catching site.

**Table 2: Details of WWRG longevity records**

Species in italics are holders of the national record

Species	Ring no	Ringing information			Finding information		
		Age	Place	Date	Circs	Place	Date
<i>Oystercatcher</i>	SS58540	<i>Nestling</i>	<i>Friskney</i>	14/06/70	<i>Controlled</i>	<i>Wrangle</i>	16/07/10
<i>Ringed Plover</i>	BV85945	<i>Adult</i>	<i>Heacham</i>	31/08/80	<i>Controlled</i>	<i>Snettisham</i>	20/05/00
Golden Plover	DN77939	Adult	Terrington	24/07/97	Shot	Sutton Bridge	14/12/03
<i>Grey Plover</i>	DR33258	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Summer</i>	<i>Terrington</i>	13/07/79	<i>Controlled</i>	<i>Terrington</i>	31/08/04
Knot	CK68568	Adult	N. Wootton	27/08/68	Controlled	Friskney	01/09/92
<i>Sanderling</i>	BB52147	<i>Adult</i>	<i>Snettisham</i>	18/07/70	<i>Controlled</i>	<i>Heacham</i>	21/02/88
Purple Sandpiper	BV89291	Adult	Heacham	16/04/88	Controlled	Hunstanton	08/04/00
Dunlin	NR32469	Adult	Benington	21/08/90	Controlled	Butterwick	24/07/09
Ruff	CE33211	1 <sup>st</sup> Winter	Wolferton	22/08/78	Controlled	Senegal	20/02/85
<i>Bar-tailed Godwit</i>	DB66917	<i>Adult</i>	<i>Wolferton</i>	22/08/78	<i>Controlled</i>	<i>Terrington</i>	04/08/08
Curlew	FV43050	Adult	Terrington	01/08/77	Dead	Finland	17/05/05
<i>Spotted Redshank</i>	DR28508	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Summer</i>	<i>Terrington</i>	27/07/75	<i>Dead</i>	<i>Morocco</i>	12/01/83
Greenshank	DR96000	Adult	Wolferton	22/08/82	Controlled	Denmark	10/08/88
Redshank	P10010	Adult	Terrington	18/08/59	Controlled	Terrington	27/08/76
	DN20546	Adult	Terrington	11/08/87	Controlled	Terrington	29/08/04
Turnstone	CC88754	Adult	Terrington	28/08/72	Controlled	Heacham	22/11/91

For some of the species that we catch regularly, the longevity records are still being beaten fairly frequently - pointing to the fact that, for these species, expected maximum life spans have not yet been established. As predicted in the previous report, the record for Oystercatcher has been extended again with the new record passing the 40 years mark; birds between 25 and 30 years old continue to be caught or recovered fairly regularly, and it is likely the new record of 40 years set in July 2010 will be further extended. Will we have a Wash-ringed Curlew over 30 years old sometime soon?

WWRG longevity record for other species, such as Redshank (17yr 0m), Knot (24yr 0m), Sanderling (17yr 7m), Dunlin (18yr 11m) and Turnstone (19yr 2m) have all remained largely unchanged for many years, despite significant numbers being caught from the 1960s through to the 1980s. This suggests that the maximum life-expectancy for these species has been established, though it is noteworthy that higher longevity records have been set for all of these species except Sanderling elsewhere in the country, as several other wader ringing groups have now been established for long enough to recapture older birds. It will be interesting to see if Wash-ringed birds will, in future, surpass the national longevity records for these species that have been set elsewhere.

**Steve Wakeham & Rob Robinson**



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