

[1] "*Gallinago stenura* — Pin-tailed Snipe  
Glossary SPRAT Profile  
information to assist regulatory considerations, refer to Policy Statements and Guidelines, the Conservation Advice, the Listing Advice and/or the Recovery Plan. EPBC Legal Status and Documents Top EPBC Act Listing Status Listed marine as *Gallinago stenura* Listed migratory - EPBC Act as *Gallinago stenura*, Bonn as *Gallinago stenura*, CAMBA as *Gallinago stenura*, JAMBA as *Gallinago stenura*, ROKAMBA as *Gallinago stenura* Approved Conservation Advice There is no approved Conservation Advice for this species Listing Advice There is no Listing Advice for this species Adopted/Made Recovery Plans There is no adopted or made Recovery Plan for this species Adopted/Made Threat Abatement Plans No Threat Abatement Plan has been identified as being relevant for this species Wildlife Conservation Plans Commonwealth of Australia (2015). Wildlife Conservation Plan for Migratory Shorebirds. Canberra, ACT: Department of the Environment. Available from: <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/publications/wildlife-conservation-plan-migratory-shorebirds-2016>. In effect under the EPBC Act from 15-Jan-2016. Other Commonwealth Documents Top Other EPBC Act Plans EPBC Act Policy Statement 3.21 - Industry Guidelines for avoiding, assessing and mitigating impacts on EPBC Act listed migratory shorebird species (Department of the Environment, 2015) [Admin Guideline]. National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife Including Marine Turtles, Seabirds and Migratory Shorebirds (Department of the Environment and Energy, 2020) [Admin Guideline]. Information Sheets Migratory Shorebirds of the East Asian - Australasian Flyway: Population estimates and internationally important sites (Bamford M., D. Watkins, W. Bancroft, G. Tischler & J. Wahl, 2008) [Information Sheet]. Revision of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Population Estimates for 37 listed Migratory Shorebird Species (Hansen, B.D., R.A. Fuller, D. Watkins, D.I. Rogers, R.S. Clemens, M. Newman, E.J. Woehler & D.R. Weller, 2016) In effect under the EPBC Act from 29-May-2017. [Information Sheet]. Federal Register of Legislative Instruments Marine: Declaration under section 248 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 - List of Marine Species (Commonwealth of Australia, 2000c) [Legislative Instrument] as *Gallinago stenura* Migratory: List of Migratory Species (13/07/2000) (Commonwealth of Australia, 2000b) [Legislative Instrument] as *Gallinago stenura* Wildlife Conservation Plan: Wildlife Conservation Plan for Migratory Shorebirds (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006r) [Legislative Instrument] as *Gallinago stenura* Wildlife Conservation Plan: Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 - Section 285 - Instrument revoking and making a wildlife conservation plan (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016) [Legislative Instrument] as *Gallinago stenura* Non-statutory Listing Status IUCN: Listed as Least Concern (Global Status: IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: 2020.2 list) NGO: Listed as Least Concern (The Action Plan for Australian Birds 2010 - non-threatened) Naming Top Scientific name *Gallinago stenura* [841] Family Scolopacidae: Charadriiformes: Aves: Chordata: Animalia Species author (Bonaparte, 1830) Infraspecies author Reference Other names *Capella stenura* [66543] Distribution Map Top Distribution map The distribution shown is generalised from the Departments Species of National Environmental Significance dataset. This is an indicative distribution map of the present distribution of the species based on best available knowledge. Some species information is withheld in line with sensitive species policies. See map caveat for more information. Top Illustrations Top Google Images Other Links, Including Superseded Commonwealth Documents Top Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage (AGDEH) (2006f). Wildlife

Conservation Plan for Migratory Shorebirds. Canberra, ACT: Department of the Environment and Heritage. Available from: <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/migratory/publications/shorebird-plan.html>. In effect under the EPBC Act from 25-Feb-2006. Ceased to be in effect under the EPBC Act from 15-Jan-2016.

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Newsletters  
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EPBC Act email updates can be received via the Communities for Communities newsletter and the EPBC Act newsletter.  
Caveat  
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This database is designed to provide statutory, biological and ecological information on species and ecological communities, migratory species, marine species, and species and species products subject to international trade and commercial use protected under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (the EPBC Act). It has been compiled from a range of sources including listing advice, recovery plans, published literature and individual experts. While reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information, no guarantee is given, nor responsibility taken, by the Commonwealth for its accuracy, currency or completeness. The Commonwealth does not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage that may be occasioned directly or indirectly through the use of, or reliance on, the information contained in this database. The information contained in this database does not necessarily represent the views of the Commonwealth. This database is not intended to be a complete source of information on the matters it deals with. Individuals and organisations should consider all the available information, including that available from other sources, in deciding whether there is a need to make a referral or apply for a permit or exemption under the EPBC Act.

Citation: Department of the Environment (2022). *Gallinago stenura* in Species Profile and Threats Database, Department of the Environment, Canberra. Available from: <https://www.environment.gov.au/sprat>. Accessed Tue, 18 Jan 2022 21:05:33 +1100.

Where available the sections below provide a biological profile for the species. Biological profiles vary in age and content across species, some are no longer being updated and are retained as archival content. These profiles are still displayed as they contain valuable information for many species. The Profile Update section below indicates when the biological profile was last updated for some species. For information to assist regulatory considerations, please refer to Conservation Advice, the Recovery Plan, Policy Statements and Guidelines.

Taxonomy  
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Scientific name: *Gallinago stenura*  
Common name: Pin-tailed Snipe  
Other names: Asiatic Snipe  
Description  
Top  
The Pin-tailed Snipe is a small member of the *Gallinago* family. It has a length of 25009627 cm, a wingspan of 44009647 cm and an average weight of 115 g. The species has a long straight bill, rather short broad somewhat blunt wings, a very short tail and short legs. In flight the species is noted for its small size, small head, squat body, somewhat rounded outerwing, short bill and the projection of the feet beyond the tip of the tail. The sexes are alike and there is no seasonal variation in plumages. The Pin-tailed Snipe is similar to Latham's Snipe, *Gallinago hardwickii*, and Swinhoe's Snipe, *Gallinago megala*. The Pin-tailed Snipe is distinguished from the other two due to its smaller size (Higgins & Davies 1996).

Australian Distribution  
Top  
The species distribution within Australia is not well understood. There are confirmed records from NSW, south-west Western Australia, Pilbara and the Top End. In NSW a single banded bird was reported near West Wyalong. In Western Australia the species was reported at Pilbara, Port Headland, Myaree Pool, Maitland River and near Karratha. In Pilbarra the distribution is believed to be bound by Pardoo

(Banningarra Spring) and the lower Maitland River and Shay Gap. The Pin-tailed Snipe has also been reported on the Cocos-Keeling Islands as well as Christmas Island (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Global Distribution**

The Pin-tailed Snipe breeds in Russia from the northern Ural Mountains, south to the Yamal Peninsula, south-east to Transbaikalia and northern Mongolia (between Tannu-Ola and Lake Baikal. The species also breeds in the north-east, through southern Amur to the coast west of the sea of Okhotsk (it is absent from the Kamchatka Peninsula). The species breeding range also extends from north to west along the Chukotsky Peninsula as well as the Kolyma River delta. The non-breeding distribution occurs mostly in south and south-east Asia, from eastern Pakistan, through the Indian subcontinent and the Indian Ocean islands. It is also found east through Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand and Indochina, south through the Malay Peninsula through to Indonesia. The species is rare in the Philippines. The species is vagrant to east Africa and rare in Japan (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Population Information**

The population of Pin-tailed Snipe in the East Asian Australasian Flyway is estimated to be 170 000 (Hansen et al. 2016). This is compared to a global population estimate of 50 000–2 000 000 (Bamford et al. 2008). Sites of international importance and their maximum counts are listed below. An important site is calculated using the 1% criterion (i.e. a site is considered important if it is occupied by more than 1% of the bird's total population) (Bamford et al. 2008):

Site	Country	Max Count
Poyang Hu National Nature Reserve	China	4800
Daursky Nature Reserve	Russia	3000
Yancheng National Nature Reserve	China	1114
Gaoyou Hu/Shabo Hu	China	800
Nong Han Kumphawapi	Thailand	250

**Habitat**

During non-breeding period the Pin-tailed Snipe occurs most often in or at the edges of shallow freshwater swamps, ponds and lakes with emergent, sparse to dense cover of grass/sedge or other vegetation. The species is also found in drier, more open wetlands such as claypans in more arid parts of species' range. It is also commonly seen at sewage ponds; not normally in saline or inter-tidal wetlands (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Movement Patterns**

The Pin-tailed Snipe leaves Siberia mostly from August–September, with some early movement in late July. It is an uncommon passage migrant in Korea from August–September. Most move through northern China in August, passing north-east Chihli in early September. They are known to arrive in Shanghai about mid-August and leave the Lower Yangtze in early October. They are found in Taiwan from September and move through Hong Kong during September–October, but sometimes as early as August. They arrive in India, Malaya and Thailand from the second half of August, making an appearance in Sumatra from early October. They are a common passage migrant in Borneo, arriving as early as September. They have been recorded in Bali and there are several unconfirmed records in the Port Moresby district (Higgins & Davies 1996). Arrival in Australia

The Pin-tailed Snipe arrives in Australia, at Pilburra, mainly from late September to the end of March. It has been recorded in south-west Western Australia in late March. There are no winter records in Australia (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Return to breeding grounds**

The Pin-tailed Snipe leaves southern Asia in March and the first half of April. Some stragglers remain until May. The move through Borneo in February and there are passage records in Hong Kong until April. They arrive at the lower Yangtze Valley in China from mid-April and remain for about one month. They are recorded on passage through northern China during May. The species is an uncommon passage migrant in Korea during April–May. The southern parts of the breeding range are reoccupied in May. The species is found in the Arctic circle from early June (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Threats**

Global threats

There are a number of threats that affect migratory shorebirds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. The greatest threat is indirect and direct habitat loss (Melville 1997). Staging areas used during migration through eastern Asia are being lost and degraded by activities which are reclaiming the mudflats for development or developing them for aquaculture (Barter 2002, 2005c; Ge et al. 2007; Round 2006). This is especially evident in the Yellow Sea, where at least 40% of intertidal areas have been reclaimed. This process is continuing at a rapid rate and may accelerate in the near future (Barter 2002, 2005c). For example, in South Korea, the Mangyeung and Dongjin River estuaries each supported 5% of the combined estimated Flyway populations (and are the most important sites for this species on both northern and southern migration) but they are currently being reclaimed as part of the Saemangeum Reclamation Project (Barter 2002, 2005c). The 33 km sea-wall across these two estuaries was completed in April 2006, resulting in significant change in the 40 100 ha area.

Reclamation is also a threat in other areas of the Flyway, such as in Malaysia (Wei et al. 2006). In addition, water regulation and diversion infrastructure in the major tributaries have resulted in the reduction of water and sediment flows (Barter 2002; Barter et al. 1998).

Migratory shorebirds are also adversely

affected by pollution, both on passage and in non-breeding areas (Harding et al. 2007; Melville 1997; Round 2006; Wei et al. 2006).

Disturbance from human activities, including recreation, shellfish harvesting, fishing and aquaculture is likely to increase significantly in the future (Barter et al. 2005c; Davidson & Rothwell 1993).

It is predicted that the rate of decrease in the intertidal area in the Yellow Sea will accelerate (Barter 2002). In addition, intensive oil exploration and extraction, and reduction in river flows due to upstream water diversion, are other potentially significant threats in parts of China where this species is present in internationally significant numbers (Barter 2005c; Barter et al. 1998).

Global warming and associated changes in sea level are likely to have a long-term impact on the breeding, staging and non-breeding grounds of migratory waders (Harding et al. 2007).

Hunting is still a very serious problem for waders in China, and this species is sometimes caught (Ming et al. 1998).

### Threats within Australia

Within Australia, there are a number of threats common to most migratory shorebirds, including the Pin-tailed Snipe.

#### Habitat loss

The loss of important habitat reduces the availability of foraging and roosting sites. This affects the ability of the birds to build up the energy stores required for successful migration and breeding. Some sites are important all year round for juveniles who may stay in Australia throughout the breeding season until they reach maturity. A variety of activities may cause habitat loss. These include direct losses through land clearing, inundation, infilling or draining. Indirect loss may occur due to changes in water quality, hydrology or structural changes near roosting sites (DEWHA 2009aj).

#### Habitat degradation

As most migratory shorebirds have specialized feeding techniques, they are particularly susceptible to slight changes in prey sources and foraging environments. Activities that cause habitat degradation (DEWHA 2009aj) include, but are not restricted to:

- loss of marine or estuarine vegetation, which is likely to alter the dynamic equilibrium of sediment banks and mudflats
- invasion of intertidal mudflats by weeds such as cord grass
- water pollution
- changes to the hydrological regime
- exposure of acid sulphate soils, hence changing the chemical balance at the site.

#### Disturbance

Disturbance can result from residential and recreational activities including; fishing, power boating, four wheel driving, walking dogs, noise and night lighting. While some disturbances may have only a low impact it is important to consider the combined effect of disturbances with other threats. Roosting and foraging birds are sensitive to discrete, unpredictable disturbances such as loud noises (i.e. construction sites) and approaching objects (i.e. boats). Sustained disturbances can prevent shorebirds from using parts of the habitat (DEWHA 2009aj).

#### Direct mortality

Direct mortality is a result of human activities around the migration pathways of shorebirds and at roosting and foraging sites. Examples include the construction of wind farms in migration or movement pathways, bird strike due to aircraft, hunting, chemical and oil spills (DEWHA 2009aj).

### Threat Abatement and Recovery

Top Governments and conservation groups have undertaken a wide range of activities relating to migratory shorebird conservation (AGDEH 2005c) both in Australia and in cooperation with other countries associated with the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

#### Australia

The Wildlife Conservation Plan for Migratory Shorebirds (AGDEH 2006f) outlines national activities to support flyway shorebird conservation initiatives and provides a strategic framework to ensure these activities and future research and management actions are integrated and remain focused on the long-term survival of migratory shorebird populations and their habitats.

Since 1996, the Australian Government has invested approximately \$5 000 000 of Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) funding in projects contributing to migratory shorebird conservation (DEWHA 2007e). This funding has been distributed across a range of important projects, including the implementation of a nationally coordinated monitoring programme that will produce robust, long-term population data able to support the conservation and effective management of shorebirds and their habitat; migration studies using colour bands and leg flags; and development of a shorebird conservation toolkit to assist users to develop and implement shorebird conservation projects.

Birds Australia is currently co-ordinating the Shorebirds 2020 project, which aims to monitor shorebird populations at important sites throughout Australia; and Birdlife International is identifying sites and regions which are important to various species of birds, including shorebirds, and the processes that are affecting them. The aim is to inform decisions on the management of shorebird habitat. It may be possible to rehabilitate some degraded wetlands or to create artificial wader feeding or roosting sites to replace those destroyed by development, such as by creating artificial sandflats and sand islands from dredge spoil and by building breakwaters (Dening 2005; Straw 1992a, 1999).

The Significant impact guidelines for 36 migratory shorebirds Draft EPBC Act Policy Statement 3.21 (DEWHA 2009aj) provides guidelines for determining the impacts of proposed actions on migratory shorebirds. The policy statement also provides mitigation strategies to reduce the level and extent of those impacts.

#### International

Australia has played an important role in building international cooperation to conserve migratory birds. In addition to being party to international agreements on migratory species, Australia is also a member of the Partnership for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and the Sustainable Use of their Habitats in the East Asian-

Australasian Flyway (Flyway Partnership), which was launched in Bogor, Indonesia on 6 November 2006. Prior to this agreement, Australia was party to the Asia-Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy and the Action Plan for the Conservation of Migratory Shorebirds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway and the East Asian-Australasian Shorebird Site Network. The East Asian-Australasian Flyway Site Network, which is part of the broader Flyway Partnership, promotes the identification and protection of key sites for migratory shorebirds. Australia has 17 sites in the network (Partnership EAAF 2008): Kakadu National Park, Northern Territory (1 375 940 ha) Parry Lagoons, Western Australia (36 111 ha) Thomsons Lake, Western Australia (213 ha) Moreton Bay, Queensland (113 314 ha) Hunter Estuary, NSW (2916 ha) Corner Inlet, Victoria (51 500 ha) The Coorong, Lake Alexandrina & Lake Albert, South Australia (140 500 ha) Orielton Lagoon, Tasmania (2920 ha) Logan Lagoon, Tasmania (2320 ha) Western Port, Victoria (59 297 ha) Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula, Victoria (16 540 ha) Shallow Inlet Marine and Coastal Park, Victoria Discovery Bay Coastal Park, Victoria Bowling Green Bay, Queensland Shoalwater Bay, Queensland Great Sandy Strait, Queensland Currawinya National Park, Queensland.

Species Profile References

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