

[1] "*Calidris melanotos* — Pectoral Sandpiper  
Glossary SPRAT Profile For 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 Listed migratory - EPBC Act, Bonn, JAMBA, ROKAMBA 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 EBBC Act listed migratory shorebird species (Department of the Environment, 2015) [Admin Guideline]. Policy Statements and Guidelines National Light Pollution Guidelines for Wildlife Including Marine Turtles, Seabirds and Migratory Shorebirds (Department of the Environment and Energy, 2020) [Admin Guideline]. Shorebirds - A Vulnerability Assessment for the Great Barrier Reef (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), 2011) [Admin Guideline]. Information Sheets 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] Migratory: List of Migratory Species (13/07/2000) (Commonwealth of Australia, 2000b) [Legislative Instrument] Wildlife Conservation Plan: Wildlife Conservation Plan for Migratory Shorebirds (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006r) [Legislative Instrument] 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] State Listing Status SA: Listed as Rare (National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 (South Australia): Rare species: January 2020 list) Non-statutory Listing Status IUCN: Listed as Least Concern (Global Status: IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: 2020.2 list) VIC: Listed as Near Threatened (Advisory List of Threatened Vertebrate Fauna in Victoria: 2013 list) NGO: Listed as Least Concern (The Action Plan for Australian Birds 2010 - non-threatened) Naming Top Scientific name *Calidris melanotos* [858] Family Scolopacidae: Charadriiformes: Aves: Chordata: Animalia Species author (Vieillot, 1819) Infraspecies author Reference 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 polices. See map caveat for more information. Illustrations Top Illustrations 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.

Commonwealth of Australia (2000b). List of Migratory Species (13/07/2000). F2007B00750. Canberra: Federal Register of Legislative Instruments. Available from: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2007B00750>.

Commonwealth of Australia (2000c). Declaration under section 248 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 - List of Marine Species. F2008B00465. Canberra: Federal Register of Legislative Instruments. Available from: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2008B00465>.

Commonwealth of Australia (2007h). Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 - Listed Migratory Species - Approval of an International Agreement. F2007L02641. Canberra: Federal Register of Legislative Instruments. Available from: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2007L02641>.

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) (2009aj). Draft Significant impact guidelines for 36 migratory shorebirds Draft EPBC Act Policy Statement 3.21. Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. Available from: <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/migratory-shorebirds.html>.

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) (2009bc). Draft background paper to EPBC Act policy statement 3.21. Canberra, DEWHA. Available from: <http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/publications/migratory-shorebirds.html>.

Newsletters  
 Top  
 EPBC Act email updates can be received via the Communities for Communities newsletter and the EPBC Act newsletter.  
 Caveat  
 Top  
 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). *Calidris melanotos* in Species Profile and Threats Database, Department of the Environment, Canberra. Available from: <https://www.environment.gov.au/sprat>. Accessed Tue, 18 Jan 2022 20:37:00 +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  
 Top  
 Scientific name: *Calidris melanotos*  
 Common name: Pectoral Sandpiper  
 Other common names: American Pectoral Sandpiper, Pouter-shorebird  
 Description  
 Top  
 The Pectoral Sandpiper is a small-medium sandpiper and member of the Scolopacidae family. The species has a length of 19–24 cm, a wingspan of 37–45 cm and a weight of 85 g for males and 60 g for females. The species is characterised by a flat back and a plumpish body that tapers to a drawn out rear end. The head is small and rounded, situated on a long neck. The legs are short and the bill varies from short and straight, to medium-length and gently decurved. When at rest the folded primaries (flight feathers) are level with, just short of, or slightly longer than the tip of the tail. Also, the folded primaries are short in breeding adults and long in juveniles (Higgins & Davies 1996).

Australian Distribution  
 Top  
 Queensland, New South Wales and Victorian distribution  
 In Queensland, most records for the Pectoral Sandpiper occur around Cairns. There are scattered records elsewhere, mainly from east of the Great Divide between Townsville and Yeppoon. Records also exist in the south-east of the state as well as a few inland records at Mount Isa, Longreach and Oakley. In New South

Wales (NSW), the Pectoral Sandpiper is widespread, but scattered. Records exist east of the Great Divide, from Casino and Ballina, south to Ulladulla. West of the Great Divide, the species is widespread in the Riverina and Lower Western regions. In Victoria the Pectoral Sandpiper is mainly found from Port Phillip Bay and the valley of the Murray River between Kerang and Piangil. It has also been recorded at Coronet Bay (in Westernport Bay), Wimmera and Mallee (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Tasmania, South Australia and Northern Territory distribution**  
 In Tasmania the Pectoral Sandpiper is very rare, however records exist for Cape Portland, Orielton Lagoon-Sorell, Barilla Bay, Clear Lagoon, Cameron Inlet and Flinders Island. In South Australia (SA), the Pectoral Sandpiper is found mostly in the south-east, from north to the Murray River and west to Yorke Peninsula. Outside of this region the species is occasionally recorded in Innamincka, Welcome Bore and Mintabie. In the Northern Territory (NT), the Pectoral Sandpiper is found at Darwin and Alice Springs (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Western Australian distribution**  
 In Western Australia (WA), the species is rarely recorded. It has been observed at the Nullarbor Plain, Reid, Stoke's Inlet, Grassmere Lake, Warden Lake, Dalyup and Yellilup Swamp, Swan River, Bengier Swamp, Guraga Lake, Wittecarra, Harding River, coastal Gascoyne, the Pilbara and the Kimberley (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Global Distribution**  
 Top  
**Breeding distribution**  
 The Pectoral Sandpiper breeds in northern Russia and North America. In Russia, its breeding distribution is from the Yamal Peninsula, east along the Arctic coast, through the Deltas of Lena and Kolmyra Rivers, to the Chukotskiy Peninsula. In North America, its breeding distribution extends from Goodnews Bay, north through Wales to Point Barrow, east and north Canada from the northern regions of Yukon and Mackenzie, north to Banks, Bathurst, Devon, north Baffin Island and south and west to Hudson Bay.

**Transient distribution**  
 The species is transient through Central America and the Caribbean while on route to the non-breeding areas in South America, from Peru to Bolivia, south to south-central Chile and from southern Brazil and south to Argentina. In the tropical Pacific, there are scattered records from Hawaii, Polynesia, Micronesia and Australasia. The species occurs in small numbers through east Asia, including Ussuriland, Japan and the Korean Peninsula. The species is vagrant to the Yenisei River, Transbaikalia, continental Europe, the British Isles, the Azores and the African continent (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Habitat**  
 Top  
 In Australasia, the Pectoral Sandpiper prefers shallow fresh to saline wetlands. The species is found at coastal lagoons, estuaries, bays, swamps, lakes, inundated grasslands, saltmarshes, river pools, creeks, floodplains and artificial wetlands. The species is usually found in coastal or near coastal habitat but occasionally found further inland. It prefers wetlands that have open fringing mudflats and low, emergent or fringing vegetation, such as grass or samphire. The species has also been recorded in swamp overgrown with lignum. They forage in shallow water or soft mud at the edge of wetlands (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Feeding**  
 Top  
 The Pectoral Sandpiper is omnivorous, consuming algae, seeds, crustaceans, arachnids and insects. While feeding, they move slowly, probing with rapid strokes. They walk slowly on grass fringing water (Higgins & Davies 1996).

**Survey Guidelines**  
 Top  
 The Pectoral Sandpiper is found in Australia from September to June (Higgins & Davies 1996). The species is very similar in shape to the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*) but with a slightly slimmer, longer neck, more rounded crown, a lower more sloping forehead, slightly shorter legs and a slightly longer and more strongly decurved bill (Higgins & Davies 1996).

The draft referral guidelines for migratory shorebird species includes guidelines for conducting surveys of migratory shorebird habitat (DEWHA 2009aj).

**Threats**  
 Top  
 The following table identifies threats relevant to the Pectoral Sandpiper, and migratory shorebirds in general:

**Distribution Threat Details Australia**  
**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 specialised feeding techniques, they are particularly susceptible to slight changes in prey sources and foraging environments. Activities that cause habitat degradation 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 and changes to the hydrological regime  
 exposure of acid sulphate soils, hence changing the chemical balance at the site (DEWHA 2009aj).

**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, chemical and oil spills (DEWHA 2009aj).

**Global Habitat loss**  
There are a number of threats that affect migratory shorebirds in the East Asian-Australian Flyway (EAAF). 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 which includes 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 (Barter 2002, 2005c). For example, in South Korea, the Mangyeong 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) and will be reclaimed as part of the ongoing Saemangeum Reclamation Project (Birds Korea 2010; 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 (Barter 2005c). Reclamation is also a threat in other areas of the EAAF (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).

**Pollution**  
Migratory shorebirds are also adversely affected by pollution, both on passage and in non-breeding and breeding areas (Harding et al. 2007; Melville 1997; Round 2006; Wei et al. 2006).

**Disturbance**  
Globally, disturbance from human activities, including recreation, shellfish harvesting, fishing and aquaculture is likely to continue to increase (Barter et al. 2005; Davidson & Rothwell 1993).

**Climate change**  
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).

**Threat Abatement and Recovery**  
Top Wildlife Conservation Plan for Migratory Shorebirds and EAAF shorebird conservation initiatives  
The Wildlife Conservation Plan for Migratory Shorebirds (AGDEH 2005c, 2006f) outlines Australian activities to support EAAF shorebird conservation initiatives. The plan 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. Objectives of the plan include increasing international cooperation, managing important habitat, supporting research and raising awareness of the conservation of migratory shorebirds.

**Natural Heritage Trust**  
Since 1996–97, the Australian Government has invested approximately \$5 000 000 of Natural Heritage Trust 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 program, that will produce robust, long-term population data able to support the conservation and effective management of shorebirds and their habitat, and migration studies using colour bands and leg flags, and the development of a shorebird conservation toolkit to assist users to develop and implement shorebird conservation projects.

**Birds Australia**  
Birds Australia is currently co-ordinating the Shorebirds 2020 project, which aims to monitor shorebird populations at important sites throughout Australia. 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 of these activities 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 (Denig 2005; Straw 1992a, 1999).

**Draft referral guidelines**  
The Draft Significant impact guidelines for 36 migratory shorebirds (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. The policy aims to promote ecologically sustainable development that allows for the continued ecological function of important habitat for migratory shorebirds (DEWHA 2009aj). The document indicates that there are no Australian sites of international significance to the Pectoral Sandpiper (DEWHA 2009aj).

**East Asian-Australasian Flyway site network (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 EAAF 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), although it is unknown what benefits these sites receive by being on the list:

State	Location	Size (hectares)	NT
	Kakadu National Park	1 375 940	
Western Australia	Parry Lagoons	36 111	
	Thomsons Lake	213	
Queensland	Moreton Bay	113 314	
	Bowling Green Bay		
	Shoalwater Bay		
	Great Sandy Strait		
NSW	Hunter Estuary	2916	
Victoria	Corner Inlet	51 500	
	Western Port	59 297	
	Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula	16 540	
	Shallow Inlet Marine and Coastal Park		
SA	The Coorong, Lake Alexandrina & Lake Albert	140 500	
Tasmania	Orielton Lagoon	2920	
	Logan Lagoon	2320	

Management Documentation

Top

Management documents relevant to the Pectoral Sandpiper include:

- Marine Bioregional Plans for the North and East marine areas of Australia (DEWHA 2008, 2009m)
- Wildlife Conservation Plan for Migratory Shorebirds (AGDEH 2006f)
- Species Profile References
- Top

Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage (AGDEH) (2005c). Background Paper to the Wildlife Conservation Plan for Migratory Shorebirds. Canberra, ACT: Department of the Environment and Heritage. Available from: <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/migratory/publications/pubs/shorebird-plan-background.pdf>. 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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Barter, M.A., K. Gosbell, L. Cao & Q. Xu (2005). Northward shorebird migration surveys in 2005 at four new Yellow Sea sites in Jiangsu and Liaoning Provinces. *Stilt*. 48:13-17.

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Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) (2008). The North Marine Bioregional Plan: Bioregional Profile: A Description of the Ecosystems, Conservation Values and Uses of the North Marine Region. Canberra: DEWHA. Available from: <http://www.environment.gov.au/resource/north-marine-bioregional-plan-bioregional-profile-description-ecosystems-conservation>.

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Shanghai shoreline, China, between 1984 and 2004. *Emu*. 107:19-27.\r\n \r\n Harding, S.B., J.R. Wilson & D.W. Geering (2007). Threats to shorebirds and conservation actions. In: Geering, A., L. Agnew & S. Harding, eds. *Shorebirds of Australia*. Page(s) 197-213. Melbourne, Victoria: CSIRO Publishing.\r\n \r\n Higgins, P.J. & S.J.J.F. Davies, eds (1996). *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds*. Volume Three - Snipe to Pigeons. Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press.\r\n \r\n International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (2010). *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*. Version 2010.4. Available from: <http://www.iucnredlist.org>.\r\n \r\n Melville, D.S. (1997). Threats to waders along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. In: Straw, P., ed. *Shorebird conservation in the Asia-Pacific region*. Page(s) 15-34. Melbourne, Victoria: *Birds Australia*.\r\n \r\n Ming, M., L. Jianjian, T. Chengjia, S. Pingyue & H. Wei (1998). The contribution of shorebirds to the catches of hunters in the Shanghai area, China, during 1997-1998. *Stilt*. 33:32-36.\r\n \r\n Partnership for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (Partnership EAAF) (2008). *East Asian-Australasian Flyway Site Network: October 2008*. Available from: <http://www.eaaflyway.net/documents/Flyway-Network-Sites-Oct-08.pdf>.\r\n \r\n Round, P.D. (2006). *Shorebirds in the Inner Gulf of Thailand*. *Stilt*. 50:96-102.\r\n \r\n Straw, P. (1992a). *Relocation of Shorebirds. A Feasibility Study and Management Options*. Sydney, NSW: Unpublished report by the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union for the Federal Airports Corporation.\r\n \r\n Straw, P. (1999). *Habitat remediation - a last resort?*. *Stilt*. 35:66.\r\n \r\n Wei, D.L.Z., Y.C. Aik, L.K. Chye, K. Kumar, L.A. Tiah, Y. Chong & C.W. Mun (2006). *Shorebird survey of the Malaysian coast November 2004-April 2005*. *Stilt*. 49:7-18.\r\n \r\n \r\n\r\n\r\n"