**Shorebirds Competition 2019**

**Background Information and Threatened Shorebirds**

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

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

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

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

Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy,

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

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

NSW Government Office of Environment & Heritage, Threatened Species:

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

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

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

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Critically Endangered Shorebirds** | **Endangered Shorebirds** | **Vulnerable Shorebirds** |
| Australian Painted Snipe | Bush Stone-curlew | Black-tailed Godwit |
| Greater Sand Plover  Grey-tailed Tattler | Curlew Sandpiper  Great Knot | Common Greenshank  Common Sandpiper |
| Lesser Sand Plover | Red Knot | Eastern Curlew |
|  | Terek Sandpiper | Hooded Plover  Marsh Sandpiper |
|  |  | Pacific Golden Plover |
|  |  | Ruddy Turnstone  Whimbrel |
|  |  | Wood Sandpiper |

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