

## Maianbar's shorebirds need space

Deeban Spit is home to many shorebirds, one of the world's most endangered species group. Bird habitat is declining rapidly as people around the world continue to expand into their space. In order to give them a chance we need to learn how to share their space. Thanks to the many residents no longer taking their dogs to the beach.

How can we help?

- Look out for signs or temporary fences on the beach, installed to protect the nest sites.
- Don't stop along the fence lines looking for the nest. This may cause the parent birds to leave eggs/chicks unprotected.
- Walk only along the water's edge and be careful not to step on any beach debris like seaweed or driftwood. A chick may be hiding amongst it.
- Remove any rubbish or discarded fishing line which can trap chicks.

**Please stop by to talk with the volunteers on the beach during nesting season for more information.**

**As with most Sydney beaches, dogs are not allowed on the Maianbar beach areas, the foreshore reserves or sandflats at any time.** Nesting birds will be disturbed much earlier and stay off nest at just the presence of a dog, big or small, on or off-lead. **Birds are likely to move off nest before you even see them.**



When eggs/chicks are left exposed; even a light sea breeze could bury them if the parents are scared off nest too often.

Unlike most Sydney beaches Maianbar is still home to endangered shorebird species that Australia has international obligations to protect. See the following websites for excursions by the water where you can enjoy a day out with your fur family, with no risk of a fine.

[www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/Outdoors/Beaches/Beach-Locations](http://www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/Outdoors/Beaches/Beach-Locations)

[www.greatdogwalks.com.au/sydney-dog-friendly-beaches.aspx](http://www.greatdogwalks.com.au/sydney-dog-friendly-beaches.aspx)

[www.australiandoglover.com/2015/10/20-great-dog-walks-around-sydney-and.html](http://www.australiandoglover.com/2015/10/20-great-dog-walks-around-sydney-and.html)

For the shorebird facts follow their journey:  
<http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-17/flying-for-your-life-ann-jones/7459288>  
[www.birdlife.org.au/projects/shorebirds-2020](http://www.birdlife.org.au/projects/shorebirds-2020)  
<http://ouroystercatchers.wix.com/shireshorebirds>

Australian government obligations include bilateral migratory bird agreements with Japan (JAMBA), China (CAMBA) and the Republic of Korea (ROKAMBA), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and through the East Asian - Australasian Flyway Partnership.

**Like to volunteer to help the shorebirds?  
No experience necessary, training provided.  
To volunteer send an email to:  
[shireshorebirds@outlook.com](mailto:shireshorebirds@outlook.com)**

Thanks to:

Birdlife Australia

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

### PHOTO ATTRIBUTIONS

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'Bar-tailed godwit'. By 'Franzed' – Own work (CC BY-2.0)

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'Double-banded plover' 'Little tern chick'. South Coast Shorebirds

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[www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au)

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## Shorebirds are on the move

**Arctic birds are flying in,**

**New Zealand birds are flying out.**

**Many are now endangered.**

**Small changes on our part can**

**increase their survival chance.**



## Shorebirds are here year round

The beach and sand flat areas from Bonnie Vale through to Costens Point are home to endangered shorebirds that need the area to feed and rest. The last 30 years of development between Newcastle and Wollongong leaves these birds no place to go.





**Pied oystercatcher - ENDANGERED**  
*seafood specialist*

Rope lines/signs will indicate nesting in progress. The fence is the most important element to protect the eggs, but it has a limited effect. To hatch chicks on a busy beach it can take 10 years of trial and error to overcome all the threats. There are only two nesting attempts a year. **It takes only 20 minutes for an unattended egg or chick to die and every disturbance adds up.** Estimates show fewer than 200 breeding pairs left in NSW.



**Eastern curlew – CRITICALLY ENDANGERED**  
*summer stunner*

Travelling about 10,000 kilometres from and to Arctic breeding grounds it is the world's largest migratory wader and has a downward curved bill. **Numbers have crashed by 80% in just 3 decades.** They are very wary birds and easily disturbed. **If you see them ahead, walk around them allowing 100 metres of space.** They are on the beach at high tide and on the tidal flats at low tide.



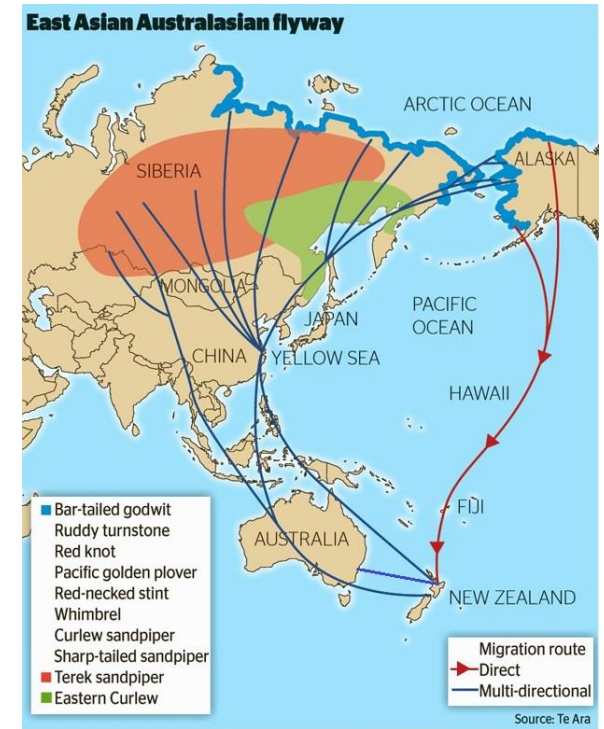
**Bar-tailed godwit - VULNERABLE**  
*marathon winner*

A migration so long over its lifetime it is equal to flying to the moon. Travels to the breeding grounds via the Yellow Sea in China and then flies further north to Alaska. After breeding it then travels non-stop back via the Pacific Ocean, the longest non-stop migration known. Can be seen resting or feeding with the eastern curlews. This bird is smaller than the curlew and its bill curves slightly up rather than down.



**Double-banded plover**  
*winter sprinter*

Unlike other migratory shorebirds, the tiny double-banded plover travels east/west (from New Zealand) rather than north/south, and arrives in autumn, not spring. These birds are one of our smaller annual visitors, about the size of a mandarin, with legs. Just before departing back to New Zealand in August for breeding, their chest bands colour up to a rich chestnut colour.



In human terms, what the migratory shorebirds do twice a year is the equivalent of running at 70 km per hour, day and night, for more than 7 days straight, non-stop.

Pre/post migration birds spend weeks feeding. To survive they need to almost double their body mass. Constant disturbance uses up energy rather than allowing for conversion of food to fat or muscle or a rebuild of wasted body tissue. Young birds, or those birds that have not been able to put on sufficient reserves to migrate spend the winter here, taking them out of the migration pool.

Many people would have seen dead shearwaters (mutton birds) on Sydney beaches over the years; they are migratory seabirds that migrate from areas north of Japan. Cause of death: starvation. This shows what happens once migratory birds run out of reserves. According to the last Australian census there are 10 times more people living in the Sutherland Shire than there are curlews left in the world.