

# Waterbirds

## Hooded Plover

*A message from Marcus Singor of Birds Australia*

We have colour banded 27 Hooded Plover in Yalgorup National Park and are keen to hear from anyone who has seen one. We do need the exact location preferably with GPS reading. Otherwise a good location description. The birds will have four bands: one metal and three colour, two bands on each leg e.g. a red band over a metal band on right leg and, say, an orangeband over a yellow one on the left leg.

We are trying to track the movements of Hooded Plover and any sightings outside Yalgorup would be of great interest. Of course we are interested in any sightings or reports of Hooded Plover and are always on the look out for regular surveyors.

## Conservation of the Rare Hooded Plover

The rare Hooded Plover is an attractive wader, which is endemic to Australia. Only 5000 birds are left in the world. Most of these remaining birds are in southern Western Australia. In the Eastern States the species' range has contracted and it has become locally extinct in some areas. We have an international responsibility to protect the species.

Hooded Plovers live on ocean beaches and on coastal and inland salt lakes. They are mainly found on the coast during the dry season, but some birds move inland during the wet season. They feed on invertebrates such as worms, shellfish, crustaceans, insects and seeds. In Western Australia they are normally found in small numbers of less than 10 birds, usually with only one to three birds in a group. Occasionally hundreds may be found spread over a single wetland.

Hooded Plovers are particularly vulnerable in the first stages of their lives. They take approximately four weeks to hatch and are flightless for five to six weeks after that.

The eggs and flightless chicks can easily be hunted and eaten by foxes, dogs and cats. Being highly camouflaged they are also accidentally crushed by pedestrians, four-wheel drive vehicles and trail bikes. The adults are only 19-23cm long. Adults have a distinctive red bill with a black tip. Red eye ring. Black head, White collar. Back pale grey-brown. Lower neck, side of breast black. Broad white wing bar in flight.

Photos supplied by: Julie Raines, Michael Burns and Marcus Singor

You can contact Marcus here [Marcus Singor](#)



*Thinornis rubricollis*  
Also known as Hooded Dotterel  
Bird in the hand?



Hooded Plovers at Lake Pollard



Hooded Plovers plus juveniles



Black-winged Stilt



Sacred Ibis in Samphire

## **The Waterbirds of Goegrup and Black Lakes in the Peel Region**

Since the mid 1980s, members of the Peel Preservation Group have been keeping a watching brief on the chain of lakes in Barragup. The lower reaches of the Serpentine River flows through the largest of the lakes known as Goegrup; the other four lakes have various local names and in this report are referred to as the Black lakes. Until recently, this lakes system was well known to generations of humans as a rich source of fish and waterfowl and, because the lakes were surrounded by thick growths of fringing vegetation and large trees, as a haven for other native wildlife and a source of plant foods.

In the last twenty years there has been a huge rise in the human population of Mandurah and its surrounds, posing possible threats to the lake's ecosystem in spite of some attempts at protection through System 6 and the Peel Region Scheme. The factors influencing the lakes include the opening of the Dawesville Channel in 1994 with consequent increase in tidal water levels, pollution of the Serpentine river causing blooms of *Nodularia* and other algae, insecticide spraying of the lakes to reduce mosquitoes and

subdivisional developments around the lakes' edges likely to increase as new freeways and railways make Mandurah more accessible to the metropolitan area.

Changes to ecosystems occur very gradually and are impossible to assess unless detailed studies of animal and plant populations and water quality are undertaken and recorded to act as baseline data for the future. We hope this study will contribute to this databank. Peel Preservation Group was awarded a Grant from Gordon Reid Foundation for Conservation to help towards this study. The Mandurah Birdwatchers Group carried out all the bird counts on a completely voluntary basis over a 12 month period, the counts being collated by Dick Rule.



Black Lake/Cogrup Lake Feb 1995



Black Lake near link to Goegrup Lake  
Jan 1995



Black Lake western side Feb 1995



Goegrup Lake from Lakes Rd