

Birds of the Manning Coast

The coastal corridor and adjoining estuaries provide a significant diversity of habitat which supports a diverse abundance of associated wildlife – dunes, mudflats, sand spits, mangroves and saltmarshes, swamp forests, littoral rainforest, heathlands, and open forests.

SHOREBIRDS (Waders)

Shorebirds survive in a habitat space between the sea and the land that is revealed each day between high and low tide. They are waders, without webbed feet, so only go into the water as far as they can touch the bottom.

There are 10 species of shorebirds on the Manning coast (see table) in addition to the Comb-crested Jacana which lives in the upper estuary. Six of these shorebirds are migratory and they are truly astounding in their achievements. Around November and December each year our beaches, foreshores and tidal mudflats are a part of the feeding zone for these species as they chase seasonal blooms of food for feeding and put on condition before they fly northward again chasing a continual spring and summer. For many the destination is as far as the Arctic Circle mosquito boom in June and July via the Yellow Sea mudflats in April and May where they feast on shellfish. The Yellow Sea laps against the shores of South Korea, North Korea and China and is under enormous change and ongoing pressure by land reclamation which destroys the habitat. In 2007, a female Bar-tailed Godwit was tracked flying 11,680 kilometres from Alaska to New Zealand in nine days straight. It is the longest recorded bird flight on the planet.

The **Ramsar Convention** is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It is named after the city of **Ramsar** in Iran, where the **Convention** was signed in 1971.

Three of the shorebirds are recognised as threatened species under NSW legislation. The Sanderling is vulnerable, the Pied Oyster-catcher is Endangered and the Beach Stone Curlew is critically Endangered. Some shorebirds are listed on International

Agreements such as the Ramsar Convention for their protection. These international Agreements are highly significant as, to ensure their survival, the species need ‘stepping stones’ of quality habitat along the migration routes known as the East Asian- Australian Flyway. Seven of Australia's 37 migratory wader species are edging towards extinction.

FEEDING METHODS

FISHING & DIVING	birds generally dive for mobile prey
WADING	Birds prey on mobile species (fish), probe for invertebrate animals (benthos) in the sediment surface and sub-surface layers (benthic zone) or feed in benthic vegetation
SHALLOWS	Birds feed on benthic vegetation or animals

COMMON NAME	<i>Migrates</i>	FEEDING METHODS	HABITAT
CURLEW, Eastern	yes	WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
GODWIT, Bar-tailed	yes	WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
GREENSHANK, Common	yes	WADING / BENTHOS SHALLOWS / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
JACANA, Comb-crested			Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
SANDERLING	yes	SHALLOWS	Intertidal sand banks and shores
SANDPIPER, Common	yes	WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
TURNSTONE, Ruddy	yes	WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
OYSTERCATCHER, Pied		WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh
STONE CURLEW, Beach		SHALLOWS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh
LAPWING, Masked		WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh
STILT, Black-winged		WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh

Other birds of the Manning Coast

There are about 35 other species of bird which are seen on the Manning Coast.

COMMON NAME	FEEDING METHODS	HABITAT
BITTERN, Black		Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
CORMORANT, Great	FISHING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
CORMORANT, Little Black	DIVING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
CORMORANT, Little Pied	DIVING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
CORMORANT, Pied	DIVING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
DARTER , Australian	DIVING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh
DUCK, Chestnut Teal	FISHING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows
DUCK, Hard-headed or White-eyed	SHALLOWS	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
DUCK, Pacific Black	DIVING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh
EGRET, Great	WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds

EGRET, Intermediate	WADING / FISHING	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
EGRET, Little	WADING / FISHING	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
GULL, Silver	WADING / FISHING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Sea Grass beds - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
HERON, Mangrove or Striated	WADING / SHALLOWS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
HERON, Striated	WADING / FISHING	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh
HERON, White-faced	WADING / FISHING	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
HONEY-EATER, Varied or Mangrove	WADING / FISHING	Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh
IBIS, Sacred	LAND BASED FORAGER	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh
IBIS, Straw-necked	WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
JABIRU	WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
KINGFISHER, Sacred	SHALLOWS	Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
KITE, Brahminy	LAND BASED FORAGER	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
KITE, Whistling	FISHING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh
NIGHT HERON, Rufous or Striated	DIVING	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh
OSPREY	FISHING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows
PELICAN, Australian	SHALLOWS	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
REEF EGRET, Eastern or Pacific	SHALLOWS / DIVING	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
SEA-EAGLE, White-breasted	WADING / FISHING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Mangroves and / or Saltmarsh - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
SPOONBILL, Royal	DIVING	Channels & submerged intertidal shallows - Intertidal sand banks and shores
SPOONBILL, Yellow-billed	WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
SWAN, Black	WADING / BENTHOS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
TERN, Caspian	SHALLOWS	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
TERN, Common	DIVING	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds
TERN, Crested	DIVING	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds - Upper estuary / freshwater riparian
TERN, Little	DIVING	Intertidal sand banks and shores - Sea Grass beds

Compiled from Greater Taree City Council State of the Environment Report 1995; and Mitchell McCotter 1997 Manning River Estuary Processes Study.