

NSW NPWS FAR SOUTH COAST REGION THREATENED SHOREBIRD RECOVERY PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Sharing the shoreline

2014/2015 Season Summary



NSW National Parks
and Wildlife Service

SHOREBIRD BREEDING SEASON

The 2014-2015 shorebird breeding season on the Far South Coast was interesting to say the least. We experienced extreme flood events in December, beaches eroded away and others covered with timber and debris—which did not stop one determined pair of Hooded Plover breeding. We undertook Biennial Hooded Plover surveys, participated in the Mimosa Rocks Bioblitz, coordinated Discovery educational activities, and even got out there over winter to survey many beaches and estuaries on foot, boat and kayak! We promoted the program at festivals, in the media, through many posters put out around the region and just from having a chat to beachgoers. As always all of this could not have occurred without the help of all of our NPWS Shorebird Volunteers.



Clyde River nest site built up with the help of Batemans Bay Primary School Students.



**Thank you to everyone who helped
with the conservation of our local
beach nesting birds - your help is
vital to the success of the program**

Thank you!

Season Results

Hooded Plover—8 fledglings overall. Four of these were from Nullica/Boydton Beach (2 successful attempts 1 fledged in December then 3 fledged in April 2015, really late but successful all the same). Then, the Haycock to Nth Long stretch was home to another successful pair that fledged 3 chicks in late 2014. The final beach, Merimbula Main Beach, was chosen by 'Y0' and partner after unsuccessful attempts on Bournda Beach. What a surprise to have them turn up here and fledge a chick, as we have not had Hooded Plover recorded nesting here previously. Pairs were also present at Wallaga Lake, Murrah Entrance, Aragunnu, Gillards/Cowdroys Beaches—one even popped into Mogareka this year for a short visit—Tura Beach, Legges and Brandy Creek Beaches, Disaster Bay Beach and Greenglades. We also got our flagged 'Y8' back from the South Coast where it turned up on Short Point Beach. Up to 3 adults were sighted in Nadgee NR also. Unfortunately despite many attempts none of these pairs were successful in fledging chicks this season.

Pied Oystercatchers— 8 fledglings also this season. Volunteers monitored 32 pair of Pied Oystercatchers this season which was a great effort. Often when chicks hatch of this species they are moved around estuaries and into upper parts of creeks and rivers making it harder to determine if chicks survived to fledge. There were definitely 8 fledglings sighted but this is likely to be a minimum estimate. The successful sites were: 2 from the Clyde River in Batemans Bay, 3 from Tuross Lake estuary and 2 from Aragunnu. The Clyde River Pair had a unique nest site thanks to Batemans Bay Primary School Children who help raise their nest site up above the king tide levels (see photo on front page).

Little Terns— 3 colonies established at Tuross Lake, Wallaga Lake entrance and Mogareka. The FSC hosted 57 breeding pairs (that actually laid an egg) but over 150 adults in breeding plumage were sighted altogether across these three sites. The first nests were laid at Mogareka on the 14 of November 2014, this was also the largest colony with 53 breeding pair present. It was fantastic to see so many birds nesting at Mogareka this season. Unfortunately the colony that commenced breeding at Wallaga Lake in late November was left with no breeding habitat after flooding took away the entrance sandspit and the two nests that had been laid there. Nesting commence very late at Tuross Lake, perhaps some relocating from Wallaga Lake, with the first of two nests being laid there around the 15th of January. Amazingly one chick was actually fledged from Tuross Lake very late in the season. Overall, the FSC fledged over 71 chicks during the 2014/15 season which was a great result.

Fairy Terns— were again nesting in amongst the Little Terns at both Wallaga Lake and Mogareka. At least 6 nests at Mogareka and 1 nest at Wallaga Lake were Fairy nests.

Sooty Oystercatchers— over 54 adults were sighted on the FSC this season. Favoured sites were Congo Creek Rock Platform, with up to 8 sighted there and regularly a large number present. They were also present at Wagonga Inlet, along the rocky coastline of Mimosa Rocks NP, at Bournda Island (though not sighted with eggs or chicks this year) , at Haycock Pt and even one hanging out on Whale Spit Beach Eden. Nesting was however confirmed only on Montague Island this season with 3 pair sighted with eggs or chicks there.

The amazing Nullica/Boydton Beach Pairs— this is a special beach, home to both an amazing Hooded Plover pair (Y7 and Unbanded) and a caring shorebird volunteer pair (Di and Paul). Together they all put in an amazing effort—the Hoodies successfully fledging 4 chicks, whilst the volunteers moved signage up and down the beach repeatedly, educated the beachgoers and were kept busy checking on the Hoodie family progress regularly. What a great team these two pairs make! As a result, half of the Hooded Plover fledglings from the FSC took flight from this one beach this season.

Photo below: Di and Paul on site with the last update sign of the season on Nullica/Boydton Beach.





Above: Red-capped Plover at Mogareka. Photo- Ben Smyth.



Discovery Educational Activities at Spencer Park Merimbula viewing the many shorebird species on the sandflats. Photo P.Collins.



Left: a decorated Hooded Plover nest. Photo: A. Harris

Below: T1 and partner at Tura Beach. Photo Liz Allen.

Far Bottom: Liz Allen on the job surveying shorebirds at Merimbu-la.





Top: Signage works effectively at Mogareka. Photo A. Harris

Middle: The debris along Nullia Beach which provided lots of cover for the Hooded Plover family there. Photo: A. Harris

Bottom: the resident Hoodie Family at Nullica—adult with 3 chicks. Photo: P. Whittock.





Above: Richard out in the field surveying Wal-laga Lake.

Right: Pied Oyster-catcher gathering at Wagonga Inlet. Photo: S.Gorton.



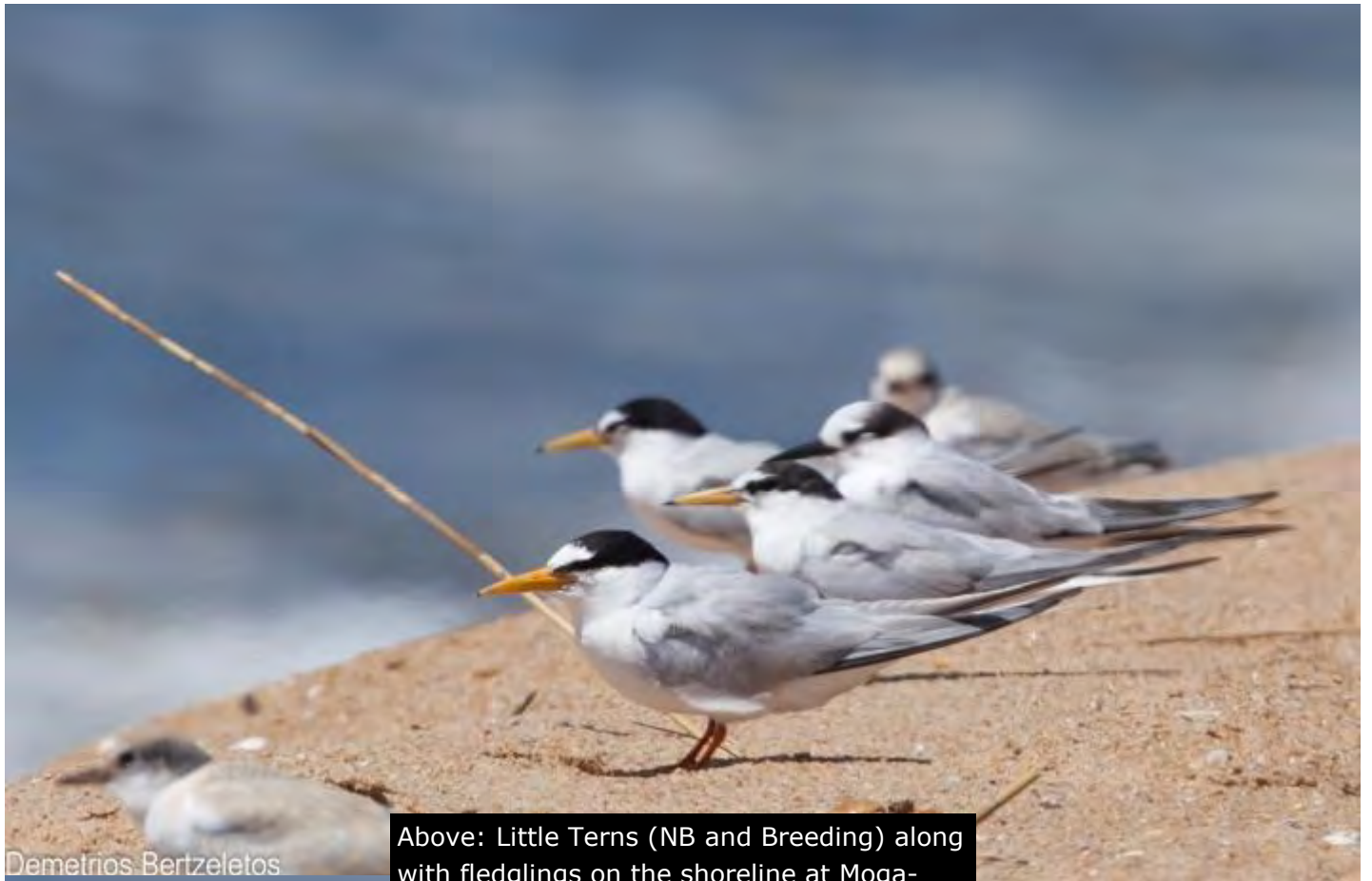
**Thanks for helping with the Far South Coast NPWS
Threatened Shorebird Recovery Program**

[Www.southcoastshorebirds.com.au](http://www.southcoastshorebirds.com.au)

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Above: Little Terns (NB and Breeding) along with fledglings on the shoreline at Moga-reka. Below: Fairy tern adult and chicks. All photographs by D. Bertzeletos.



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Above: A flagged 'H5' Pied captured at greenlades. Photo L.Allen

Below: Shorebird Survey team at Bithry In-let. Photo: L.Brown.

