

Planning and Local Government Brief

Five key components involved in developing a planning tool for shorebirds (to incorporate conservation needs into local government activities) include:

1. Meeting with planning and GIS staff within local government
2. A field assessment and mapping of shorebird habitat
3. Development of supporting information to accompany mapping
4. To advocate that mapping be linked to the development assessment process in Council
5. Preparation of a shorebird factsheet for local government

Meeting with Council Staff

Meet with senior planning and GIS staff within Council to:

- Discuss current limitations of zones within local government planning schemes with respect to shorebirds.
- Discuss the integration of shorebird habitat mapping with development assessment and the type of information required to improve the link between mapping and planning.
- Gather background information on the type of information required to prepare GIS maps e.g. datum, use of reference points etc.
- Gather background information on the type of information required by planning staff to assist in the assessment of Development Applications (DA) that may affect shorebirds.
- Request/access printed copies of orthophotos for use in the field.

Field Assessment and Mapping

Undertake a field assessment involving local (where possible) shorebird counters to survey and map habitat during (low) spring high tides.

Things to consider:

- If high quality orthophotos are available mark the boundary of spring tide roosts directly onto the photos, whilst in the field, with a GPS reading taken for the middle of each roost site.
- If good quality aerial photographs are not available, GPS readings should be taken around the periphery of each roost.

Polygons will be used to delineate the boundary of spring tide roosts.

Note: Whilst in the field care should be taken to ensure that the information gathered is as accurate as possible, although the need for accuracy must be balanced against the recognition that the location of roosts at some sites is likely to change depending on patterns of erosion and accretion.

Supporting Information

Collate background information on the use of each roost and feeding area by shorebirds to support habitat mapped. This supporting information will then be linked directly to the GIS overlay.

Include the following supporting information for each roost and foraging area:

- A list of species
- Conservation status of each species
- Maximum number of each species recorded at that site
- Maximum number of individuals recorded at a site during a single survey
- Number of times that a site has been sampled

Data should be sourced from one of a combination of the Australasian Wader Studies Group, the State Wader Study Group or local Bird Group.

Linking Mapping to Council Planning

Advocate the integration of shorebird habitat mapping into the Council planning process. The need for integration would be identified during the initial meeting with Council when any impediments to integration would be discussed.

Things to consider:

- Letter to senior planning staff in Council, including provision of mapping and supporting information and an outline of opportunities for its inclusion in planning processes.
- Presentation to Senior planning staff.
- Circulation of mapping and supporting information to State Government and Community Interest Groups (seeking their assistance, if needed, in advocating the integration of habitat mapping into council planning).

Shorebird Factsheet

Develop a brief factsheet targeting Council Planners and other local government staff.

The fact sheet should be designed to provide a general overview of important information on shorebirds, with the central focus being a discussion of threats and how planning and regulation can benefit shorebirds.

The factsheet should include:

- Information on shorebirds in the area.
- A brief discussion of the international and national status of shorebirds.
- A discussion of important shorebird habitat within the area.
- Information on threats to shorebirds and their habitat in the area.
- A brief discussion of specific types of activities that may affect shorebirds and their habitat.
- A discussion of the important role that planning and regulation at the local scale have in protecting shorebirds and their habitat.
- An overview of actions to manage shorebirds and their habitat.