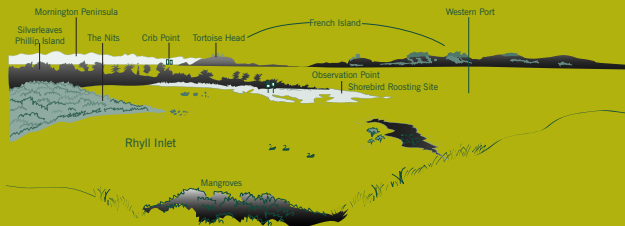


# World Class Wetland

## Welcome to Rhyll Inlet and Observation Point

The inlet and bay before you are an important destination for birds that breed in Siberia, Alaska and New Zealand. They are also home to resident birds.



### Rhyll Inlet

Rhyll Inlet is part of a large bay called Western Port. This 680km<sup>2</sup> bay features 27 000 hectares of mudflats which provide such a rich food supply that many birds fly a 25 000 km round trip each year to feed here. At high tide, when feeding areas are covered, Observation Point provides a safe roost (place to rest) for shorebirds (waders). At low tide, the birds spread out to feed on shrimps, crabs, worms and molluscs that live in the mud and seagrass.

### Observation Point

Observation Point is the most important site in the bay for medium to large waders such as Bar-tailed Godwits and Whimbrels. It is also a good site for Oystercatchers, Eastern Curlew, Red-necked Stints, Double-banded Plovers and Red Knot.

- Viewing is best at high tide.
- High powered binoculars or telescopes are recommended.

### Life in the Fast Lane

Migratory shorebirds lead 'double lives' over an endless summer. They have adapted their entire existence to fly across the globe to places where food is plentiful.

In the northern summer (June-August), the adult birds travel mostly to Arctic Siberia: one of the most insect-rich places on earth. They fit the whole cycle of courtship, mating, egg laying and chick rearing into a tight schedule of just six to eight weeks! This allows adults and chicks to be ready for 'take off' to fly to the southern hemisphere to spend the Austral spring and summer feeding in places like this where food is plentiful.



### The East Asian Australasian Flyway

The path the birds travel is called a 'flyway'. Birds stop at 'refuelling' points along the way where they rest, feed and accumulate fat reserves for the next stage of their journey. The journey of up to 12 500 km one way takes about two months. Birds on migration fly at around 70 kph and can cover over 1500 km in a day.

