Satellite Tracking Report from North-West Australia 2019

Number 16

12.08.19

We're continuing to receive information regularly from our satellite trackers on the four remaining Oriental Pratincoles and the two Whimbrel. Some of these reports are of lower quality/accuracy but they are sufficient to give us a good idea of what our birds are currently doing.

Only one of the four Oriental Pratincoles seems certain to have bred for a second time this season. This was at a different location to the first breeding attempt. At least one of the other three may also have bred again but we probably need a further period of tracking to be more certain. One of the birds – the one which went to India (SEP) – still seems to be moving and therefore is probably not currently breeding.

Both Whimbrel have spent an extensive period at their respected breeding locations in the north-east of Siberia and almost certainly therefore they have both bred successfully. One (KU) has now left Siberia and has crossed the Chinese-Russian border on its way to the Yellow Sea. The second Whimbrel (LA) has only just left the breeding grounds and it is too early to say what migration route it is taking.

(Contributed by Clive Minton)

ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE

REPORT NO. 16

11/8/19

Grace Maglio

Location data has been sparse over the last week or so, likely due to the inclement weather throughout Asia. There is some evidence of a slow southward migration from SEP and possibly SEC but SHE and SUN look to be remaining in their post breeding locations.

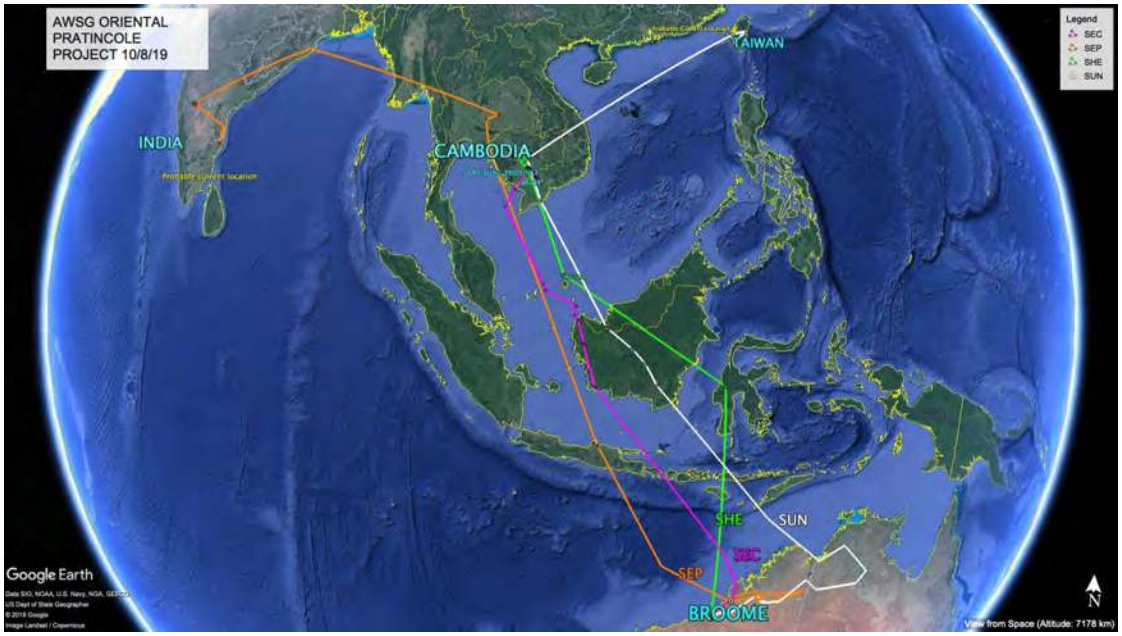


Figure 1 – Tracks of Oriental Pratincole 10/8/19

Migration details/facts so far - 10/8/19

Bird ID	Distance from 80 Mile Beach release location to breeding grounds (approx.)	Approximate time in breeding location (days)	Breeding Location	Distance from breeding site. 10/8/19
SUN	4800km	66 total	East Taiwan	130km south west
SEP	6350km	88 total	South-west India	585km south east (probable 780km SE)
SHE	4000km	97 total	West Cambodia	170km south east
SEC	3840km	70 total	South-east Cambodia	115km south east

SHE (PTT 83595) – Exploiting the riches of Prey Veng Province

Prey Veng Province upholds its title of Cambodia's 'Great Green Belt' as SHE continues to utilise resources in the area now, for approximately 70 days. Tracks continue to resemble the presumed breeding behaviour of its previous Tonle Sap Lake location.

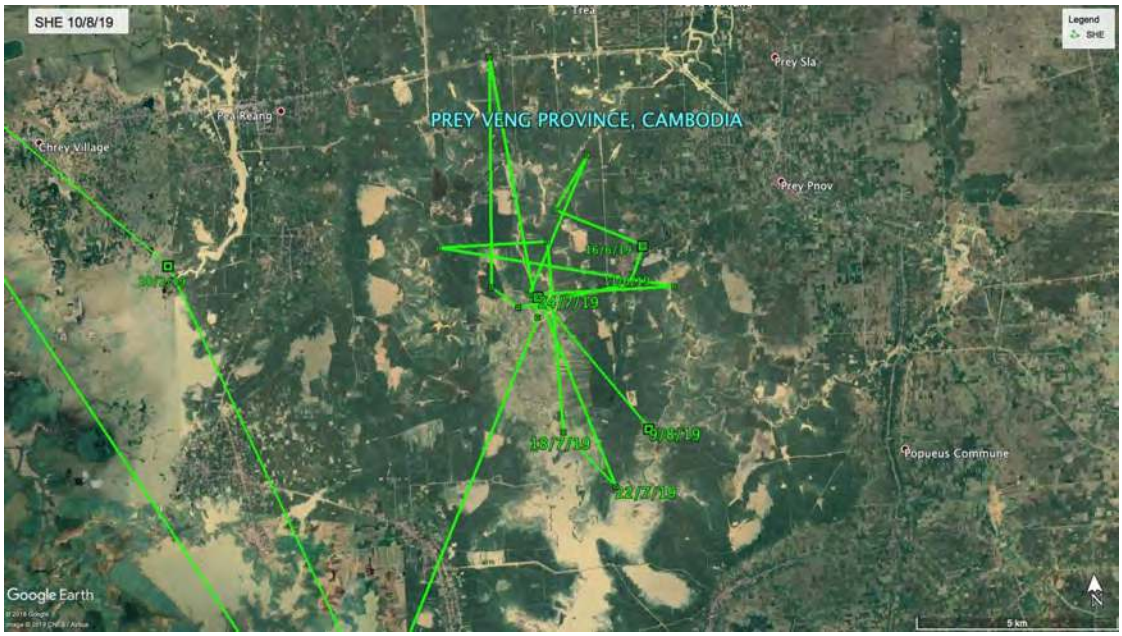


Figure 2 – SHE 10/8/19 –Tracks from high accuracy location data - Prey Veng Province.

SEC (PTT 83596) – Approaching the border.

It is now around 71 days and SEC is still in Svay Rieng Province. SEC is approximately 20km west of the largest city in Svay Rieng, Bavet and less than 8km from the Cambodia/Vietnam border. Accurate location data suggests that SEC is slowly moving south but less accurate data suggests that SEC may be still utilising an area of approximately 15 to 20km around the Waiko River.

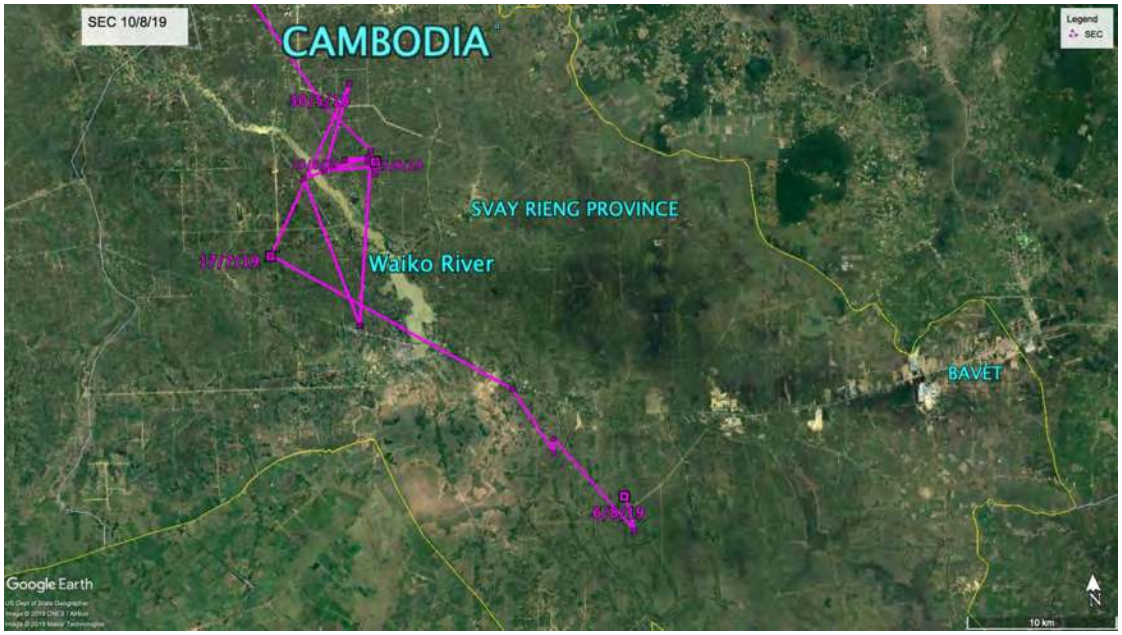


Figure 3 – SEC 10/8/19 – Svay Rieng Province, Cambodia approx.

SUN (PTT 83591) – Data difficulties continue. By Grace Maglio and Chung-Yu Chiang

Ongoing issues with obtaining accurate location data persists making attempts to confidently locate SUN difficult. Although there have been no accurate readings since June 26, SUN's probable location continues to be within 5 to 10km of its first Taiwanese stopover site near Tainan City.

Figure 4 - SUN – Last accurate reading 26/6/19, Qishan District, Taiwan.
Pinned area marks probable location.

SEP (PTT 83593) By Grace Maglio and Subbu Subramanya

SEP continues southward migration. As of the 21 July SEP was 30km west of Chennai, approximately 580km south east of Almatti Dam where it was found by Subbu and the team, no further accurate data has been received since. Less accurate readings suggest SEP is still in the state of Tamil Nadu but possibly travelled another 285km south of this location.

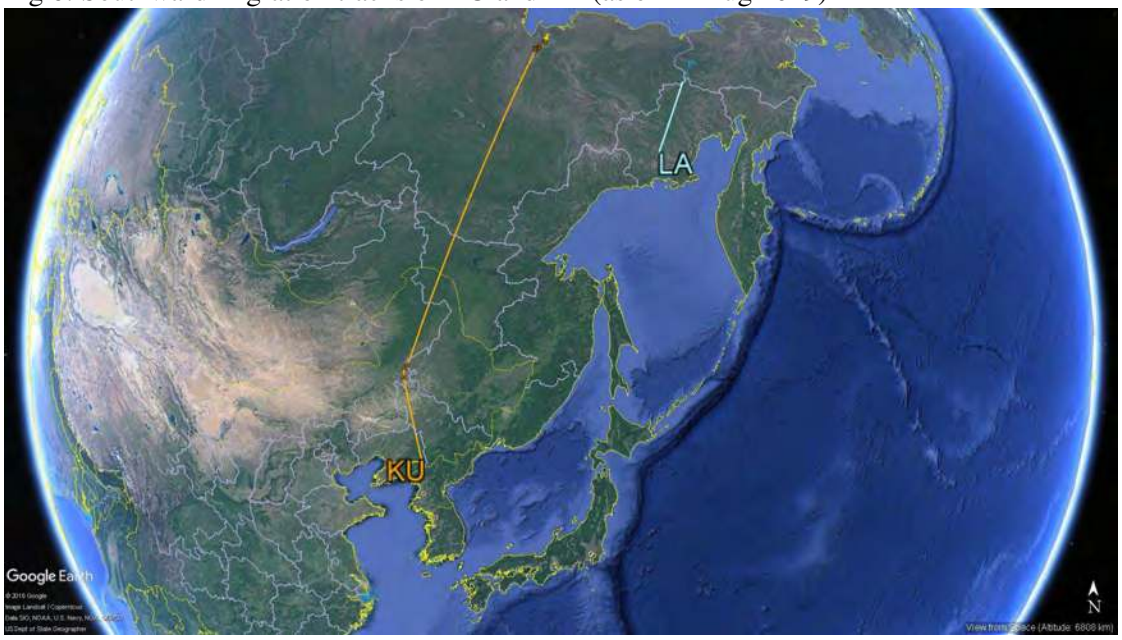
Figure 5 –SEP approx. 30km west of Chennai, India, with probable location since the 21 July.

Whimbrel – Southward migration on (by Katherine Leung)
After more than 2 months in Siberia, KU and LA kicked started their southward migration in the past few days.

KU apparently has bred successfully. It spent 67 days in its nesting area, which is slightly longer than the 62-day in 2018. On 8 August, it started migrating for a brief stop just about 105km south of its nesting site, and then continue on another 3,550km directly to Yingkou, Liaoning Province north coast of the Yellow Sea at the exact location as it rested for 52 days during southward migration in 2018.

It is not clear whether LA has bred. In the first 5 weeks, LA was not very settled in Chukotka and changed its location from time to time. In the 6th week, LA finally settled in Magadan and stayed for 29 days which might not be enough time to incubate and raise some chicks. It started migrating south on 11 August for 658km. Will LA take a similar route via Kamchatka like 2018?

Fig 6: Southward migration tracks of KU and LA (as of 12 Aug 2019)



Migration summary of Whimbrels (as of 12 Aug 2019):

Leg Flag (track colour)	No. of days since transmitter deployment	No. of days since departing Australia	Distance travelled (2019)
KU (yellow)	900 days	110 days	13,847 km
LA (blue)	912 days	109 days	11,377 km