

Satellite Tracking Report from North-West Australia 2019

Number 3

18.03.19

The main news contained in this (3rd) Report on the satellite trackers deployed in NWA in February 2019 is again centered on the Oriental Pratincoles. Two of the three individuals which were still on active migration last week have continued northwards. One of these (SEC), was just off the Asian mainland close to the Cambodia/Vietnam border. Subsequent, less accurate, readings indicate that the bird has now reached the mainland. It will be interesting to see if this bird proceeds northwards to the lake where the initial Oriental Pratincole (SHE) has been located for the last three weeks. The lack of onward movement of SHE increasingly suggests that it may have reached its breeding location, although breeding is unlikely to commence before April.

Of the remaining two Oriental Pratincoles one (SUN) has continued its northward movement through the Maritime Continent and is now in Central Borneo. The other (SEP) is still foraging over agricultural land in Central Indonesia.

At the rate the Oriental Pratincoles are moving northwards, it is possible that the main migration to the breeding grounds may even be completed before the end of March.

In contrast the Little Curlew have only just started to show evidence of northward migration. One of the birds moved today (17th March) from Anna Plains Station to Roebuck Plains Station, near Broome (around 200km northwards). The others still seem to be feeding happily on the abundant insect life on the grasslands of Anna Plains station, with the occasional sortie to the adjacent 80 Mile Beach in the heat of the day. It is probable that other Little Curlew will then move to Roebuck Plains in coming days, but departure overseas is not expected to commence until early April.

The two Whimbrel also seem content to remain at their over-wintering locations on 80 Mile Beach and on the north side of Roebuck Bay. Again their main migration is not expected to start until April, probably mid-April.

We have not received any further information on the Eastern Curlew this week from Amanda Lilleyman. By the time of the next report we would expect several birds to have set off over the sea on northward migration.

Contributed by Clive Minton

ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE

REPORT NO. 3

Contributed by Grace Maglio

ALL ON THE GO AND WHERE THEY WILL STOP, WE REALLY DON'T KNOW!

With all four birds now in Southeast Asia we find SHE on the floodplains of Tonle Sap Lake and SEP near the city of Pati; the same locations as described last week. SEC and SUN continue their migrations, making flights further north.

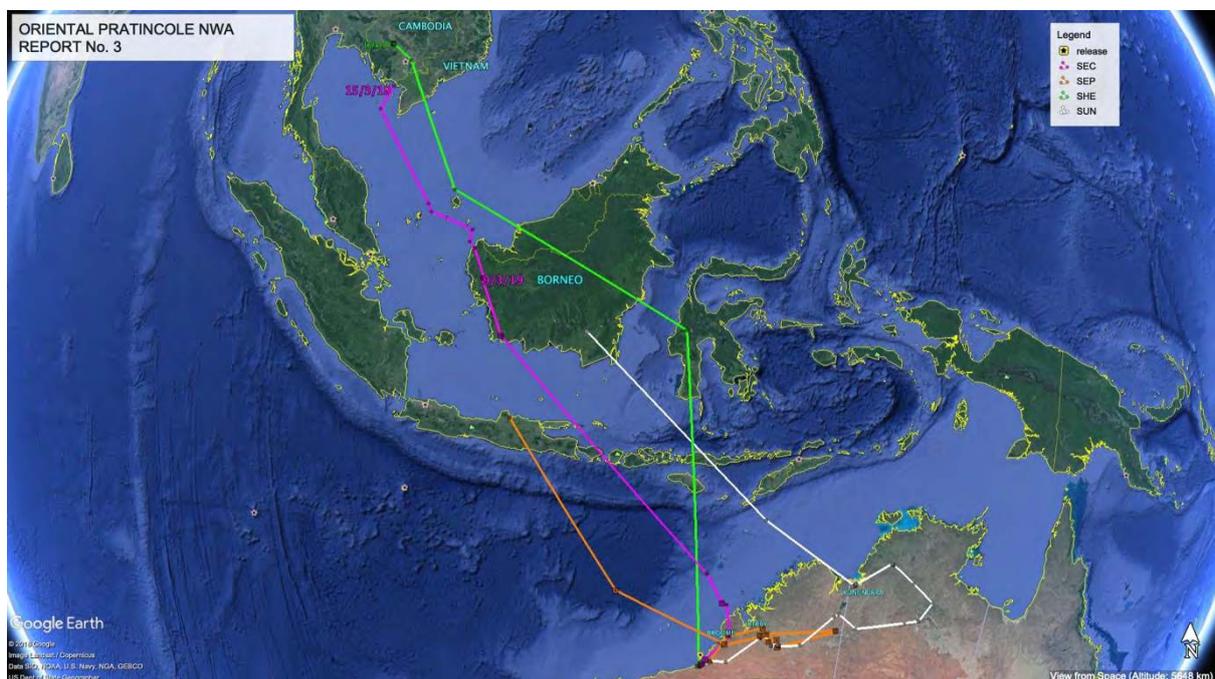


Figure 1 – Four Oriental Pratincoles in Southeast Asia

DISTANCE FROM RELEASE LOCATION 16/3/19

Leg Flag ID	Distance from 80 Mile Beach release location (approx.)
SUN	2000km
SEP	1790km
SHE	4000km
SEC	3700km

SUN (PTT 83591) – On the 9th March SUN's position was recorded 140km north-east of the Ashmore Islands, approximately 300km off North West Australia's

Kimberley Coast. Four days later and another 1450km northwest, SUN is now located in Central Kalimantan, approximately 5km from the Barito River and 10km from the village of Rantau Kujang, in the Jenamas District of Borneo. This location is approximately 2000km from the release site at 80 Mile Beach in North West Australia.

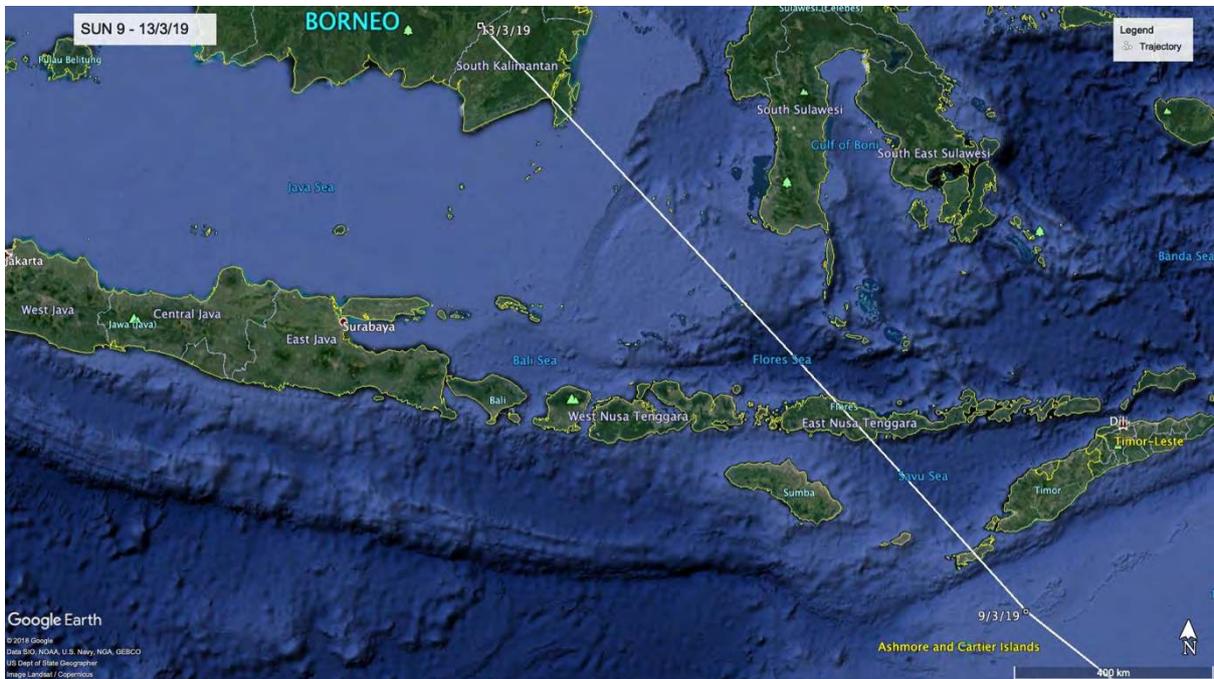


Figure 2 – SUN, Fly by Ashmore Islands, Indian Ocean to Central Kalimantan



Figure 3 – SUN, Central Kalimantan stopover.

SEP (PTT 83593) – SEP has not moved since our last report and remains in the moderately populated Pati Regency in Central Java, Indonesia. This bird seems to be using agricultural land surrounded by many villages in the area.



Figure 4 – SEP Remains in the Pati Regency, Central Java

SHE (PTT 83595) – Three weeks have passed since SHE first began migration. In our last report, SHE had settled in the Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve, Cambodia where it still remains. The latest location shows this bird in the Roniem Forest, containing habitat which includes open grasslands.



Figure 5 - SHE Tonle Sap Lake Biosphere Reserve

SEC (PTT 83596) – After departing Broome, SEC remained in the West Kalimantan Region, Borneo, for approximately 11 days. Around the 12th March there was a brief stopover at Pulau Serasan, (Serasan Island) - part of the southern group of Islands making up the Natuna Regency, Indonesia. Between the 14th and 15th of March, SEC travelled a distance of approximately 850km to its latest location 23km off the coast of the Vietnam-Cambodian border, approximately 3700km from the release site at 80 Mile Beach in North West Australia.

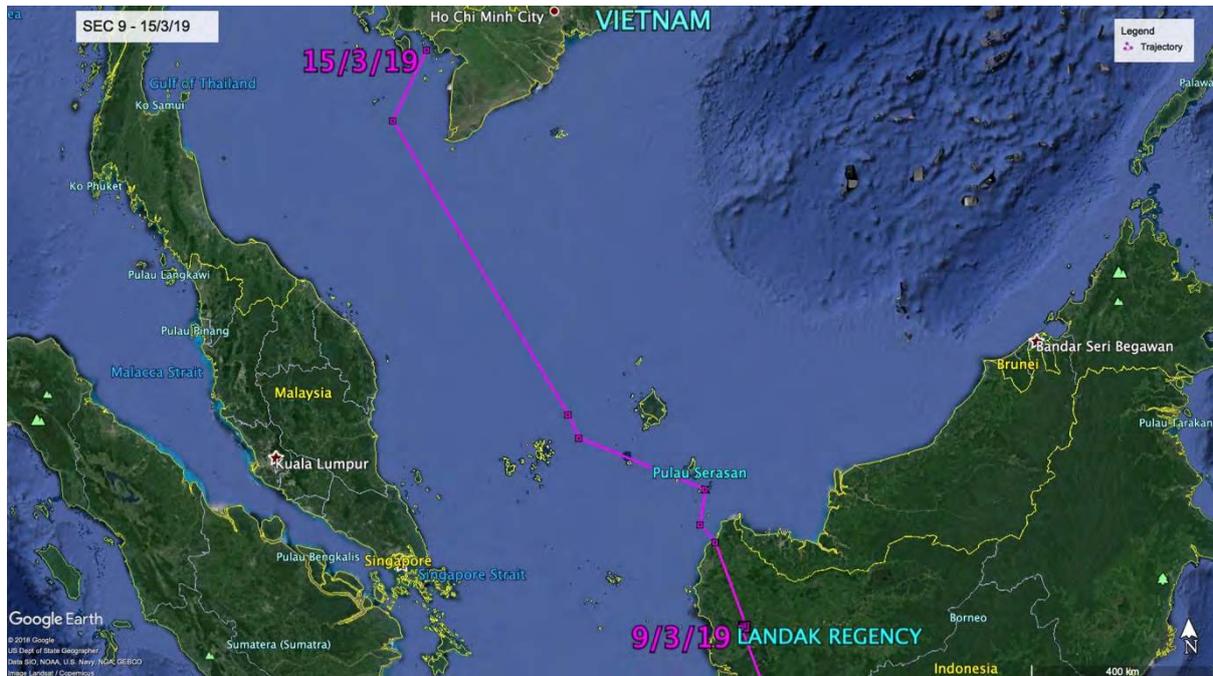


Figure 6 – SEC, West Kalimantan region to the coast of Vietnam

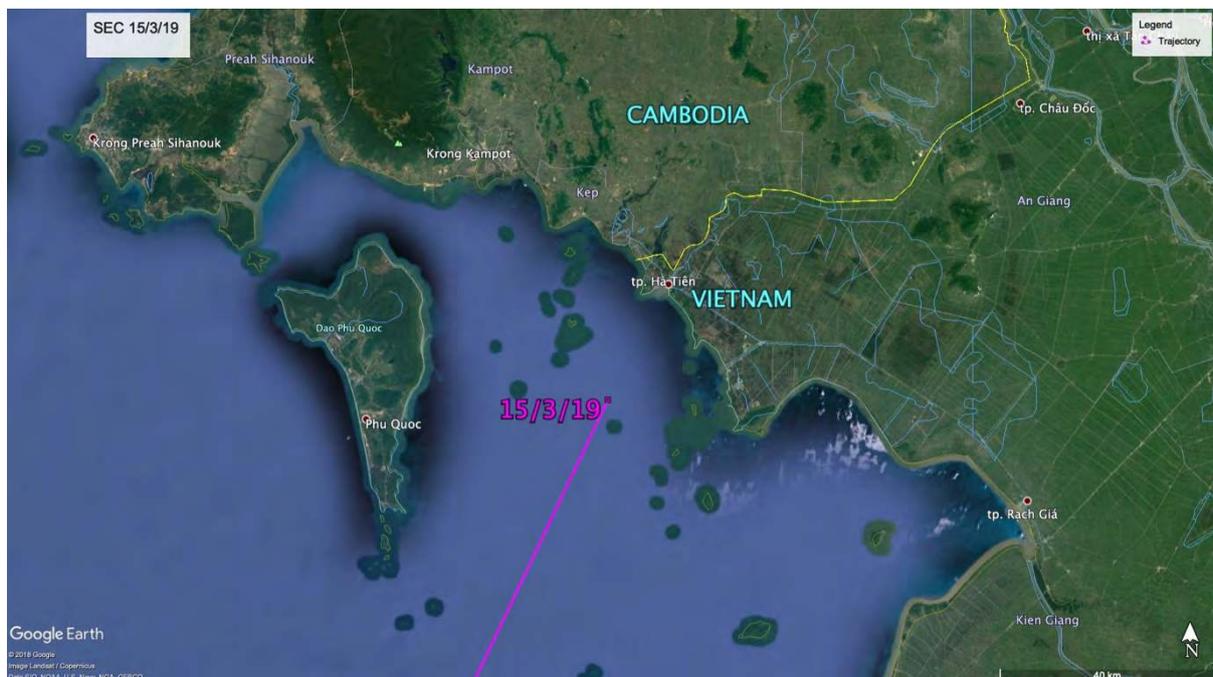


Figure 7 – SEC, 20km off the coast of Vietnam

LITTLE CURLEW

REPORT NO. 3

Contributed by Inka Veltheim

During the last week four of the Little Curlew have mostly continued to roam around the grazed grassland of Anna Plains Station in the same area at which they were originally caught. However on the 17th March Little Curlew 'LS' moved northwards approximately 200km to the grazed grasslands at Roebuck Plains, near Broome. This is probably the first step in its northward migration.

The fifth satellite transmitter put on Little Curlew 'LK' is confirmed as not now being on a live bird. It is still transmitting indicating that it may have been shed and be now lying on the ground with its solar panel facing upwards.

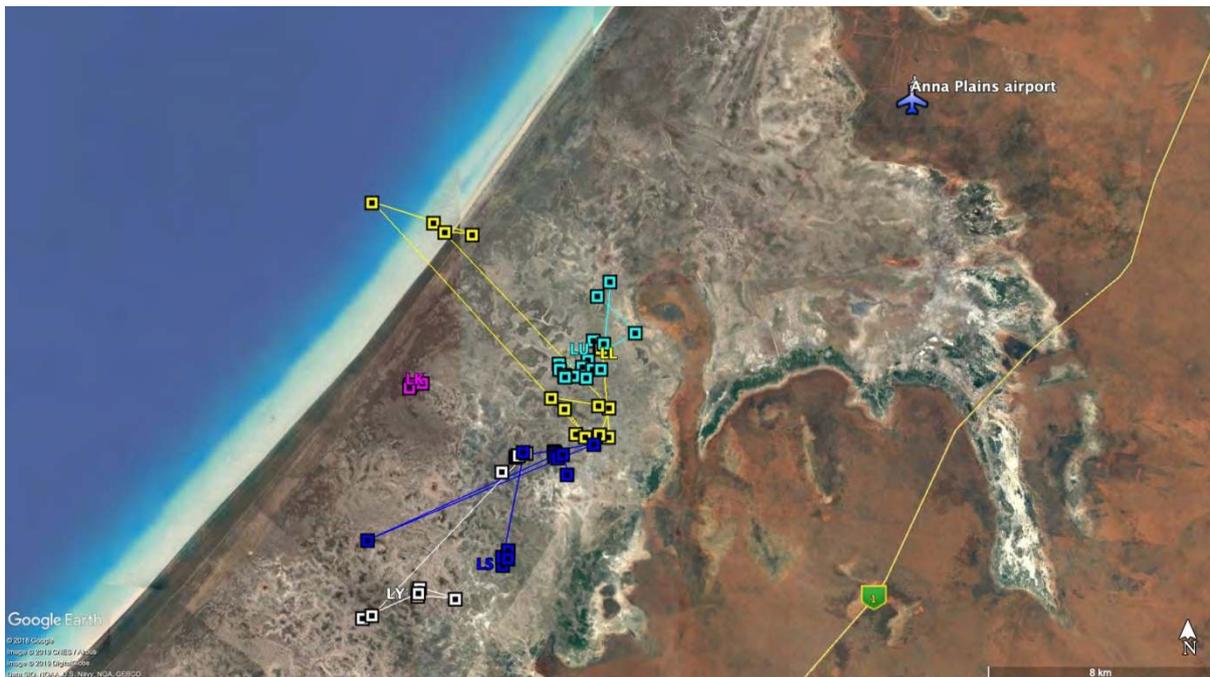


Figure 8 – Little Curlew movements, Anna Plains



Figure 9 – Little Curlew 'LS' movement to Roebuck Plains

WHIMBREL

REPORT NO. 3

Contributed by Katherine Leung

There is still a month to go until the anticipated departure date. Both KU and LA remain at their marking locations, Roebuck Bay and 80 Mile Beach respectively.

EASTERN CURLEW

NO REPORT