

Satellite Tracking Report from North-West Australia 2019

Number 7

16.04.19

It is absolutely marvellous the way these satellite tagged Oriental Pratincoles continue to come up with surprises. Having stuck my neck out and suggested that they may have already reached their breeding areas, two birds have made major onward migrations during the past week. One has gone to Taiwan, the site of our only previous overseas record of an Australian marked Oriental Pratincole. The other has gone to India. If this bird remains to breed it will be the first example of an Australian wader breeding in India. What are the other two Oriental Pratincole now going to do – stay put and breed or migrate? Watch this space!!

The first of the Little Curlew to leave North-west Australia has only moved another 90km east locally. Based on results of previous years we would expect it to make its first Asian mainland landfall in China. How soon will the other Little Curlew follow on its heels?

(Contributed by Clive Minton)

ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE

Contributed by Grace Maglio

**Namaste, Susaday and Ni Hao
Greetings from across the flyway**

Another interesting and exciting week with SUN now in Taiwan, SEP on the east coast of India, and SHE and SEC continuing their stay in Cambodia. With two of the four birds using Mainland Southeast Asia as a staging area (SUN 7 days and SEP 11 days approx.), it will be interesting to see future movements of SHE and SEC; which way will they go?

For this special update we have 'on the ground information' from friend and colleague Chung-Yu Chiang, Senior Bander, Taiwan Wader Study Group.

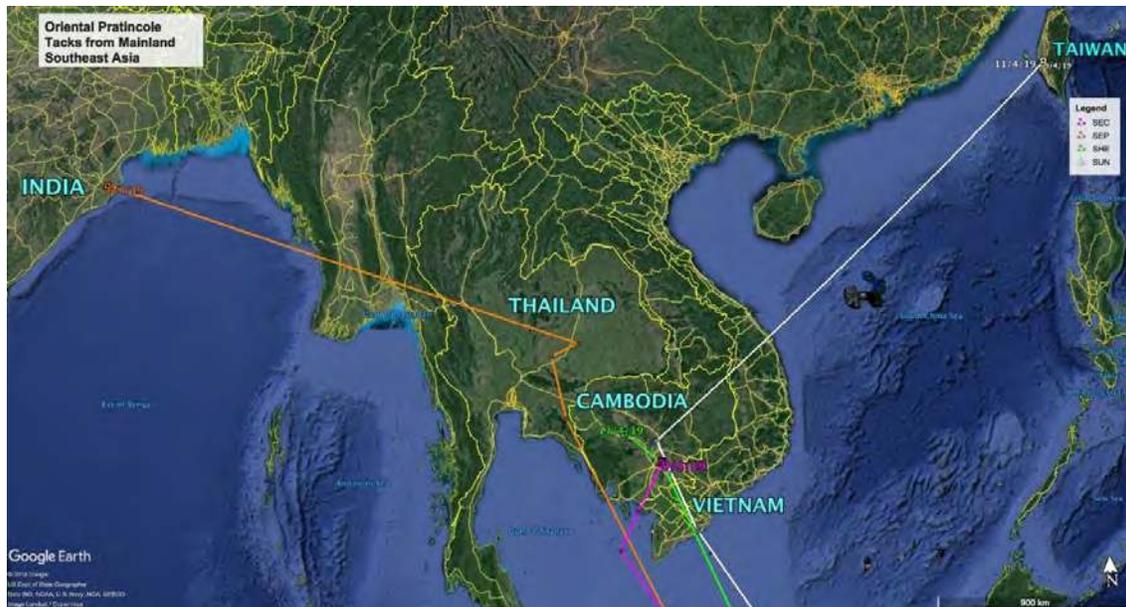


Figure 1 – Tracks of Oriental Pratincole from Mainland Southeast Asia.

DISTANCE FROM RELEASE LOCATION 13/4/19

Bird ID	Distance from 80 Mile Beach release location (approx.)
SUN	4,800km
SEP	5,800km
SHE	4,000km
SEC	3,840km

SUN (PTT 83591) – **Why the long road?** (by Grace Maglio and Chung-Yu Chiang)

On 5 April, SUN's location was in the Baray District of Cambodia. Around 6 April after approximately 7 days on Mainland Southeast Asia, SUN headed west and although we are unable to determine the route taken, this bird travelled approximately 2,030km east and was located in Taiwan – in rice fields around Ba-Chang River in Tainan City on 9 April and Chiayi County on 10 April.

What makes this flight fascinating is that had SUN taken a more direct route to this area from 80 Mile Beach, Western Australia, it may well have saved itself around 1,000 kilometres of air travel.

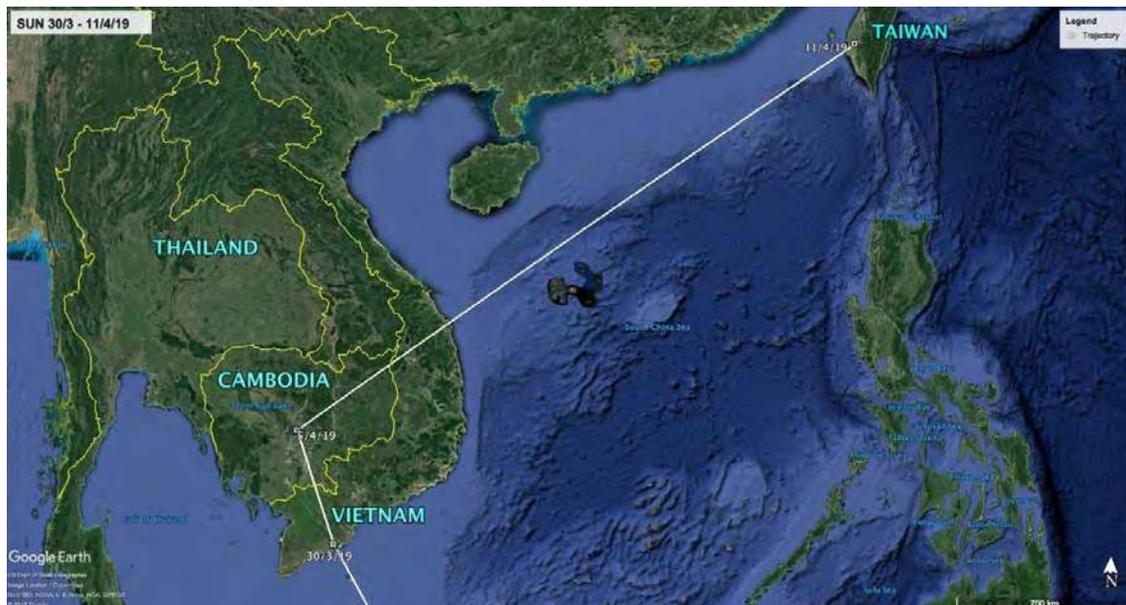


Figure 2 - SUN - Kampong Tong Province, Cambodia to Taiwan.

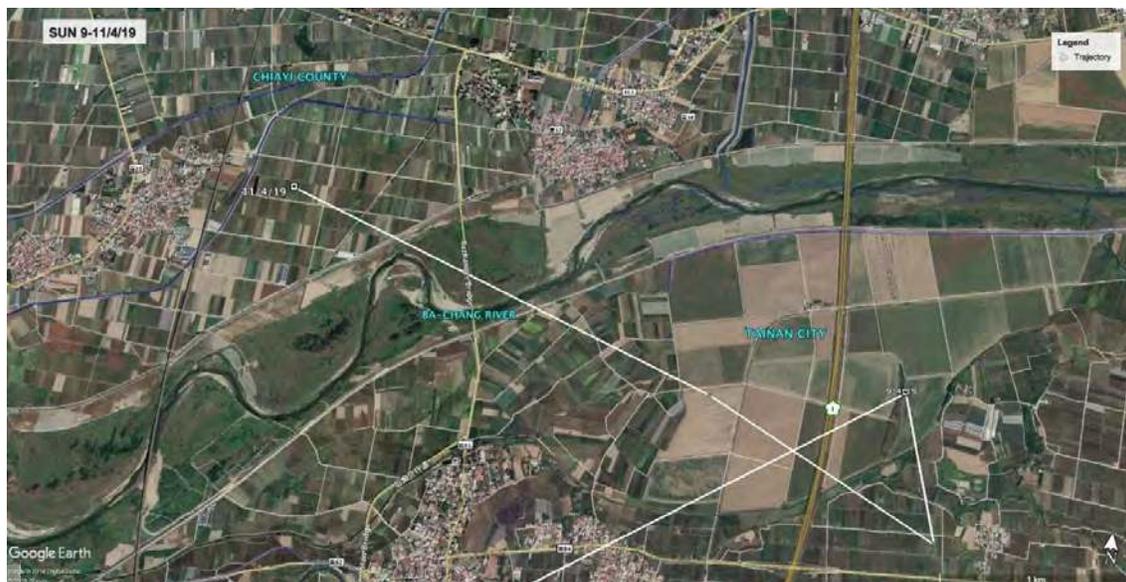


Figure 3 - SUN - tracks in Taiwan

On the morning of 10 April, a survey was completed in the approximate area of SUN's location in Tainan City by Chung-Yu (Fig 4). The area consists of sugar cane, rice and corn fields. Sixteen Oriental Pratincoles were counted in this area (SUN was not observed) and were observed hawking for insects and flying around over sugar cane fields.



Figure 4 - SUN – Area surveyed in Tainan City, Taiwan 10/4/19.



Photo 1: SUN - Survey site 10/4/19:
 Upper left: Ba-Chang River bed
 Upper right: Harvested sugar cane field
 Lower left: Rice and corn field planted area
 Lower right: Rice and corn field harvested area



Photo 2: SUN - an example of habitat in Chiayi County location (Google Street View)

SEP (PTT 83593) – **Keep calm and wait until next week**

According to the more reliable location data, there has been no change to SEP's movements. However, less accurate data suggests that SEP may be moving west along India's Eastern Coastal Plains. We hope to have more up-to-date information next week.



Figure 5 – SEP's last accurate location reading.

LITTLE CURLEW

Contributed by Inka Veltheim

Little Curlew LL has moved about 90 km east on Seram Island, Maluku province. The others (LS and LU) are still getting ready for migration at Anna Plains and we expect them to migrate any day now.

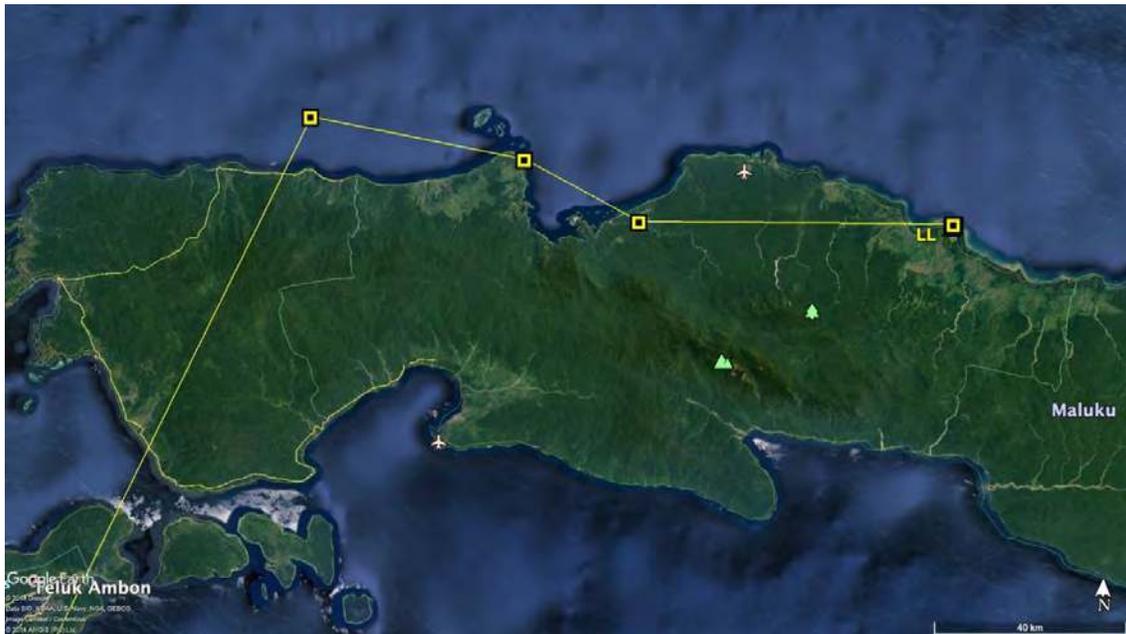


Figure 9 – Movement of LL on Seram Island



Photo 3 – Little Curlews should now be gaining more weight compare to when this photograph was taken in Feb (by Pat Macwhirter)

WHIMBREL

Contributed by Katherine Leung

No movement yet for Whimbrel KU and LA, we are still holding our breaths.



Photo 4 – Whimbrel KU might now be as fat as this photo taken in Apr 2017, ready for its long flight to China (by Grace Maglio)