

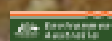
Shorebirds, Networking the Flyway

Each year millions of shorebirds fly south from their breeding grounds in the Arctic tundra to escape the cold winter weather of September-April. Many stop to rest and feed in Asia. While some stay on, others continue south to Australia and New Zealand. They then return north to breed during the short northern hemisphere summer of May-August.

This process is called 'migration', and the routes the birds travel along are called flyways. The East Asian-Australasian Flyway is one of several flyways around the world. Some shorebirds migrate 25,000 kilometres annually along this flyway and some species may fly more than 6,000 kilometres non-stop.

Flyways contain a chain of wetlands which shorebirds rely on to rest and feed. Many countries along the flyway are cooperating on the management of a network of these internationally important wetland sites. This linkage of sites is called the East Asian-Australasian Shorebird Site Network. The aim of the Shorebird Site Network is to highlight the importance of wetland areas for migratory shorebirds and to promote activities for their conservation.

The East Asian-Australasian Shorebird Site Network is a multilateral initiative being advanced under the Asia Pacific Migratory Waterbird Conservation Strategy: 2001-2005 and supported by Environment Australia, the Environment Agency of Japan and Wetlands International.



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