**4/07/2012**

**Week day catch to take advantage of species less often caught.**

With no cannon net catches planned over the next few weekends due to large or neap tides it was decided to take advantage of the lower tides during the week with a small team.

The idea was to focus on species that we don’t often catch particularly Eastern Curlew, Oystercatchers, Black-winged Stilts and Red-necked Avocets.

A small team of 26 was organised and a dedicated few set off at 5.30am to set the net at Boiler Point where the above species had recently frequented. The net was set well below high tide.

The team gathered at BBO at 8.30am and were given a brief run down on the days plan. We then headed off and got into position at Boiler and immediately started to twinkle. Curlews took the bait of the decoys and landed in front along with some Avocets. A small amount of disturbance caused the Avocets to leave but as the tide came closer to the net it was estimated 23 Curlews catchable. The decision was made to fire but the net didn’t go as best as it could have. A little too much sand in the middle caused the net not go out on its jump ropes and didn’t extend over the whole flock. Six Curlew at the front edge of the net stood up and flew out as we ran to the net. Total caught 10 Curlew.

With a big team and a small catch it was decided to re-set and the group was split into two. One team started processing the other re-setting the net.

The Curlews were finished being processed just as the net set was finished including having to be moved and set yet again (good call Matt and Clare) due to the tide coming higher than we predicted. Everyone moved back into position and we just needed to let the tide recede a little. Decoys were placed behind the net and soon Curlews, Stilts and Terns landed nearby.

A close twinkle by Chris pushed the birds into the catching area but by now the tide had run off and many of the stilts were too far out into the water to be catchable.

Another push by Chris worked well and a few more stilts landed close along with lots of terns. Once a few Gull-billed Terns had moved out of the danger zone it was decided to fire as all the species we had in front are not caught that often.

The net went out very well, this time even reaching a few of the distant stilts. With the cool temperature no shade structure was erected.

Thanks to all who were able to join us on a weekday at such short notice. It really was worth the effort as you will see from the totals below.

**Some of the highlights were.**

One Gull-billed Tern was re-trapped with an age now of **20+ years. This is surely the oldest known Gull-billed Tern in Australia!!!!!!!!**

Of the 21 Gull-billed Tern re-traps 16 of these were over 10+ years

Three of the four re-trapped stilts were over 9+ years old.

Cheers Adrian and Chris

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| **SPECIES** | **NEW** | **RETRAP** | **TOTAL** |
| **Eastern Curlew** | **10** | **2** | **12** |
| **Black-winged Stilt** | **11** | **4** | **15** |
| **Caspian Tern** | **1** | **0** | **1** |
| **Gull-billed Tern (affinis)** | **9** | **0** | **9** |
| **Gull-billed Tern (macro)** | **58** | **21** | **79** |

**Total 116**