

Cannon Netting Report 15th of July 2017

I still really don't like Whistling Kites. But this time they didn't stop a catch being made but they did make life difficult for the birds and us at release. Eventually we kept over 100 birds and let them go on dusk when the kites had finally disappeared.

The net set was done by just 3 people (thanks Emilia and Kerry) and the cages by just 5 (added thanks to John and Brad). But small is efficient!

The kites had been completely absent on the previous 2 days when I was recceing for the catch but they showed up during the net set, then didn't show up during the catch but were prominent again after the catch. Basically when people were visible on the beach the kites were around. I don't believe they have learnt from our activities as we haven't had this issue this year or last to my memory (Brahminy Kites are our usual concern) and at least one of the kites is a young bird. Maybe they get easy scraps from people fishing and this attracts them to human activity on the beach?

The previous 2 days high tides before the catch had me watching about 1,000 birds very settled on Eagles Roost (ER) so you can imagine my dismay when every single migrant shorebird flew past ER without a glance at the beach on catch day. I couldn't see what the problem was. After a few fly pasts finally a few birds landed and, as is very often the case, that is all we needed to bring in more and more. The flock was spread well up from the tide line and I was able to take a big catch without a single bird in the water.

A very inexperienced team were fantastic at the net and we had 273 birds in the cages in no time and 70 Great Knot released directly from the net. And at the end of the day 60 more Great Knot released from the cages un-banded. Despite the releases the totals were very good for a dry season catch with an inexperienced team. We got off the beach with the last bit of gear as it went dark!

A huge thank you to everyone who helped. This was citizen science in action!

There was an interesting Red Knot retrap. It had 100% breeding plumage and had been banded originally on 16/08/2008. It was aged as 3+ then so is now 11+ (in its 11th year of life or older). It may be a lot older than that and possibly it is very old and that is why it has not migrated.

We also re-trapped 2 Great Knots that had satellite transmitters on. The birds and the transmitters were in good health. (If any one has any images of these birds could they forward them on to me please?)

All in all a very successful day, once again thank you to everyone for your input to the GFN and AWSG projects. We couldn't do it without you.

Catch details below.

15-07-2017							
SPECIES	NEW	RETRAP	Age 1 1st Year of Life	Known Age 2	Age 2+ 2nd year of life or older	Age 3+ 3rd year of life or older	TOTAL
Bar-tailed Godwit	44	4	19	19	9	0	48
Black-tailed Godwit	6	2	5	1	2	0	8
Great Knot	101	13	53	55	2	4	114
Red Knot	18	1	16	2	0	1	19
Whimbrel	24	0	19	5	0	0	24
TOTALS	193	20	112	82	13	5	213

Chris
17/07/2017