

## **Aerial Survey of Wetland Birds in Eastern Australia - October 2012 Annual Summary Report**

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### **Results summary**

1. Flooded areas contracted considerably throughout the eastern Australia survey area, with many floodplains no longer holding water. However, there was still widespread flooding in many major wetland systems of the Murray-Darling and Lake Eyre Basins (Fig. 1).
2. Wetland habitat was again extensive in the lower Cooper Creek system although there was no flow and water was confined to larger lakes; the area supported large concentrations of waterbirds. Lake Eyre was dry.
3. Throughout the Murray-Darling Basin, many of the larger wetlands areas had water. This included widespread waterbird habitat on the Paroo River,

**This survey is run by the University of NSW and the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage, with additional funding provided by the South Australian Department of Environment and Heritage, the Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management and the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment.**

## **Result summary continued**

7. The breeding index (all species combined) declined below 2011 and considerably lower than 2010. Most of the birds recorded breeding (96%) were non-game species (Straw-necked ibis, Black Swans, Royal Spoonbill). Breeding species richness was below the long term average and the data show a significant negative decline over time.

## **Acknowledgements**

We thank Terry Korn and Paul Wainwright for acting as expert observers during the survey, Richard Byrne of NSW National Parks and Wildlife, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage for piloting aircraft. We also thank Kate Brandis, Viyanna Leo and Hazel Watson for their help with data entry and validation.



Figure 2. Total wetland area

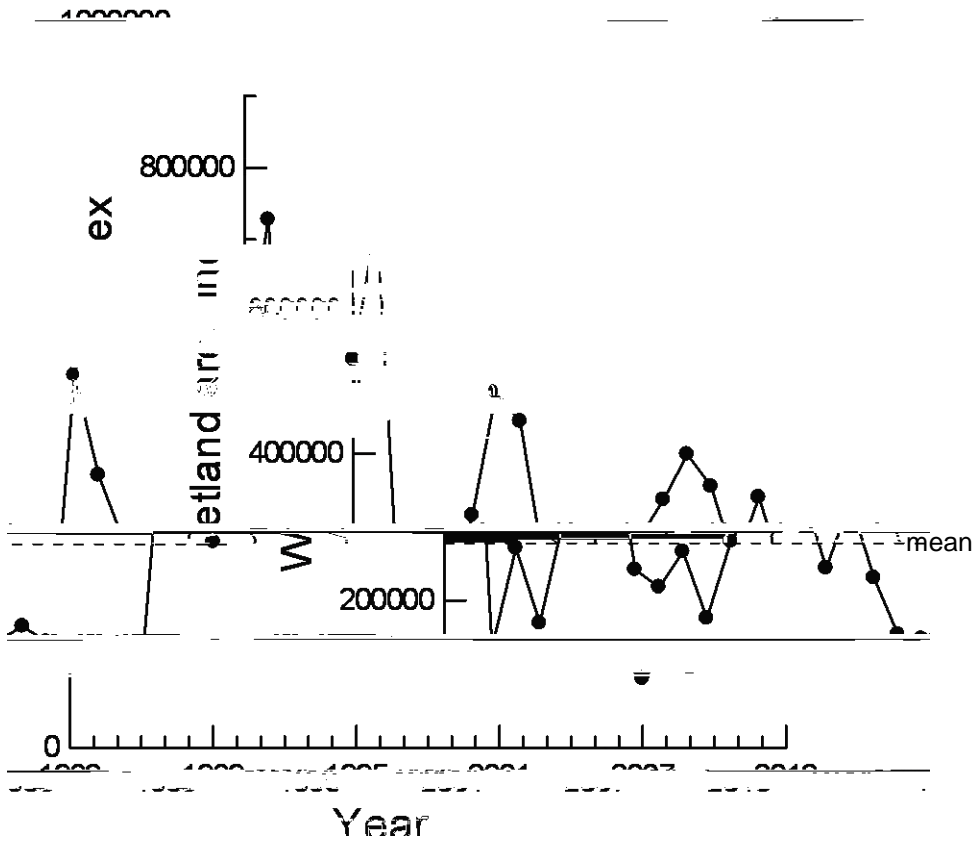


Figure 3. Total waterbirds

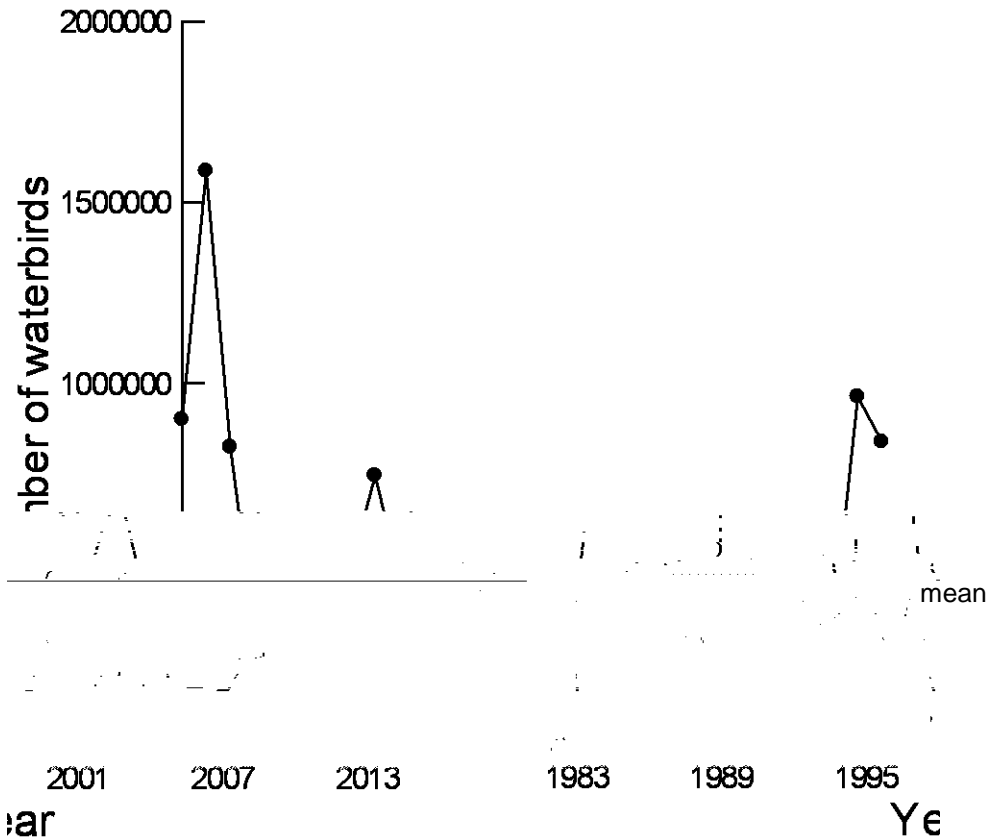
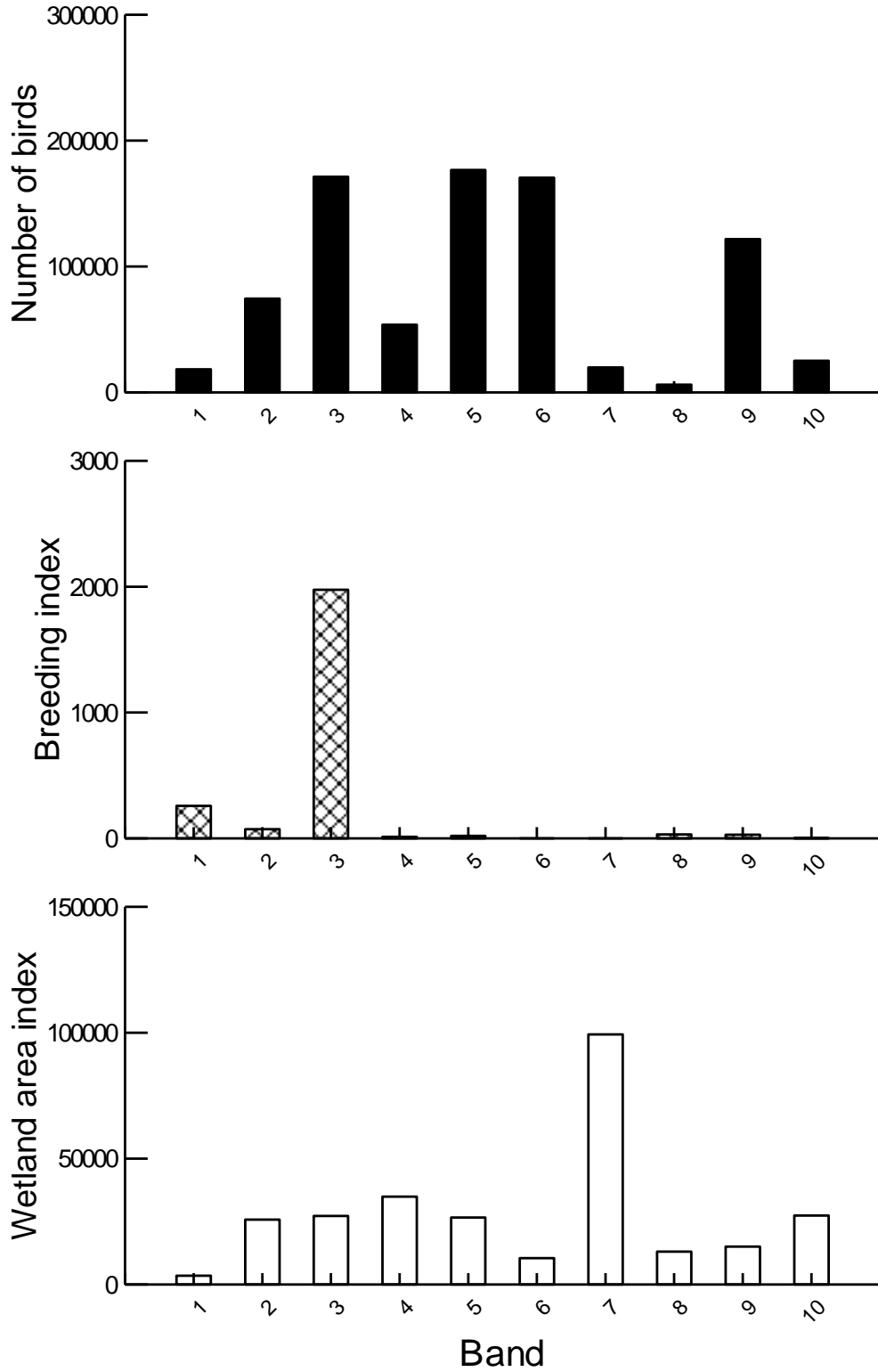


Figure 4. Band totals 2012



Scales vary on graph axes

Figure 5. Breeding index (all species)

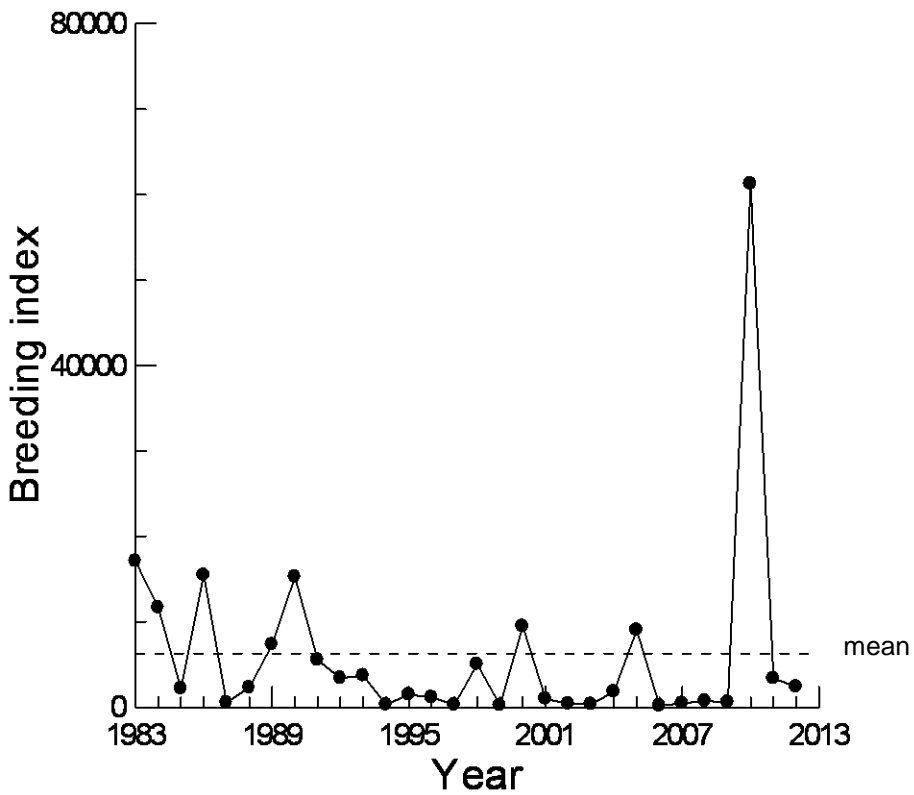
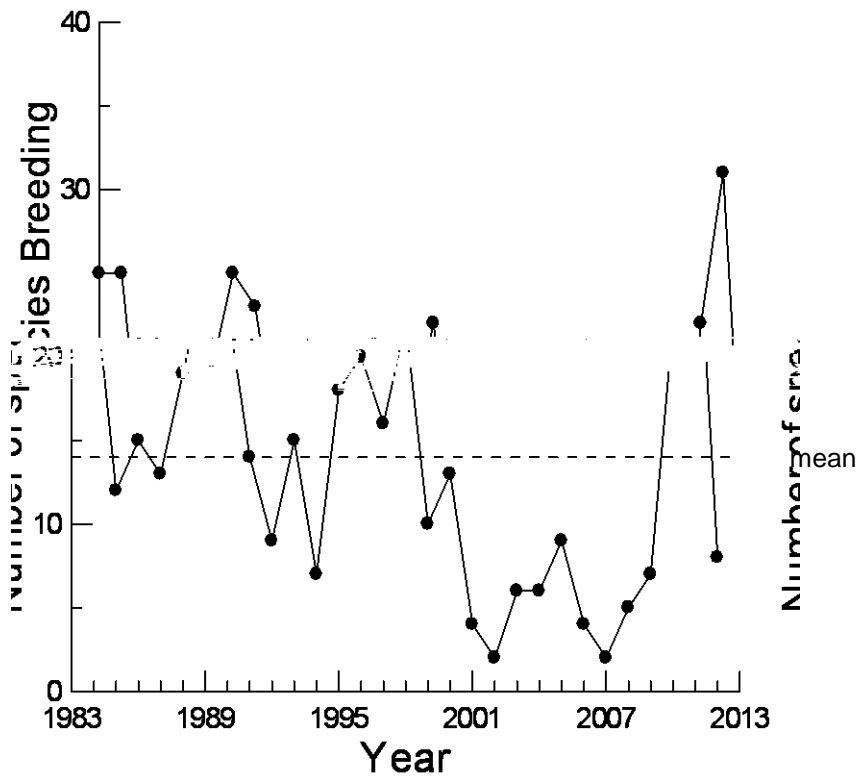
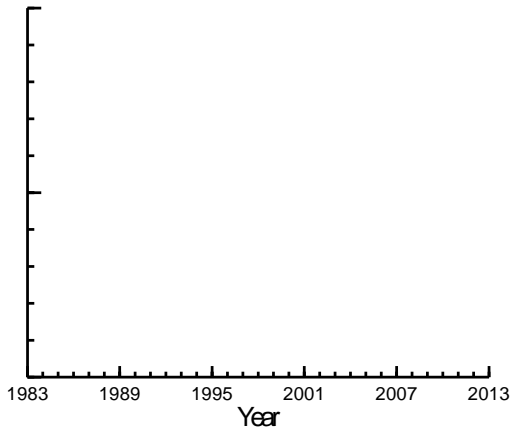


Figure 6. Number of species breeding



Scales vary on graph axes

Figure 7. Breeding index (all species) 1-5

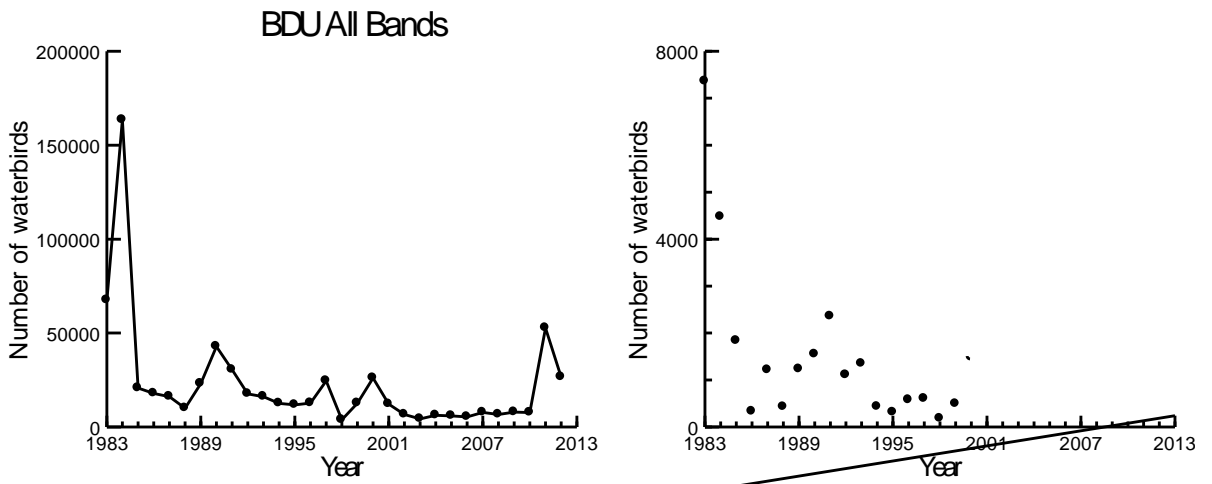






## Figure 9. Pacific black duck 1-5

Figure 10. Pacific black duck 6-10



Scales vary on graphs

Figure 11. Black swan 1-5

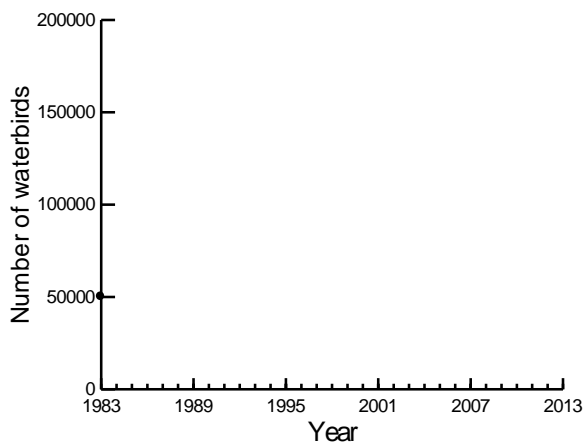


Figure 12. Black swan 6-10

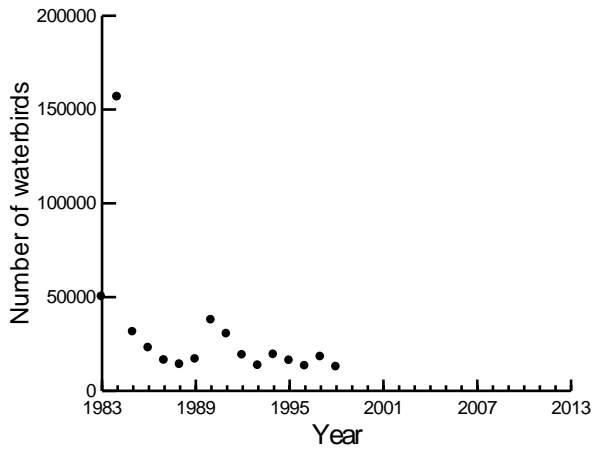


Figure 13. Australasian shoveler 1-5

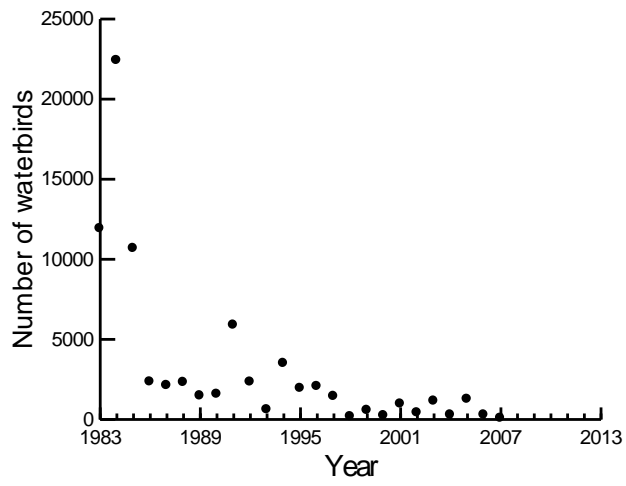
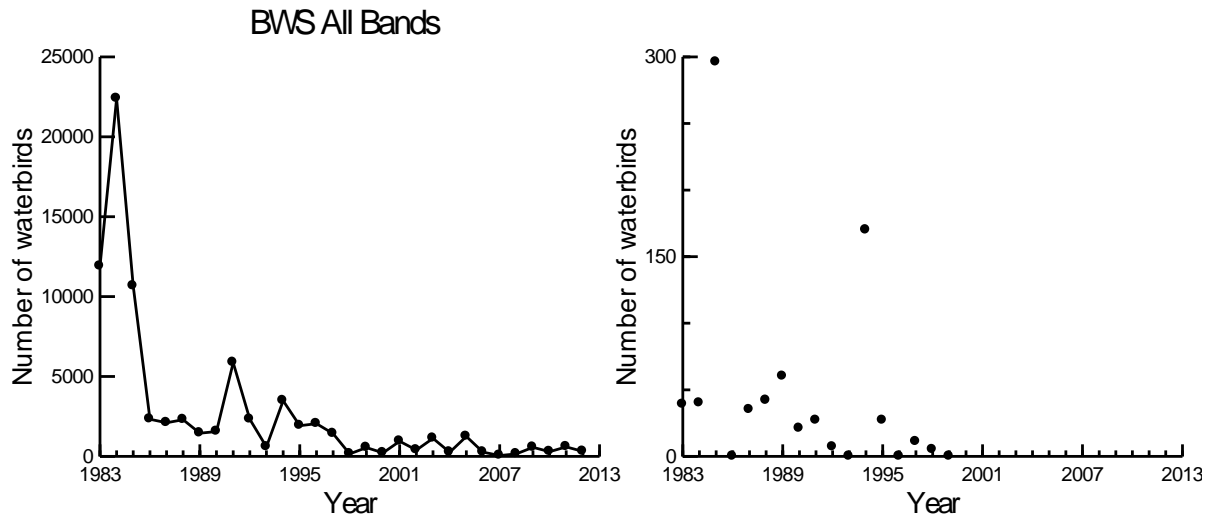


Figure 14. Australasian shoveler 6-10



Scales vary on graphs



# Figure 16. Grey teal 1-5





Figure 17. Grey teal 6-10

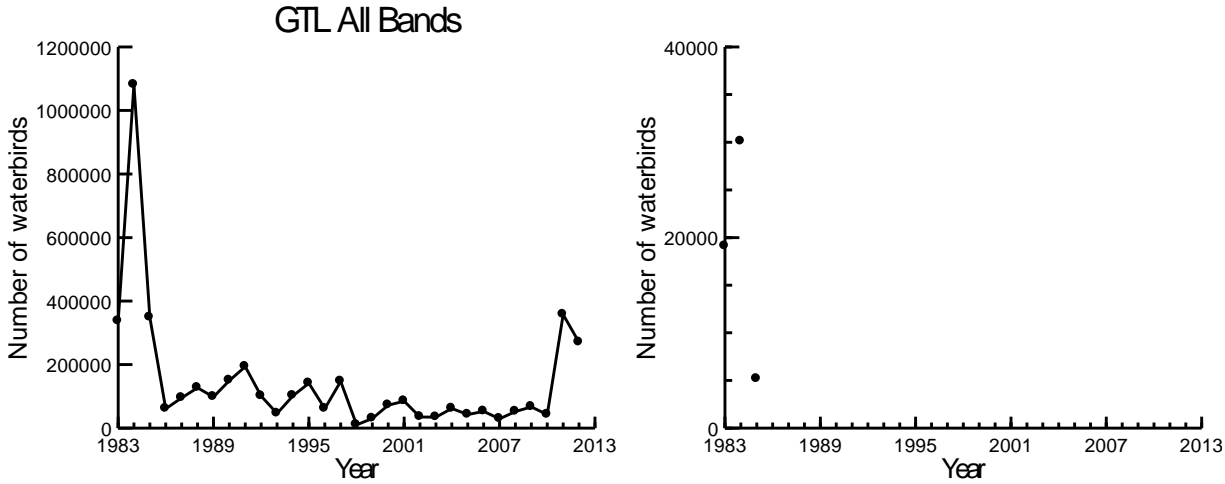
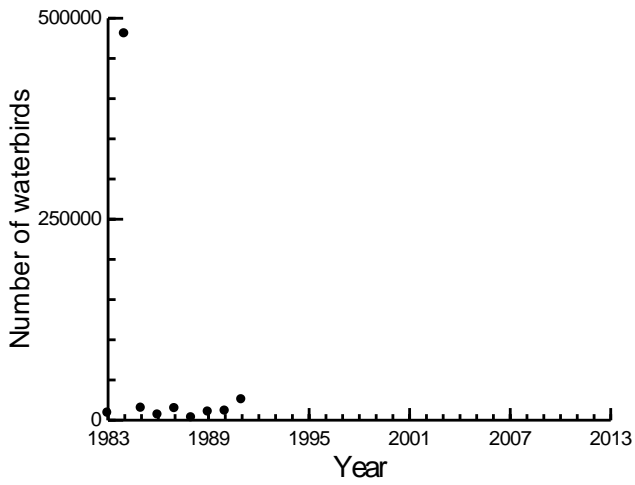


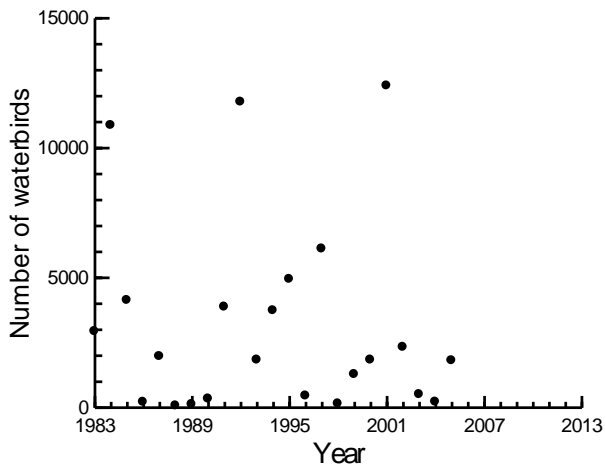
Figure 18. Hardhead 1-5



# Figure 19. Hardhead 6-10



Figure 20. Freckled duck 1-5



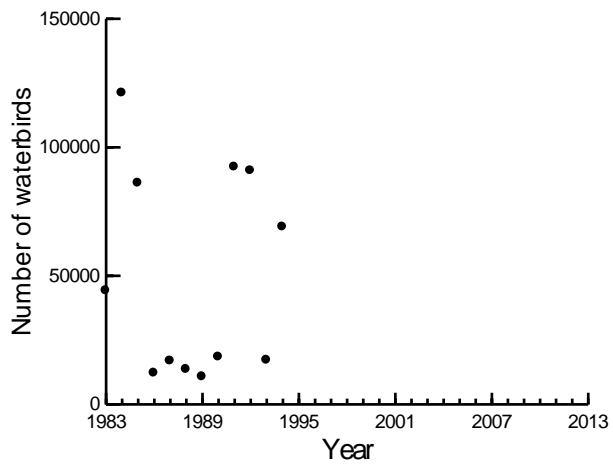


## Figure 22. Australian shelduck 1-5



## Figure 23. Australian shelduck 6-10

Figure 24. Pink-eared duck 1-5





# Figure 25. Pink-eared duck 6-10





Figure 27. Plumed whistling-duck 6-10

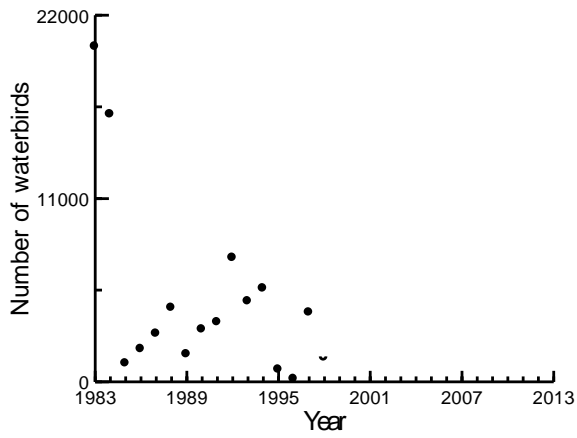
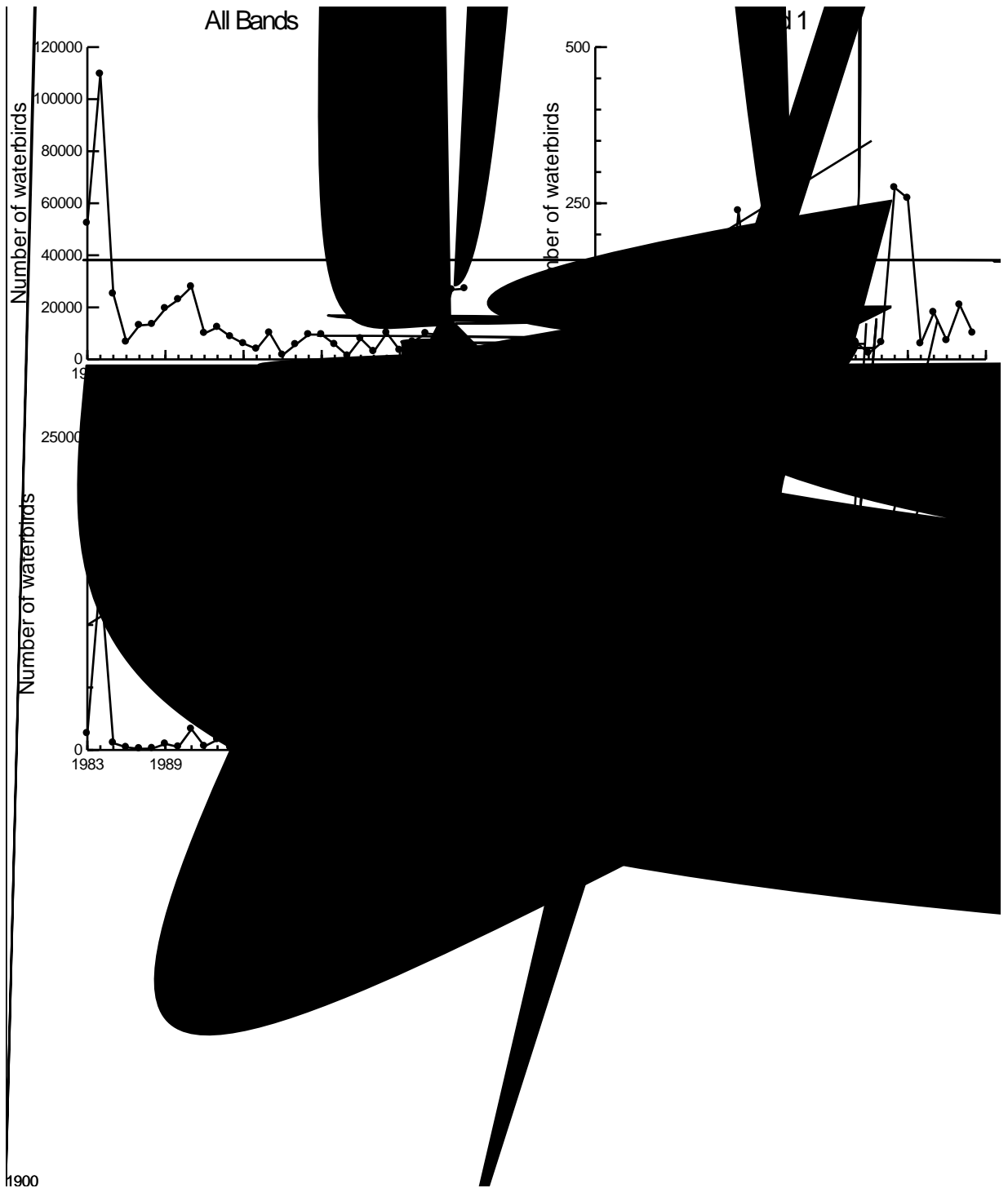


Figure 28. Australian wood duck 1-5



## Figure 29. Australian wood duck 6-10

