

This has been a clarifying discussion and dissemination of existing knowledge. I'm not really sure what additional information we need for the general migration pattern of Fennoscandia birds. Except for a multi-national separation of the post breeding sightings of adult and juvenile birds in order to clarify whether these have significantly different migration strategies or not. From my limited data, I think they have (with juveniles going further south than adults).

For detailed information it would be extremely valuable if we could add a fair number of long-lasting transmitters to our stock of tagged birds. A key issue is to spread these across the breeding range. With a few birds tagged at a few places, the results are likely to be seriously biased, making the conclusions only valid for a few sub-populations at best. This is also a problem in colour marking, but here the numbers are generally higher, yet the observer bias substantial.

In addition to colour-marked Curlews being difficult to observe (at least outside the breeding season), there is a fascinating difference in bird observation culture across Europe. In Sweden, reading rings, colour rings or neckbands seems to be of no interest at all among the vast majority of birders. I've tried to convince "goose-counters" and many others to read and report Bean Goose neckbands, but with rather limited success. Much of this limited success was reached thanks to [www.geese.org](http://www.geese.org) that enables neckband readers to report and follow "their" geese. Unfortunately, there is no equivalent for marked waders. Even finding the project that marked the bird is difficult. Many birdwatchers in Sweden add their observations into Artportalen (similar systems exist in all relevant countries, e.g. BirdTrack in UK). In case they've seen a marked Curlew, they may have noted this in the comment column of this system. For Bean Geese, we regularly scan all the observations in Artportalen to find neckband reports. This is a hell of a job ☹ Especially because the majority of observations just says: "neckband" or "blue neckband" which is of extremely limited value. Scanning Artportalen could also be done for Curlews, but I sincerely doubt if it's worth the effort. Until we can make a proper sighting report system for waders (or preferably for all marked and ringed birds), I'm afraid we're stuck in the "virtually no foreign sightings" mud. In addition, talking specific groups or nations into searching for and reporting marked birds could actually increase observer bias and jeopardize our research outcome. By the way: if we plan to make a good reporting system, we also need to carefully think over and regulate the rights and obligations of the various stakeholders. For geese.org, this is still a pending issue. Finally, making a fancy system that all stakeholders love doesn't make much sense if the funding collapses after a limited period of time. If this was simple, it probably would have been done long time ago.

Sorry for being seemingly pessimistic. In fact I'm not. The ECIWG (Eurasian Curlew International Working Group) process is giving us a golden opportunity to pull together our experiences, questions and ideas, and start working on a global understanding of what's going on with this species. I think we've been sitting on separated "islands" way too long. Obviously the fact that most of us are on extremely limited or no funding is an important reason for this. Let's hope this will change (at least a little bit) thanks to the Individual Single Species Action Plan.