

## J.N. Hobbs Medal 2023: Citation - Dr Rosalind Jessop



Roz Jessop has been an active member of the Victorian Wader Study Group (VWSG) and Australasian Wader Studies Group (AWSG) for almost as long as these ornithological groups have been in existence. Her contribution to their organisation and effectiveness has been instrumental in their success in helping to conserve Australian shorebirds.

Roz started her interest in shorebirds in the early 1980s, as one of the key members of the VWSG. Thus started decades of quiet, consistent commitment to the cause of shorebird conservation. She became a qualified cannon-netter very early in the piece, leading catches and processing teams and training many people in the appropriate way to handle and measure birds and how to age birds through assessing moult. Her knowledge on catching and processing waders is vast, and her insights and experience are often called upon when in the field and when planning catches. She is happy to share her knowledge, and her enthusiasm, dry wit and bright personality added to the fun weekends that the group enjoyed and continues to enjoy at various coastal locations in Victoria and further afield.

This includes AWSG's north-western Australia expeditions, for which she has been a regular and hardworking volunteer since 1983 and joint expedition leader from 1994, playing an increasingly more important role in the work of teams documenting the amazing

numbers and diversity of shorebirds in that part of the flyway.

Her increasing interest in and involvement in the activities of the national AWSG saw her become its Chair for 5 years, during which time the scientific rigour of its research program and the content and scientific strength of its journal, *The Stilt*, strode ahead in leaps and bounds.

Thus, from early on, Roz has put a great deal of voluntary effort into running and supporting the VWSG, and later AWSG, quickly becoming a pivotal person for many aspects of those groups' operational and scientific achievements in their early decades.

Less visible has been the enormous backroom workload over several decades, including, amongst others, VWSG Committee membership since 1993 and Deputy Chair since 2004. She has also been the Editor of *The VWSG Bulletin* for 23 years (1994–2017) and *The Stilt* for 6 years. But possibly most crucially and least visibly have been her ongoing meticulous preparations and submissions of animal ethics, fauna and landholder permits, ensuring that both the VWSG and AWSG could go out and conduct their catching activities. This included guaranteeing that both groups would meet their subsequent reporting and renewal requirements. With scientific, ethics and public landowner permits within as many as four states in which VWSG and AWSG regularly operate, this comes at a huge administrative burden, which she has been carrying with great responsibility.

Roz has been a co-author of a myriad of papers and has made many presentations on waders, particularly oystercatchers, over the years to a range of groups and audiences. Her quiet commitment, energy and infectious sense of fun helped establish the large, volunteer network, whose work changed our knowledge of the distribution, abundance and migratory behaviour of shorebirds in south-eastern and north-western Australia forever. This has laid the groundwork for the now significant scientific and conservation efforts along the whole of the East Asian–Australasian Flyway to protect these beautiful and amazing birds.

**Marcel Klaassen**, Deakin University, Geelong  
**Roger Standen**, Victorian Wader Study Group, Melbourne  
**Brett Lane**, Nature Advisory, Melbourne