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CLIVE MINTON MA, Ph.D.

Clive Minton has always been fascinated by birds and is an outstanding amateur ornithologist with an international reputation. He was born 7 October 1934 in England. At Oundle School from 1947–1953 he first became interested in trapping and banding birds. From 1953 to 1960 he was at Cambridge University where he completed his degree in Natural Sciences and PhD in Metallurgy. It was there that he became interested in the migratory waders in the Wash, and he became the founder Chairman of the Wash Wader Ringing Group which is still the largest wader banding group in the world. Clive introduced the use of rocket nets, which in turn were supplanted by cannon nets in 1967. He also took part in many other studies of birds in Britain, especially Mute Swans.

His business career was with Imperial Metal Industries Ltd., and in 1978 he was sent to Australia as Managing Director of IMI Australia, where he turned an ailing business into a very profitable one. Not surprisingly, he at once took up his long-term interest in waders and formed the Victorian Wader Study Group, revitalising local activities by the introduction of cannon-netting. This was so successful that he was invited to show the technique in other states, which in turn led in 1980 to the formation of the Australasian Wader Studies Group with Clive as the founding chairman.

Expeditions under the auspices of the AWSG in 1981 discovered the importance of Broome as a site where hundreds of thousands of migratory waders entered and departed from Australia each year. Since then Clive has been there on 17 occasions leading the now internationally famous NW Australia Wader Expeditions. The peak of those was in 1996 when 83 people from 16 countries were involved.

The recognition of this area as an important site on a major migratory route led to the establishment of Broome Bird Observatory by the RAOU in 1988 and to many international advances. The establishment of the Asian Wetland Bureau and the recognition of the East Asian Flyway through China to Siberia have, in turn, led to the Japan–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement and the China–Australia Migratory Birds Agreement.

In all these developments Clive has played the leading role, especially with cannon-netting and observation of bird movements. The birds have been banded



(and more recently had coloured flags attached to their legs), weighed and measured, and the stage of moult determined. As a result, it is known how much weight birds gain before migration, the routes they follow and the duration of their flight. For instance, Knots fly direct 5000 km to Shanghai, probably in about 3 days.

Clive was on the Research Committee of RAOU from 1980 to 1988 and was Vice-President from 1989 to 1995. He retired from business at the early age of 58 to pursue his interests in waders and to write up more fully his lifetime knowledge of ornithology, especially waders. Since 'retirement' he has been active as ever, including overseas expeditions to the north of Russia, including Siberia, and to South and North America.

How does Clive achieve this success? His knowledge is great, as is his enthusiasm, his stimulus and encouragement of everyone he meets and works with and his indefatigable energy. He is a willing speaker and contributor to the media, takes very good photographs and has written widely both in scientific journals like *Emu* and *Ibis*, specialist group bulletins and the lay press. He is a great team man as well as being a leader and it is very appropriate that he be elected a Fellow of the RAOU.

H. Norman Wettenhall