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RECOVERY OF CURLEW SANDPIPER FROM CHINA

There is nothing unusual in the reporting of a Curlew Sandpiper banded in Australia and recovered in China, though not a very common occurrence. However, a 'Report of Recovery to Bander' received recently is very unusual.

I banded a Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* at Stockton, New South Wales on 12 November 1977. The Report of its recovery was received by me on 29 March 1999! No, the bird was not over 22 years old. The report from the National Bird Banding Centre of China stated that the bird (band number 040-91835) had been recovered on '6/12/79', 8 967 km NNW. The bird was dead (probably 'hunted').

According to the report, which was partly in Chinese, from the National Bird Banding Centre of China, the bird had been reported to them in November 1998 by Tan Yaokuang! However, it seems that the bird bands were submitted to 'one old scientific worker' who had kept them in his draw. They were located when the worker's desk was cleaned up.

This is possibly 'a record' for the longest time between 'recovery and reporting date' so far! — some 19 years later.

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(For the details of the recovery see Recovery Round-up in this issue, page 51.)