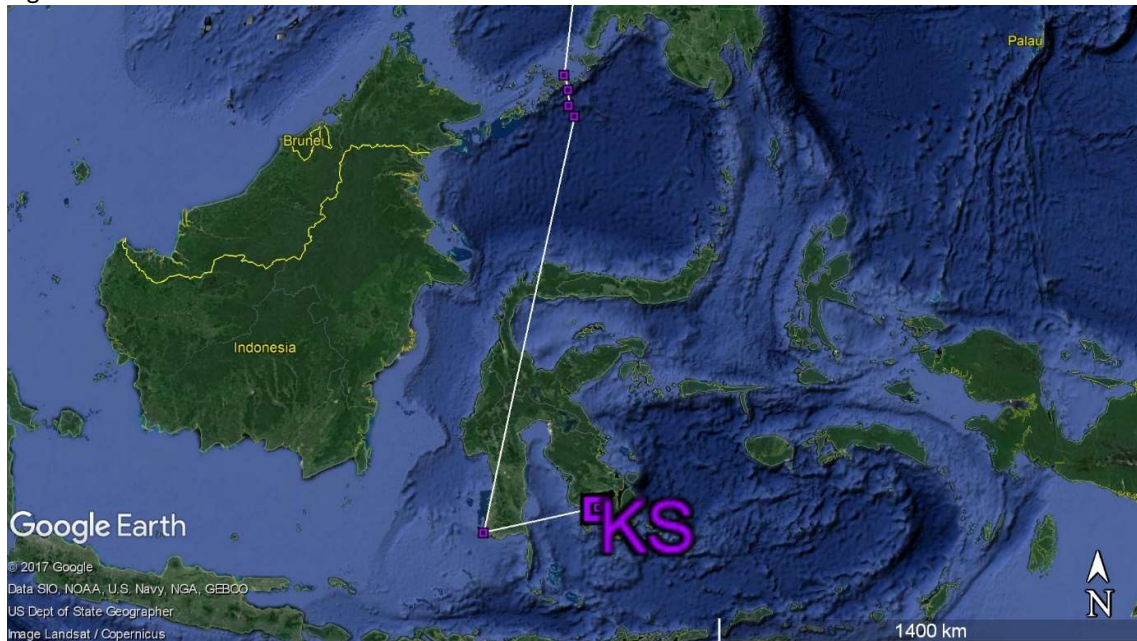


Detour before Home

About 2 weeks ago when we were all expecting KS to be back home to Broome soon, it again surprised us with another detour.

On 12-Sep, after flying 6 days non-stop from North Korea for nearly 4,900km, KS suddenly made a north-east turn before heading offshore from South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Within 6 hours, KS again travelled at its maximum speed of 55km/h for 330km to arrive at a reef area in South East Sulawesi.

Fig 1: KS's sudden twist in direction at Sulawesi



Since mid-night of 13-Sep, KS has now been staying at South East Sulawesi for 13 days. Besides the beautiful coral reef and sandy beaches, it also apparently using farmland again. According to weather charts, there haven't been any day with southerly wind blowing in the past 13 days. We hope KS has now been replenished with energy and ready to head back to Broome at any moment.

Fig 2: Local movement of KS in South East Sulawesi



Let's not forget KU, the other successful runner returning from the breeding ground, has stayed at Yingkou, Liaoning Province for 50 days! This is the longest period of stop-over among our two Whimbrels (KS and KU) which made it to the breeding ground. Comparing to the northward migration race to the breeding ground, maybe KU is really at no hurry at all for its journey home. In Yingkou, KU utilises both aquaculture ponds and intertidal mudflat.

Fig 3. KU's movement at Yingkou, Liaoning Province



On the other hand, we are still receiving regular signals from JX and LA from Broome and Eighty Mile Beach.

As of 25 September 2017:

Migration tracks of our Whimbrels:



Migration summary on our Whimbrels

Leg Flag (track colour: N - S)	No. of days since deployment	No. of days since departing Australia	Distance travelled
LA (blue)	225 days	0 days	0 km
KS (purple - white)	213 days	162 days	19,631 km
KU (yellow - orange)	213 days	161 days	13,276 km
JX (pink - green)	184 days	158 days	6,124 km

Katherine Leung
25 September 2017