

*Red-necked Avocets in
the Hunter Estuary*



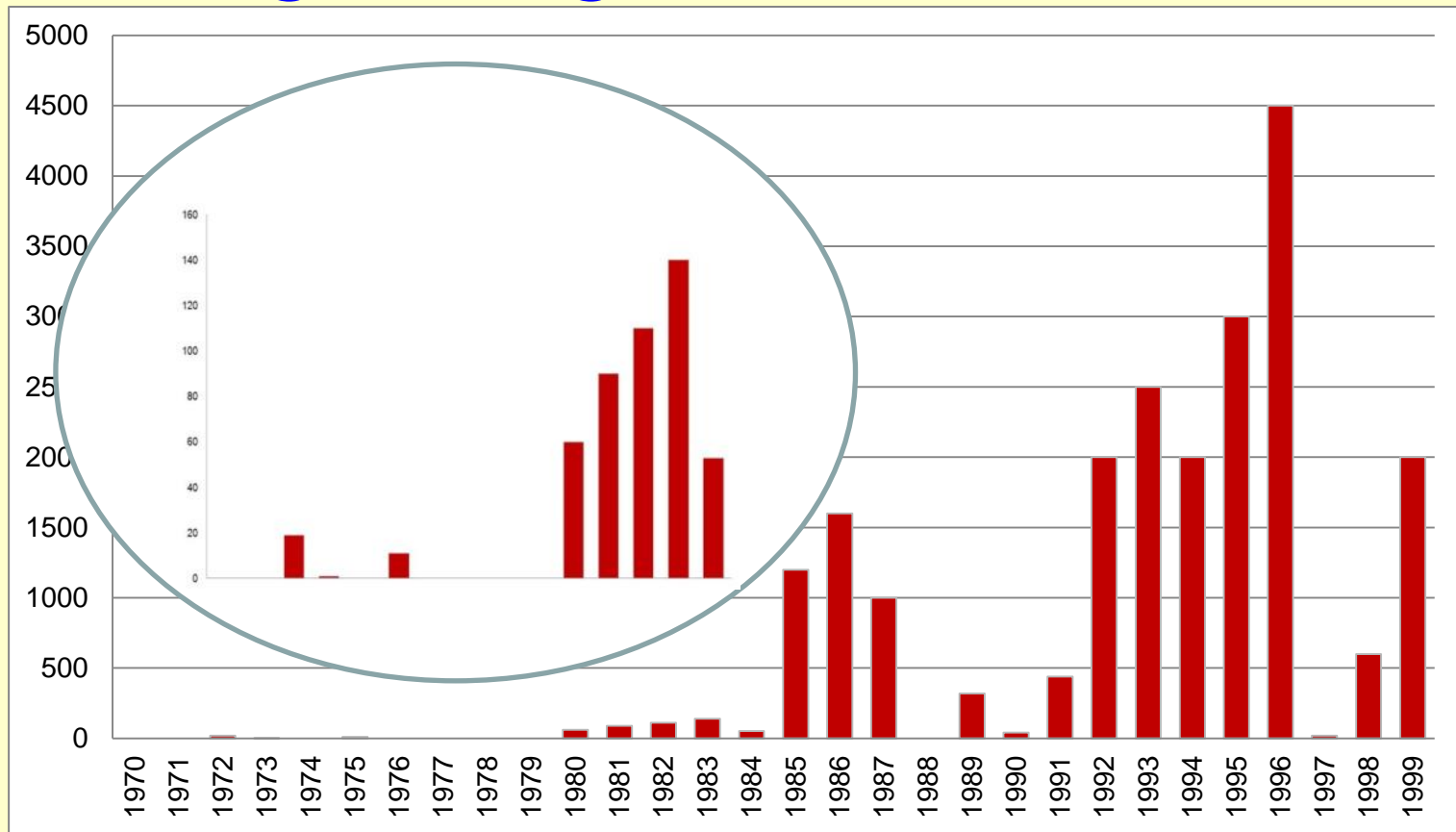
July 2017

Avocets in the Hunter Estuary

- Were they always here?
- When did they arrive?
- Why did they come?
- Is there any pattern to their movements into and out of the estuary?

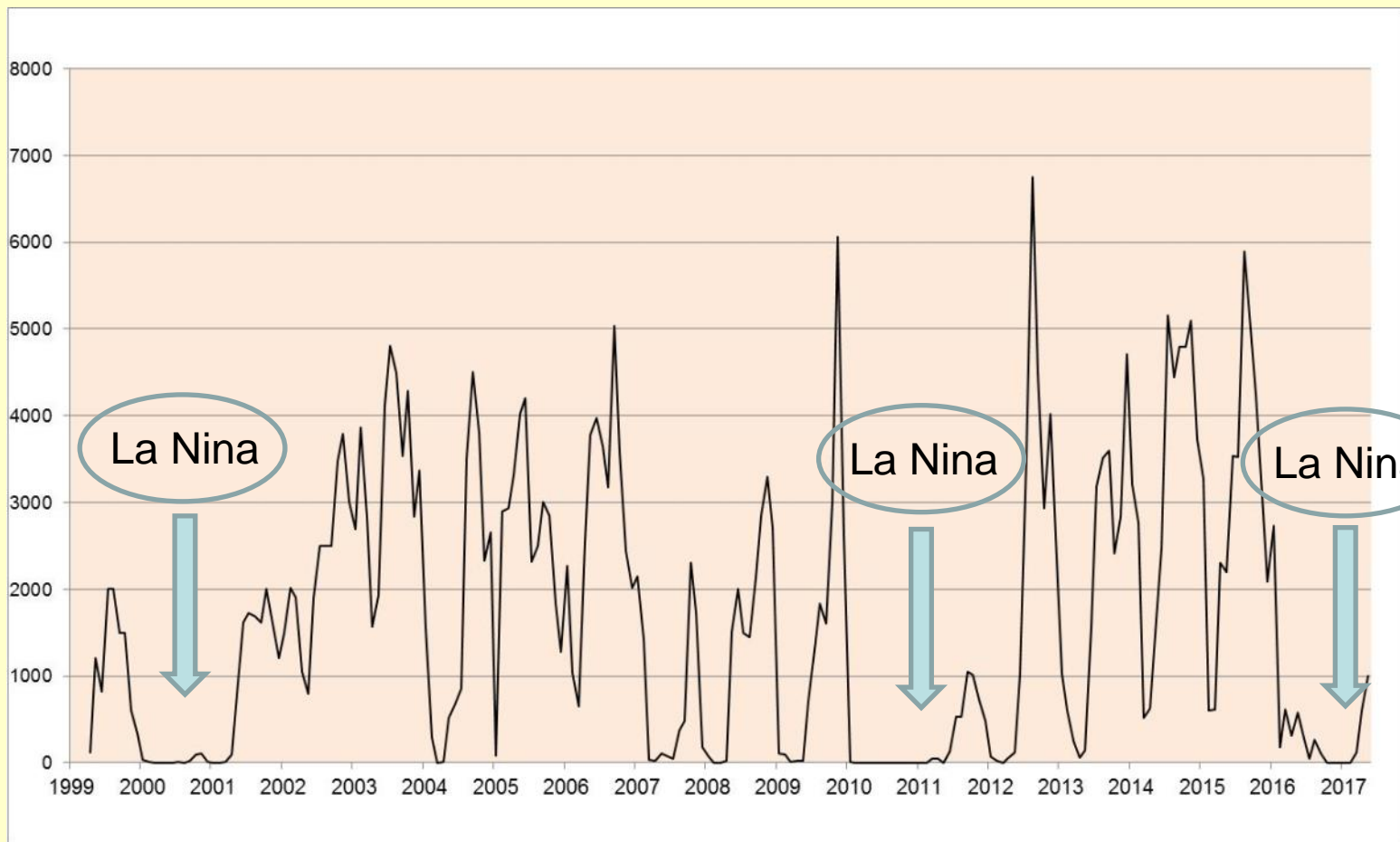


The beginnings



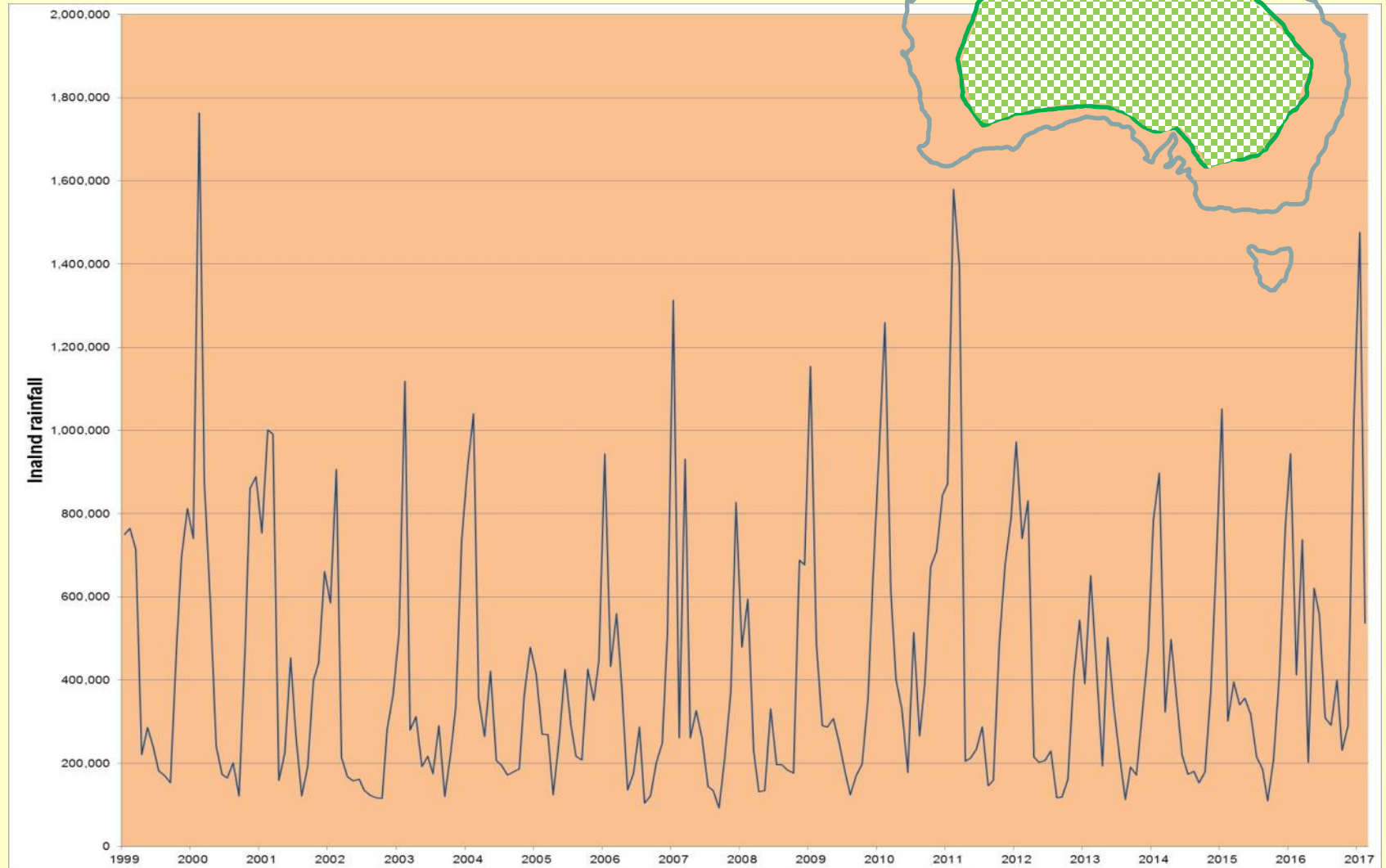
- First published record: 5 birds in 1965
- 1970's: occasional low numbers
- 1980's: low numbers 1980-1984; then wow!

Since 1999

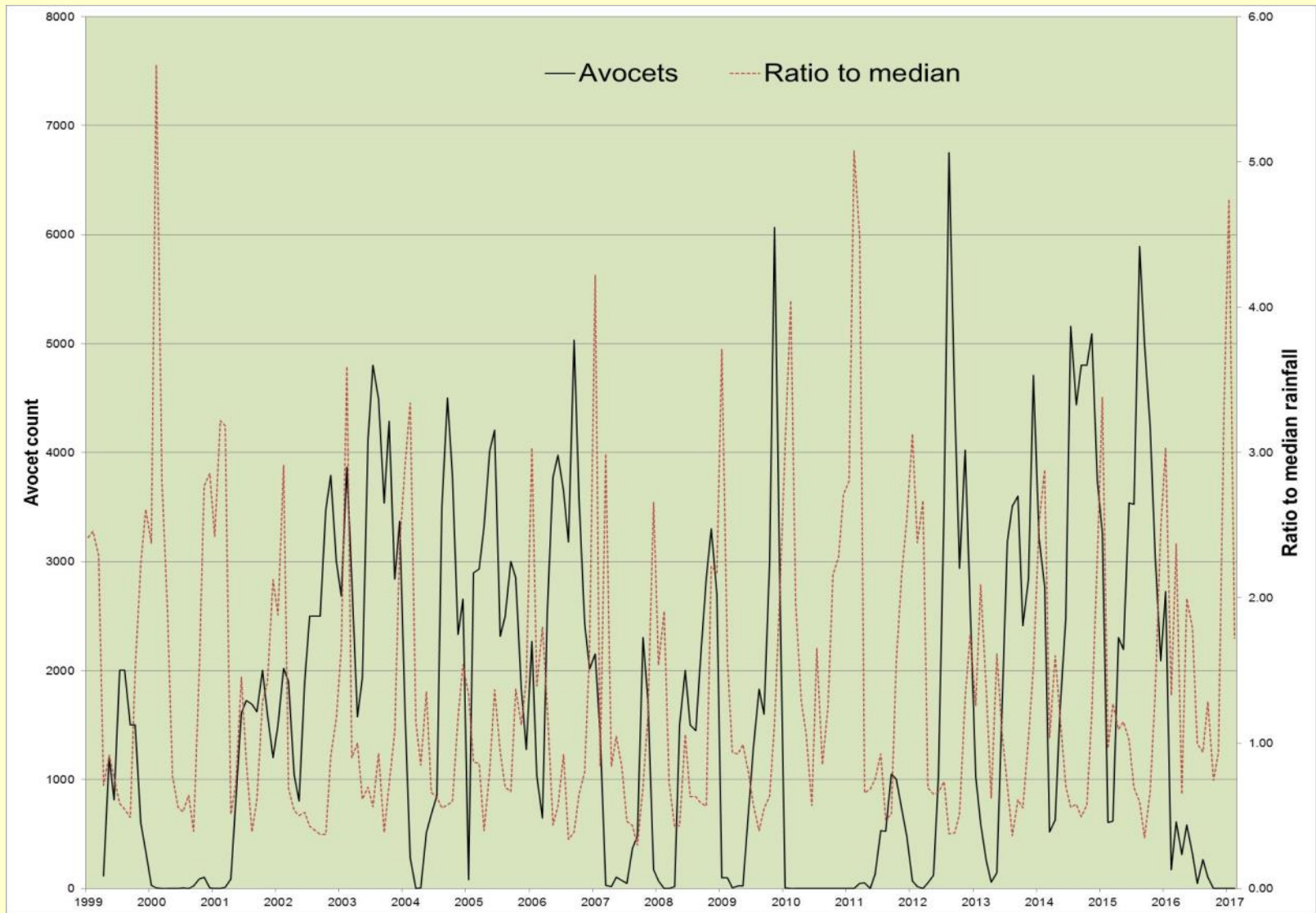


- Three prolonged absences (La Nina periods)
- Many shorter term absences

Inland rainfall



In combination



The “rules”

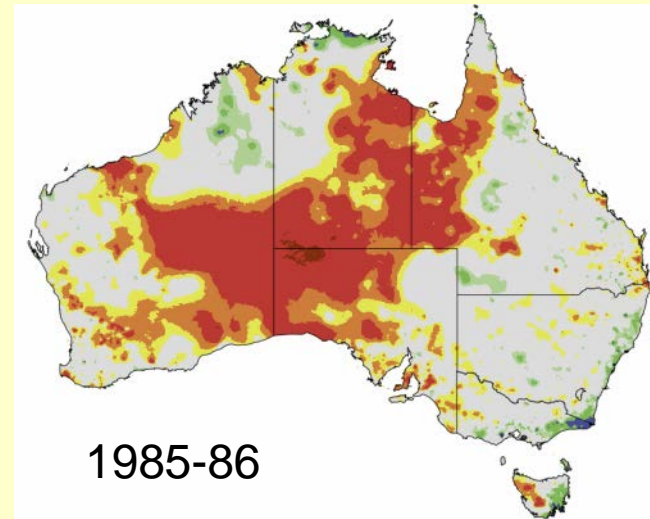
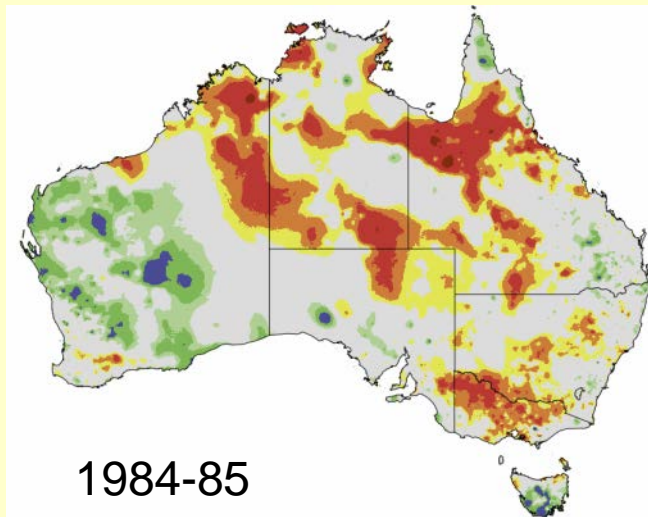
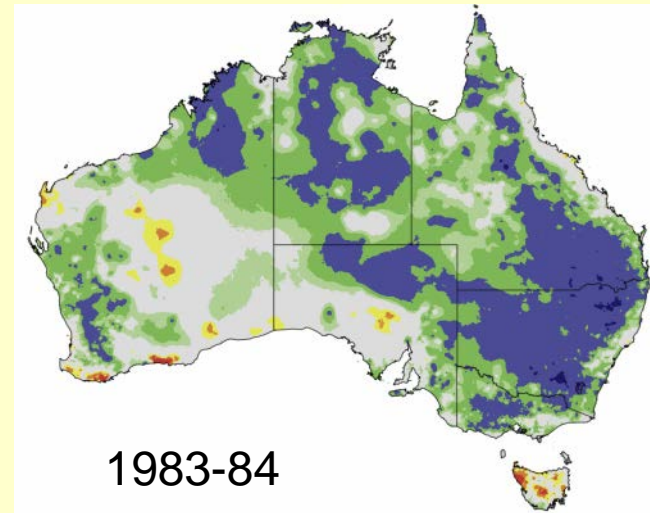
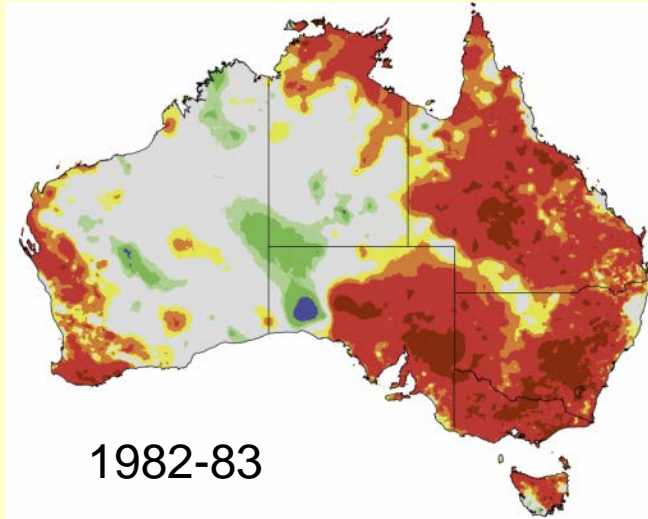
Departures from the estuary

- Three continuous months of above-normal inland rainfall
- and
- Aggregate rainfall for that period at least twice the normal (e.g. at least one “heavy” month)

Returns to the estuary

- Two continuous months of below-normal inland rain (in non La Nina periods)
 - Birds start to come back
 - Extent and duration depends on how much prior inland rain there had been

Why did they come in the 1980s?



Looking retrospectively

- What might have happened in 1895-1910 and 1925-1945??

