

Diet of Red-capped Plovers in the Coorong



Red-capped Plovers are a resident shorebird species in the Coorong.

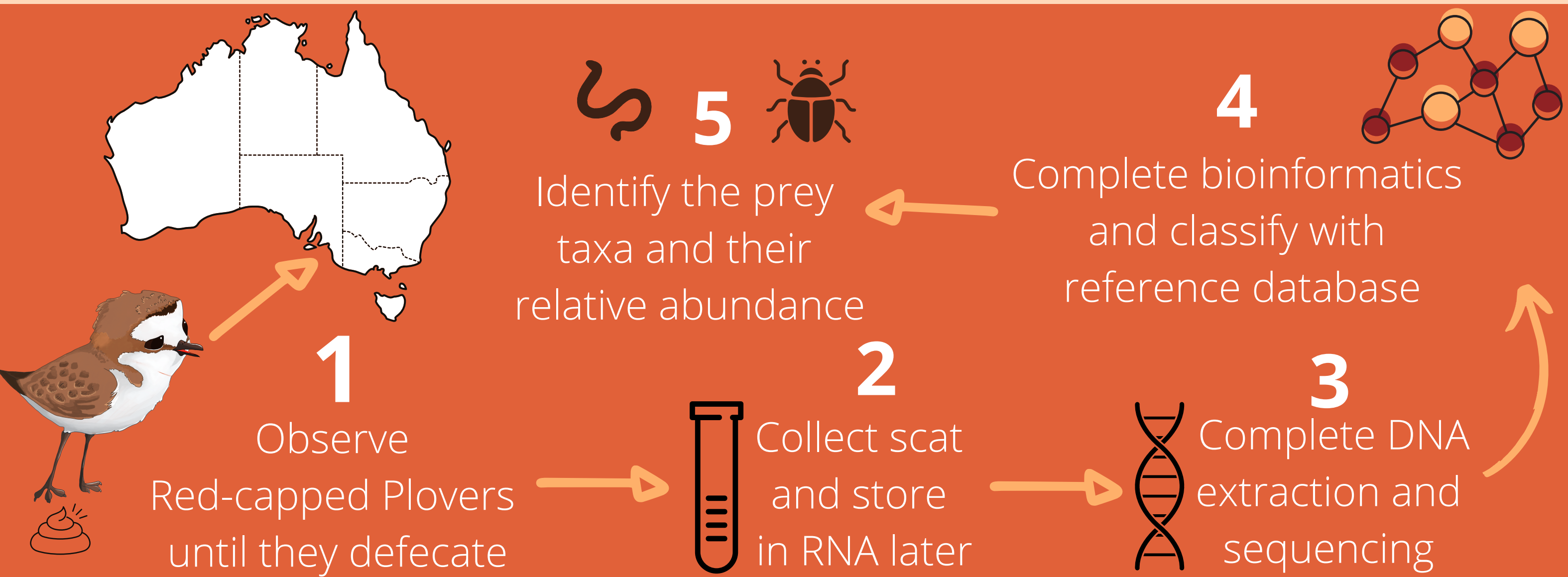
They are critically affected throughout Australia from habitat degradation.

Understanding the diet of Red-capped Plovers can help inform their future management through improving habitat quality and thus, prey availability.

My study used DNA metabarcoding on scats to identify prey species.

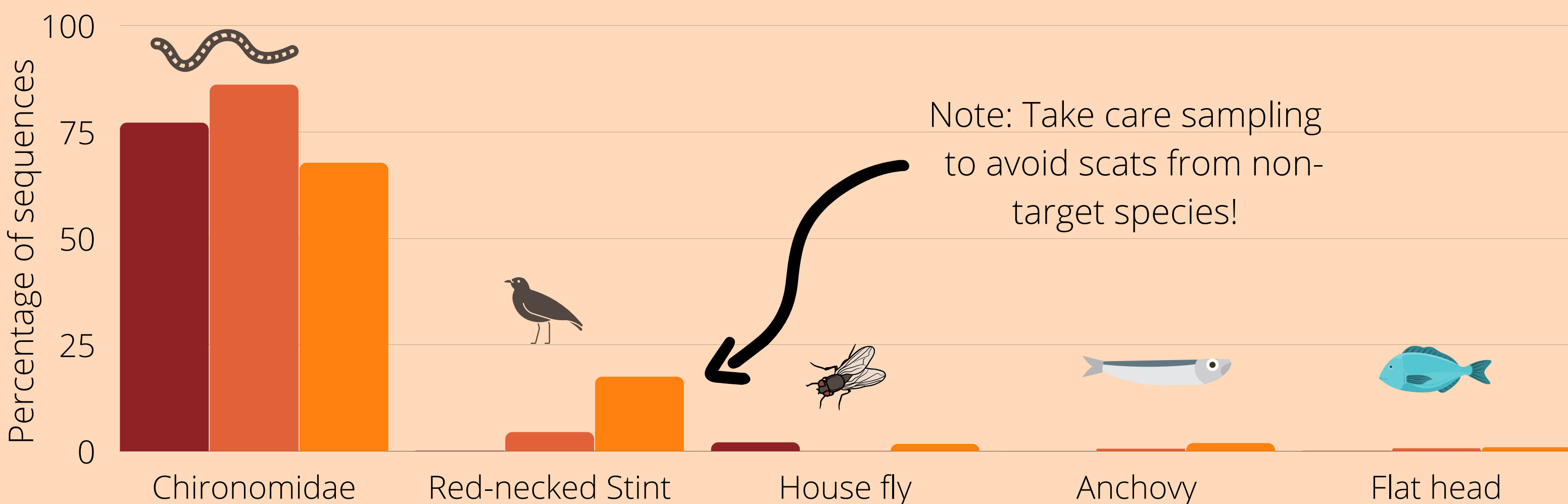
DNA metabarcoding is a non-invasive molecular technique, which can be used to accurately characterise the diet of Red-capped Plovers.

This improves on past studies that used gut composition, which does not always account for soft bodied invertebrates.



78% of all sequences were Chironomidae (non-biting midges)

The abundance of Chironomidae was similar between the three sites



Future research and management needs to confirm the importance of Chironomidae for healthy Red-capped Plover diet and protect their habitat accordingly.