

## SOOTY ALBATROSS *PHOEBETRIA FUSCA* BREEDING IN

### THE KERGUELEN ARCHIPELAGO: A CONFIRMATION

The Sooty Albatross *Phoebetria fusca* breeds in the southern Atlantic and Indian Oceans on medium latitude islands : Tristan da Cunha, Gough, Marion, Prince Edward, Crozet, Saint-Paul and Amsterdam Islands (Watson 1975). This species had never been listed from Kerguelen Archipelago (Paulian 1953, Tollu 1967, Prévost & Mougin 1970, Derenne *et al.* 1974) until Pascal (1978) noted three pairs breeding on the eastern end of Jeanne d'Arc Peninsula. Further ornithological surveys failed to confirm the occurrence of Sooty Albatrosses breeding on this site (Thomas 1983) or elsewhere in the archipelago Jouventin *et al.* 1984, H. Weimerskirch pers. comm.).

While working at a Blackbrowed Albatross *Diomedea melanophris* colony in February 1984, I found a group of nests occupied by Sooty Albatrosses at the site noted by Pascal (1978) which is situated on Jeanne d'Arc Peninsula, south of Canyon des Sourcils Noirs (49 41S, 70 15E). The colony is situated on a cliff above a Macaroni Penguin *Eudyptes chrysolophus* colony and a Blackbrowed Albatross colony and consists of three narrow ledges vegetated with *Poa cookii* (the rest of the cliff being covered by *Acaena adscendens*) at 150 m a.s.l. and approximately 40 m from the top of the cliff. Nine nests were noted of which seven were occupied by chicks. On 8 February, eight adults were present, four flying and four sitting on the ledges of which two were displaying on an empty nest. On 9 February four adults were noted and two chicks were fed during the afternoon. On 11 February two adults were displaying and a third one fed another chick. I could not find any other evidence of Sooty Albatross breeding in this area despite a careful examination of the eastern Jeanne d'Arc Peninsula cliffs.

These observations confirm that the Kerguelen Archipelago is the southernmost breeding locality of the Sooty Albatross. The small size of the Jeanne d'Arc Peninsula colony might explain why these birds have been overlooked by some of the few ornithologists who have visited the site. Since most of the Archipelago's coastline (about 3 000 km) has not yet been prospected, it is impossible to assess the size of this population but the scarcity of records suggests a very small one.

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## NEW BREEDING LOCALITY DATA FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN SEABIRDS

### Cape Cormorant

### *Phalacrocorax capensis*

Sixtyone definite breeding localities are known for the Cape Cormorant (Loutit *et al.* 1986, Cormorant 13: 185-187 and references therein). A 62nd locality is a mainland site at Die Dam (34 42S, 20 10E) southern Cape, where 50 nests were observed with eggs in January 1985 and with chicks on 28 February 1985. (P.G. Reyneke pers. comm.). The cormorants were breeding in a large colony of Kelp Gulls *Larus dominicanus* among sand dunes c. 300 m from the high tide mark. The breeding locality is unusual since it is the only known mainland colony not on a cliff outside the desert coast of northern S.W.A./Namibia.

### Whitebreasted Cormorant

### *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Sixtyfive breeding localities are known for the Whitebreasted Cormorant on the southern African coast (Brooke 1984, Cormorant 12:109 and Cooper & Brooke 1986, Cormorant 13: 178-179). A 66th locality is on the farm Bokram (32 38S, 18 18E), immediately to the south of Rocher Pan, western Cape where c. 48 nests were observed in gum trees one kilometre from the coast in October 1985 (C. Heyl *in litt.*).

### Kelp Gull

### *Larus dominicanus*

Sixtytwo breeding localities are known for the Kelp Gull in southern Africa (Cooper 1984, Cormorant 12: 109-110). A 63rd locality is the mainland coast at Koppie Alleen (34 29S, 20 31E) southern Cape where one nest with two eggs was found on 13 December 1984 and four nests, containing from one to three eggs, were found on 12 November 1985. (H.A. Scott *in litt.*).

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## NEW DATA ON RARELY RECORDED SEABIRDS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Macaroni Penguin

*Eudyptes chrysolophus*

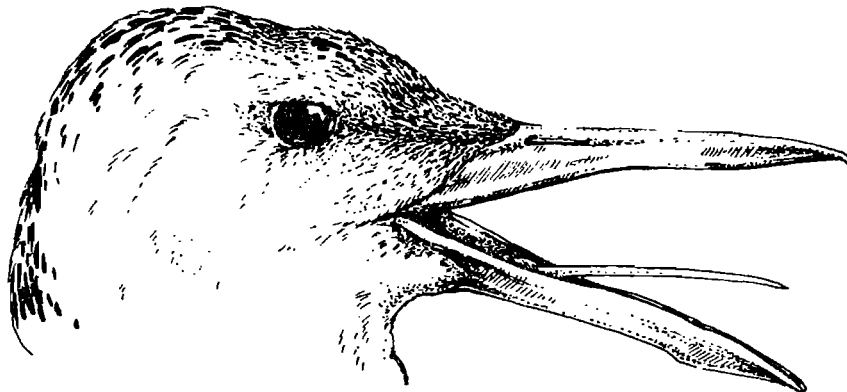
Five records of the Macaroni Penguin ashore in South Africa exist (Cooper 1983, *Cormorant* 11: 67). A sixth individual was collected alive from "Grysgat", probably Die Gruis (34 38S, 19 26E) between Danger Point and Pearly Beach, southern Cape on 20 February 1986. The bird was taken to the SANCCOB Rescue Station where it was photographed on 24 February (*The Argus*, 26 February 1986, p. 9) showing it to be a moulting bird and probably a juvenile, based on its short old head plumes. All six records of Macaroni Penguins ashore in South Africa are of moulting birds in the months of February to April (Enticott 1986, *Cormorant* 13: 118-142). All but one individual were known or thought to be juveniles.

### Rockhopper Penguin

*Eudyptes chrysocome*

There are 40 acceptable, published records of Rockhopper Penguins ashore in South Africa (Cooper 1982, *Cormorant* 10: 101 and Sinclair *et al.* 1984, *Bokmakierie* 36: 64-68). A 41st record is of a bird seen on the rocky shore near Onrus (34 25S, 19 10E) southern Cape on 9 November 1983 by J. Taitz (pers. comm.). The individual did not appear to be moulting and was not present the next day. It was recognized as a Rockhopper Penguin by its small size and pale yellow head plumes.

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*Swift Tern (juv)*

*by McMahon 1986*