

**MOST NORTHERLY RECORD OF THE ROCKHOPPER PENGUIN *EUDYPTES CHRYSOCOME* FOR
AFRICA**

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Rockhopper Penguins *Eudyptes chrysocome* are irregular visitors in small numbers to South Africa, and to date 42 acceptable records have been published (Cooper *et al.* 1978, Cooper 1979, 1980, 1982, 1987, 1988, Sinclair *et al.* 1984). Six more records can be added to this total, one of which represents an extension to the known range of the species for Africa.

On 12 January 1989 a moulting Rockhopper Penguin was captured at Gansbaai (34 35S, 19 21E) southwestern Cape, South Africa. It was taken to the South African National Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB) Rescue Station near Cape Town where it died on 28 January 1989. On subsequent examination, I identified it as of the northern subspecies *moseleyi*. It had completed moult before dying and its short head plumes suggested it was a juvenile prior to its moult.

On 14 January 1989 a Rockhopper Penguin of the northern subspecies *moseleyi* was captured crossing a coastal road at Llandudno (34 00S, 18 20E), southwestern Cape (P.A.R. Hockey pers. comm.). I examined it on 19 January when it was moulting into adult plumage. Based on the absence of old head plumes, it was probably a juvenile bird prior to moult. The penguin was released after completion of its moult at Cape Point (34 21S, 18 30E) by the SANCCOB Foundation.

A moulting Rockhopper Penguin was collected from the beach near Struisbaai (34 48S, 20 03E), southwestern Cape on 8 February 1989. The penguin was taken to the SANCCOB Rescue Station

near Cape Town, from where it was sent to the United Kingdom on 9 June 1989 (Anon. 1989). The subspecies is unrecorded but the bird was thought to have been a juvenile prior to moult.

A dead Rockhopper Penguin was found on the beach at Melkbosstrand (33 45S, 18 27E) on 15 March 1989 (Anon. 1989). No further details are known for this specimen.

The 47th acceptable record for southern Africa is of an individual which "came aboard" the vessel *Deep Salvage 1* some 20 km off the Orange River Mouth (28 38S, 16 28E), the border between South Africa and Namibia, on 13 February 1992. The bird which was a moulting adult with long head plumes, was taken to the SANCCOB Rescue Station and thence sent to the National Zoological Gardens, Pretoria, where it died of general debilitation and septicaemia on 11 March 1992. The subspecies of this bird is unrecorded.

The most northerly record of a Rockhopper Penguin for Africa hitherto is from Durban Bay, (29 51S, 31 03E), Natal, South Africa on the Indian Ocean coastline (Sinclair *et al.* 1984). The previous most northerly record on the South Atlantic seaboard is from Van Riebeeck Strand (33 42S, 18 27E), southwestern Cape (Cooper *et al.* 1978). The Orange River specimen therefore represents a northerly range extension in the Atlantic Ocean of c. 600 km, as well as being the first Rockhopper Penguin collected at sea in southern African waters. It is also apparently the most northerly record for the species (Enticott 1986, Marchant & Higgins 1990).

The 48th record is of a partially decomposed corpse found dead at Olifantbospunt (34 16S, 18 23 E), southwestern Cape on 1 April 1992 (Fraser & McMahon 1992, M.W. Fraser *in litt.* to the Southern African Ornithological Society Rarities Committee). Based on photographs taken, including of the underflipper pattern, the bird was of the subspecies *moseleyi* and was an adult in post-moult condition with long (60-mm) head plumes. The skeleton is to be deposited in the South African Museum.

These six records match the previous pattern for the species in southern Africa: of mainly moulting juveniles of the northern subspecies *moseleyi*, in the first two months of the year (Enticott 1986).

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