

**Status of the Heard Island King Penguins in 1971.**—The progress of the current recolonization of Heard Island (53° S, 73° E) by the King Penguin (*Aptenodytes patagonica*) has been assessed during three brief visits to the island over the past 9 years (Budd and Downes, *Emu*, 64: 302, 1965; Budd, *Auk*, 85: 689, 1968; Budd, *Auk*, 87: 366, 1970). A further census of the whole island was attempted in 1971 by Iain Dillon, Ian Holmes and myself, when as members of the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions we accompanied a summer expedition of Terres Australes et Antarctiques Francaises. Much of the program had to be abandoned following a crevasse accident, but the limited observations made are worth reporting because of the scarcity of opportunities to visit this remote and uninhabited island.

The colony at Vahsel moraine, Southwest Bay (Table 1) was found to have doubled its population in 2 years, from 17 breeding pairs in 1969 to 38 pairs in 1971. This increase is almost identical with that at Spit Bay between 1963 and 1965. Between 3 and 26 February one egg was abandoned and one chick died; all the other eggs hatched, showing that their parents were "early breeders" by Stonehouse's classification (Stonehouse, *Falkland Islands Dependencies Surv.*, Sci. Rept. No. 23, 1960). A few more birds might well have laid after 26 February.

A probable attempt to form a new colony was seen at Mt. Aubert de la Rue, West Bay, 3 km north of the Vahsel moraine. On 8 March a solitary incubating King Penguin was found on the lower slopes of Mt. Aubert, and five other King Penguins, without eggs, were seen on the level ground 100 m away. One of the latter group was incubating a stone and had been doing so since 26 February, when the group was first seen. Her tenacity suggests that she too may have laid, but lost her egg and taken the stone as a substitute. In the previous summer a group of 5–10 King Penguins was frequently seen in this area by members of the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey's BC-4 camera team, but apparently did not lay (Richard Cohen, pers. comm.). Their status is now very like that of the Vahsel moraine group in 1963, and it will be interesting to see whether they thrive as that group has done, or disappear like the small breeding groups seen at Saddle Point in 1963, Skua Beach in 1963 and 1965, and Red Island in 1969 (Ben D. Roth, pers. comm.).

The 1971 observations suggest—as so far the main colonies have increased together—that the King Penguin population of Heard Island is continuing to expand. That the island has supported a large population in the past is shown by the recently-published diary (Crowther, *Polar Record*, 15: 301, 1970) of Captain J. W. Robinson, who visited Heard Island in the whaler 'Offley' in 1858–59. Captain Robinson noted that at Spit Bay the sloping ground was "covered with myriads of king penguins," and his description of their appearance and behavior leaves no doubt as to the identification.

TABLE 1  
KING PENGUINS AT VAHSEL MORAINÉ, HEARD ISLAND, 1963–71

Year	Date	Adults	Eggs and chicks
1963	3 March	6	1
1969	17 March	40	17
1970 <sup>1</sup>	14 February	54	19
1971	3 February	67	38

<sup>1</sup>Observations by U. S. camera team. Count of eggs and chicks is a minimum value, as a thorough search was not made.

During the 1971 expedition a ground and air reconnaissance was made of the hitherto unvisited McDonald Islands, 38 km west of Heard Island (Budd, Polar Record, 16: 64, 1972). No King Penguins were seen, which is in keeping with earlier suggestions that the most likely source of those at Heard Island is Kerguelen (49° S, 69° E), 460 km to the northwest.

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**The California Condor in the Pacific Northwest.**—The California Condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*), once found along the Pacific Coast from Baja California to British Columbia, had become very rare north of California by 1850. Koford (1953), summarizing information available on the species in the Pacific Northwest, tentatively concluded that birds seen in that area were wanderers from California, perhaps forced north in some years by food shortages. As support for his theory he noted that there were no records of fossil condors in this northern region, known occurrences there were all in winter, and only a few individuals seemed to be present at any one time.

Recently information has come to light that suggests the Pacific Northwest condors were permanent residents with a long history there. An Indian midden on the Columbia River near The Dalles, Oregon, has yielded a considerable number of California Condor bones, dating back thousands of years (Miller, 1957). A more recent, but still precaucasian condor bone was found in another midden in southwestern Oregon (Miller, 1942). These finds indicate the condors are not recent invaders from California.

Most records of condors on the lower Columbia River are in the period October to May, but condors were present at other times of year. A specimen taken in the Columbia River area in 1825 was probably collected in late summer (Scouler, 1905). Elsewhere condors were observed in the Umpqua River area of Oregon from March through October (Finley, 1908; Douglas, 1914; Peale, 1957), and in southern British Columbia in September and November (Macoun and Macoun, 1909; Tolmie, 1963). Information is biased by the small number of reports, and probably by seasonal travel patterns of observers, but it indicates both yearlong residency in the Pacific Northwest and a fairly definite movement to the Columbia in fall and away in spring. No condor nests were ever found in Oregon, Washington or British Columbia, but this may be because few people visited the more rugged portions of this region prior to the species' disappearance.

Nonbreeding condors now wander considerable distances, but have a tendency to move toward the breeding grounds in winter (Wilbur, MS). Records from the Pacific Northwest indicate condors may have been as plentiful in winter as at any time of year. Also, seasonal movements in recent years have taken condors only 150–200 miles from nesting areas. Condors were nesting farther north in the 1800s than today, but it would still have been a 400–600 mile journey from central California breeding areas to Oregon, Washington, or British Columbia.

Scarcity of food might have furnished incentive for long distance flights, but all indications are that food was much more abundant year-round in California than it would have been in the Pacific Northwest at any season. Pronghorn, elk, and