

**Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association Inc.**

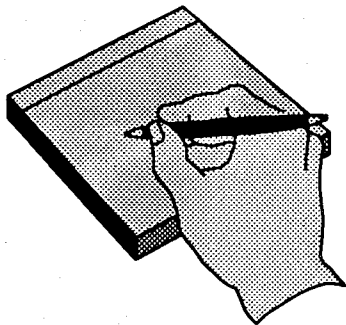
**" Wildlife Research "**

**"ALBATROSS"**

**JUNE**

**1999**

**ISSUE No. 21**



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### A Note From The Editor

In this issue we have presented mainly an update on what has been happening in our local region particularly the "Five Islands Nature Reserve".

We took this liberty to present some of our findings on the biology of the Sooty Oystercatcher at the Five Islands. This article, I feel is an indication of what we as members of SOSSA can achieve by working together, with support of the Cumberland Bird Observers Club, the NSW Parks and Wildlife Service, The University of Wollongong, Wildlife Information and Rescue Service and the Native Animal Network

Ambulance. We represent a community that cares for their environment.

It shows that in order to understand things on a global scale we must first understand what is happening, in our own local regions, become familiar with their needs and respect them for future generations to marvel at. "The Jewel in the crown of the Illawarra" (Sir David Attenborough *pers comm*)

An interesting letter from Chris Jowett (New Zealand) to whet our appetites with sightings of seabirds in the South Pacific, also an interesting account of the effects of the El-Nino / La Nina transition on seabirds in the Hauraki Gulf in N.Z 1992-1994.

In shore lines we give a brief insight into a close encounter with the Green & Gold Bell Frog (*Litoria aurea*) "The Olympic Frog".

One prominent member of SOSSA asked, "What are frogs doing in a seabird newsletter"? I reminded him that members of SOSSA come from many walks of life and interests not just SEABIRDS!! and that I as editor was one of them! I hope that you enjoy the article too.

### SHORE LINES

On May 12th a large bull Australian Fur Seal hauled out on one of our local beaches, the unfortunate animal had obviously taken a shark bait and had the hook well embedded in its stomach with 3+ metres plus of stainless steel wire trace trailing from its mouth. Distressed onlookers could do nothing to assist the animal. Calls for assistance were made to local wildlife carers and Orrca but help was slow in coming. A NSW Parks & Wildlife Service officer who attended quickly assessed the its predicament and contacted a local vet, but unfortunately the seal was disturbed by the camera flash of a photographer and it returned to sea before the vet arrived. It has not been sighted since.

Such instances as occurred above fortunately are rare. This type of situation is often very difficult to deal with even for the most experienced personnel.

Large seals and their kin (especially males) can be very aggressive and can present a danger to the public and wildlife rescuers alike. They should not be approached. Notify the National Parks and Wildlife Service and or SOSSA for further advice.

## Cetaceans Whales & Dolphins

A lone male Killer Whale sighted off the continental shelf at Bateman's Bay NSW on April 9th by local fisherman Bruce Cantell.

Captain Carl Loves of the Sandra K reports large numbers of Pilot Whales 100 + and large Bottlenosed Dolphins 30-40 Risso's Dolphins 50-60 all moving north in 800 fathoms off Wollongong April 26th 1999.

May 18th Lorraine Toohey advised that the first pod of Hump-backed Whales of the season were sighted just off shore at Kiama on the south coast of NSW. There were 3 large whales in the pod and they were moving north when sighted.

## GREEN & GOLDEN BELL FROGS

*Litoria aurea*

*aurea* means "Golden"

Tadpoles were rescued from a swimming pool at Port Kembla and given to the HQ at SOSSA. The majority of Green & Gold Bell Frogs at Port Kembla have residential addresses, (most are found living amongst vegetation in peoples gardens within two kilometres of Coomaditchy Lagoon). The family at Port Kembla wanted their swimming pool back and needed to put Chlorine in the pool to clean it, so we were indeed pleased to be asked to care for the tadpoles which were to be removed from the pool. We placed the tadpoles in one of our spare fish tanks to assist in their growth and as they developed they were relocated to known breeding habitats.

At the end of March approximately 15 froglets were taken by Chris Brandis to Blackbutt Reserve and on 4th April a further 25 were re-located to Coomaditchy Lagoon by Lindsay and son, Robin Smith. Since then Another 47 of the froglets have been returned to former known breeding sites throughout the local district.

The Green and Golden Bell Frog occurs in large permanent swamps or ponds with plenty of emergent vegetation, especially bulrushes. It is essential for the survival of the frogs that they are not just put in any pond but one with plenty of emerging vegetation and hopefully free of the Mosquito Fish *Gambusia holbrooki*

This Plague Minnow is a known to be predator of the eggs and hatching tadpoles it may be the key threatening species to the survival of the Green and Gold Bell Frog.

The Bell frog can grow up to a length of 8.5 cm. They are currently listed as an endangered species. Here in the Illawarra researchers are studying them in the field. Returning almost 100 Froglets back into the wild was indeed an uplifting feeling!! Ed.

## The Sooty Oystercatcher

(*Haematopus fuliginosus*)

At the Five Islands Nature Reserve NSW.

L.E. Smith, M. Jarman and Damien Stanioch

### Introduction

The Sooty Oystercatcher, inhabits rocky shorelines and coastal islands. It forages in the littoral zone (between high and low water) and preys on a variety of molluscs and crustaceans. It apparently breeds only on marine islands, and breeding space appears to be the limiting factor of population size. Non-breeding birds inhabit rocky shore areas all year round.

When breeding, Sooty Oystercatchers require access to an area of littoral zone large enough to supply all food requirements of parents and chicks over the breeding period. On many islands littoral zones are restricted to vertical rock faces and these are not readily accessible to oystercatchers. Such islands may support only one or two pairs. Rarely, the littoral zone may occur as a rocky platform offering a relatively large littoral area for foraging oystercatchers, This results in higher population densities. Overall, the New South Wales Sooty Oystercatcher population is small and widely distributed (only 100 individuals recorded in counts conducted by Wader Study Groups). (Lane 1987) RAOU.

Breeding Sooty Oystercatchers are generally unattractive as a subject for study, as access to a statistically useful number of breeding pairs is possible only with a great deal of effort and persistence. In addition special skills and equipment are required (essentially a suitable craft, boat license, seamanship and a knowledge of how to access islands with safety in various weather and sea conditions).

### Relevance

The Sooty Oystercatcher remains one of the least known of all the Oystercatchers in the world and little has been written on the breeding biology of this species.

The Sooty Oystercatcher is listed as a threatened species, as a result of its small population size. Currently its population, while small, appears to be increasing at the Five Islands Nature Reserve, its habitat generally appears to be relatively secure.

In New South Wales, offshore islands are nature reserves under the control of the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service.

Presently there is also a considerable length of relatively as yet undisturbed rocky coastline. However, small populations must be considered vulnerable, particularly if breeding biology and population regulation parameters are unknown. As is a common event in current times, declines occurring in small populations make the acquisition of data even more difficult because there are fewer individuals with which to work.

Members of the Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association (SOSSA) in 1994 began studying the breeding biology of the Sooty Oystercatcher (*Haematopus fuliginosus*), its breeding distribution on the Five Islands Nature Reserve and the post breeding dispersal of fledglings.

Our studies indicate that this small group of islands, possibly holds the largest breeding population of Sooty Oystercatchers along the seaboard of NSW.

### Population and Status

A. Keast (*pers comm*) indicated that during his previous visits to the Five Islands with Consett Davis 1940-42, the Sooty Oystercatcher was regarded as a rare breeding resident, with one pair breeding on Flinders Island and another pair possibly breeding on Big Is No. 2. He also indicated that there were thought to be fewer than 3 pairs in 1942 and the Sooty Oystercatcher was regarded as quite rare in the Sydney region.

Battam 1976 (Seabird Is. 38,39,40, 41). Reports that up to 3 pairs bred on Flinders Island. (No further mention of the Sooty Oystercatcher breeding on the Five Islands was noted).

Below we present some of the preliminary results of our studies at the Five Islands NSW.

### Breeding Population and Distribution

Total number of breeding Pairs, 16. These are distributed throughout the group as follows:

- 1 Pair on big Island (No 1)
- 3 Pairs on Big Island (No 2)
- 1 Pair on Martin Island (No 3)
- 9 Pairs on Flinders Island (No 4)
- 2 Pairs on Bass Is. (No 5)

### Breeding Season

The breeding season of the Sooty Oystercatcher at the Five Islands extends from mid September till February, or rarely March, (earliest egg date October 13th 1996) (M. Jarman).

### Breeding Territories

At the Five Islands Sooty Oystercatchers maintain breeding territories. The size of each territory varies considerably, depending on quality of site, the richer the site, the smaller the territory. During the incubation and for much of the chick rearing period the male would forage in non-breeding or post breeding territories. Males were often not observed in breeding territory, during visits to the nest site by authors.

### Nest site

At the Five Islands the Sooty Oystercatcher nests in a variety of sites, from 3 metres above the high water line to elevated situations up to 16 metres above the high water mark. Nest sites are rarely found more than 20 metres from waters edge.

The distribution of nest sites is largely dependent on availability of suitable sites relative to suitable foraging sites. On Flinders Is. (No 4), 3 nests containing eggs were situated within 3 metres of each other, these were confirmed to be three separate pair.

### Nests

Are found amongst patches of pebbles, shells, rocks and vegetation, most are often quite exposed. The sitting bird usually has a good view of its surrounds and in most cases is able to skulk away undetected at the approach of possible danger.

The nest of the Sooty Oystercatcher is as variable as the nest site itself. In many instances it is no more than a scrape in the pebbles amongst low vegetation. On occasions underneath small shrubs. This scrape is made by the bird digging with its bill as it turns its body in a "top" like manner excavates the loosened material with its feet. In some cases the scrape is well lined with pebbles, shell fragments, often small bones or some vegetation is used. Often more than one nest scrape is found in a breeding territory, the purpose of these additional scrapes is not known.

### Eggs

At the Five Islands two eggs form the usual clutch though one egg clutches are often encountered. Typical Egg Size: 62.1 x 41.5: weight 58 grams. Kelp Gulls and Australian Ravens have been observed preying eggs. Both species also breed on Flinders Island.

## Chicks

The earliest recorded hatching date of Sooty Oystercatcher chicks on the Five Islands is 16th November 1993. Most eggs hatch during December and generally one of the chicks is lost soon after hatching, usually within 6 or 7 days. On hatching the chicks are covered with dark sooty grey down, peppered with black, four narrow black lines run the length of the body. The crown is striped and peppered with black. Soft parts, Bill and Legs are a mid grey, as is the eye-ring.

The chicks are active within hours of hatching, and will scramble around in close proximity of the nest site, when not being brooded by the parents. Chicks are brooded by the parents at or near the nest site for a minimum of 5 days, in some cases longer. Generally the chick is fed at a site where they can hide quickly to avoid predators. This feeding station is often remote from the nest site.

As the main food resource, fed to chicks at our study site, consists primarily of Limpets and Chitons. The feeding station soon becomes littered with their shells. To the trained eye of a predator/researcher, this site is obvious and fresh shells indicate the presence of the chick, nearby. Oystercatcher chicks grow rapidly, at 2 weeks of age they are covered in body feathers with down persisting along the back and on the head. At this age the chicks will accompany the adults along the rocky shore-line of their breeding territory. Here they will be taught how to forage and, be fed by the female.

Here to, chicks will hide at the sounding of an alarm call, often with water breaking over them, they will remain hidden until given the all clear by the parents. Chicks can swim quite well at this age and will dive to escape danger. They can swim well under water, and do so if pursued, using their wings in a manner similar to that of Shearwaters.

Chicks disperse with adults from the islands at 7-8 weeks of age. They will move to their foraging territories on the mainland. The chicks will remain with the parents for up to a further 221 Days (Smith pers obs). Eventually the young birds are driven away from it's parents foraging territory.

Generally the ousted bird of the year will join up with a nomadic flock of non-breeding (non-territory holders) and Juvenile birds. Referred to as the club, (Goss and Custard 1996). They will remain in the club until such time as they are able to secure a foraging territory and a breeding territory, both of which are at a high premium, ensuring that only the fittest and most experienced birds breed.

## Conclusion

The contribution of the Five Islands Sooty Oystercatcher population in terms of the population of NSW. Is as yet unknown. Further research at distant breeding sights is required.

This island group was thought to present the best opportunity for studies into the breeding biology of the Sooty Oystercatchers in New South Wales. However due to the small size of Flinder's Island and the high concentration of breeding Oystercatchers, it was decided that further disturbance of intensive studies, may effect the well being of the birds. Mindful of this researchers, have restricted their visits to island in the past two years to one or two visits during peak egg laying mid October-late November. Chicks are banded on one or two visits in January and February. Studies of the breeding biology, chick growth have been conducted at this location by members of the Southern Oceans Seabird Study Association (SOSSA), and may be presented elsewhere.

Hopefully further studies can be conduct at additional sights, thus allowing us to gain a more enlightened understanding of the breeding biology and needs of these handsome birds.

The above article was first published in Cumberland Bird Observers Club Newsletter March-April 1999. The CBOC was instrumental in assisting with funding for this and other research into the biology of breeding sea and shore birds at the Five Islands Nature Reserve. We take this opportunity to thank the CBOC, our sponsors ENZED Wollongong, Hendry & Jones Eng. SOLAREX Pty Ltd, KEY Battery Services, South East Energy Pty. Ltd. Emu Tours, BHP Pty Ltd and the many members who have assisted in this project. With your support and that of the many SOSSA members and volunteers who have assisted. We are gaining a far better understanding of our coastal seas and islands with their unique inhabitants.

Special thanks to fellow SOSSA members Alexander Watson, Paul McDonald and Harry Battam, for critically reading and advising of the document.

L E Smith Ed. .

This article was in the Cumberland Bird Observers Club Newsletter March/April 99 Vol. 20 No.5 and we have presented here to share with our members that may not receive the CBOC Newsletters.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Lindsay,

I just received my March "Albatross" newsletter after returning from a 24 day trip on a container ship to Tonga, Niue and Cook Islands. Species observed included a probable juvenile Steller's albatross other sightings included Collared, Herald, Mottled and Gould's petrels possible Hawaiian, Leach's Storm-Petrel, Bridled and Grey-backed Terns, Audubon's and Christmas Shearwaters, South Polar Skua, Long-tailed Jaegers and a first winter plumaged Laughing Gull in Nuk'u'alofa, Tonga.

Interested to note poor breeding season of Little (Blue) penguins. During 4 years of surveys in the Hauraki Gulf, Auckland, seabird and penguin mortality occurred (via outside reports supported by survey data) in relation to a toxic algal bloom in 1992. An El Nino phase with extremely low Sea Surface Temperatures (SST's) prior, was considered the forcing factor. Numbers were a fifth of 1993-94 counts. High numbers of birds were found dead on beaches, live birds were found in very poor condition and with high tick infestation, indicative of starvation (Bird Rescue data comments). This occurred again in May - June 1995 with a mass die off of pilchards and a reduced abundance on surveys, in a post El Nino / La Nina transition period. A number of species of seabirds across the range were also affected by these two events also during the El Nino / La Nina transition; evidence limited to decreases in abundance, compared to other years.

Limited evidence of mortality. Live birds were found starving and there was some evidence of emigration out of the Hauraki Gulf. Sea birds are certainly affected by climatic based events and their affects on the Marine Environment.

Oh! also on Laughing Gulls saw another juvenile at Chatham Islands in February!

Good Birding Chris R. Jowett.

## FIVE ISLANDS REPORT

It is interesting to note that the Wedge-tailed Shearwaters breeding at the Five Islands have not met the same fate as that which effected the Little Penguins up and down the coast (See Albatross Newsletter No 19). Instead they appeared to have successfully bred on a par with past seasons.

(some studies continuous since 1968) Battam H & Smith L. pers obs.

In contrast to the disastrous failure of the Little Penguins this season, the Wedge-tailed Shearwaters have fared relatively well. The general condition of the adults and chicks has been good, Hatching rate of eggs was high with few eggs being lost and many chicks developing to fledging.

## VEGETATION RECOVERY

Experiments are currently being undertaken by Ben Wolhuter (Environmental Studies) University of Wollongong.

This follows a recent site visit to Big Island and the Consett Davis Research Hut which was attended by Professor Rob Whelan University of Wollongong, Tina Bain, acting sub-district manager South Metropolitan District NPWS, Tony Auld, (Botanist) NPWS, Jamie Erskine, Ranger NSW P&WS, Lindsay E. Smith SOSSA and Tony Howard NPWS, was our boatman for the day.

The purpose of the visit was to survey potential sites for dormant seeds of the original native vegetation types and set up study plots. These are to be monitored during the non-breeding season.

This will allow researchers to determine the viability of the revegetation project.

**This project is currently under way.**

## INTERESTING BANDING RECOVERIES

Black-browed Albatross (*Thalassace melanophris*) recovered in Chile. Band No 131-85964. This bird was first banded as an immature in it's second year. It was captured at sea east of Wollongong aboard the Sandra K on August 10th 1996. It was recovered 113 kilometres south west of Punta Lavapie (Pt. Lavapie) Chile in January 1999 (taken for food), and had travelled a distance of at least 10692 km at a bearing of 146 degrees.

Wedge-tailed Shearwaters were recovered from BHP Steel works, BOC Gases Cringila, a third story Penthouse in Wollongong and even one from WIN Football Stadium on South Beach Wollongong. All were fledglings weighing between 380-420g, most had down on their heads and bellies.

## RESCUE TIPS FOR FLEDGING SHEARWATERS

At the Five Islands Wedge-tailed and some Short-tailed Shearwaters fledge at night. It appears that some birds are distracted by lights from the nearby industries and the city.

Some fledglings become disorientated and are liable to turn up anywhere along the coast at this time of the year Late April & Early May.

It is important that if the birds are to be moved from the site at which they are found, that it is done with care and with minimal disturbance.

If responding to a call for assistance, try to ascertain if it is a Shearwater / Mutton Bird that has been found. If so it should be housed in a shallow box approx. 35-40cm square and 20-25 cm deep with a lid. Birds can be left in this box in a quiet place outside in the shade of trees (if no predators, ie cats & dogs). Alternatively it can be housed in a cool room (laundries or bathrooms are ideal). Generally the birds will not require feeding and should be released ASAP after capture, preferably in early evening.

If the bird is uninjured then it should be released from a slope where it can face into the prevailing wind for take off. Choose a slope which allows the bird to run to become airborne. Be patient, let the bird get its bearings and remember that on its first flight it almost perished so that it may take some time to settle after being transported. **DO NOT** throw young birds off cliffs! They will most likely crash and injure themselves.

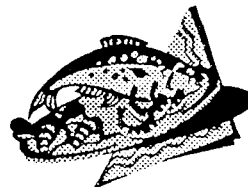
If further information or assistance is required please contact SOSSA H.Q.

## BIGGEST LITTLE PENGUIN !

Local "WIRES" (Wildlife Information Rescue Services) carer Lorraine Toohey, rescued a Little Penguin that came ashore at Kiama on the South coast of NSW.

The bird came ashore with very patchy and worn feathers and after hearing the plight of the Little Penguins along the east coast she was determined that this little fellow, a young male, was not going to perish.

The bird settled well in the garden and soon moulted (those tiny feathers stick to everything and there are hundreds of them!!). After almost five weeks post moult and exercise she thought he might be right to go back! Lorraine asked me to have a look at him band him and return him to the sea.



The little fellow was now tipping the scales at a whopping 1750 grams. I think he will manage quite well Lorraine. Ed.

Fortunately on the way to the Five Islands to release him we came across a group of Little Penguins fishing close in off shore and he was released to their company. As he bathed he clearly stood out amongst them.

### Footnote for carers

Little Penguins along the east coast in good condition generally weigh in at approx 850-1050 grams for females at sea. Pre-moult they can weigh over 1300 grams. Males typically weigh 1100-1400 grams at sea. Pre-moult they can weigh up to 2000 grams! Very large birds however are quite rare.

Little penguins generally moult a short time after breeding usually February to April, sometimes later depending on seasonal conditions. They can often be fed during moult, this however should only be done if the bird is in poor condition. If the birds are in good condition they are best kept undisturbed and not fed until the moult is complete.

**Never attempt to return a moulting penguin to the water until the moult is complete.**

Little penguins which have been in care, for more than a week should be exercised by swimming them in a pool. This should be done over several days at least before returning them to the sea. The birds need to be fit to survive the rigours of a life on the open ocean.

**Beware!**

**A fat, heavy penguin is not always a fit penguin!!**

**Contact SOSSA HQ for advise if unsure**

## BOOKINGS INFORMATION FOR BOAT TRIPS

Illawarra Boat Charter. Ph: 018- 423 555  
Captain. Carl Loves (SOSSA) (Sandra K)  
Mobile: 61-18-423 555-International  
PO Box. 148 Fairy Meadow NSW 2519  
Email: Bookings for Sandra K:  
fishing@wollongong.starway.net.au

Wollongong or Sydney: Ph wk..... 02-9900 1678  
Tony Palliser (SOSSA) Ph hm..02-9427 7563  
Ph mb..... 0416 095875 fx wk.. 02-9900 1669  
Email: Bookings for palliser@zip.com.au  
Pelagic Reports On Home Page Website  
Address: <http://www.zip.com.au/~palliser>

Brisbane Trip Bookings: Ph: 073- 3918  
839

Paul Walbridge. (SOSSA) Fax: 073- 3918 839  
135 Lytton Road East Brisbane QLD 4169

Portland Trip Bookings: Ph: 03- 9787 7136  
Mike Carter. (SOSSA)  
30 Canadian Bay Road Mt. Eliza VIC 3930

Busselton Information: Ph: 089 7553 263  
Ross Payton.(SOSSA)  
P.O. Box 410 Dunsborough. W.A. 6281

Perth Information: Ph: 08-9386 5694- H  
Frank O'Connor.(SOSSA) Ph: 08-9167 1445-  
W

8c Hardy Road, Nedlands. W.A. 6009  
Email: Bookings for Perth:foconnor@iinet.net.au

Eden Information: Ph: (02) 6495 7390  
Barbara Jones Email Bookings for Eden  
dbjones@acr.net.au

## SANDRA "K" - SEABIRD BIRD WATCHING BOAT TRIPS

4th Sunday Of The Month  
27th June 99, 25th July 99, 22nd August 99.

NEXT SOSSA MEETING

26th June 99

No meeting for July, the next will be

## SOSSA's A G M

GUEST SPEAKERS FROM THE  
AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS  
COAST WATCH  
PRESENTATION & VIDEO

4.00 pm Sunday

1 st AUGUST 1999

held at HQ.

10 Jenkins Street - Unanderra. NSW.  
We only supply the Coffee or Tea!!!

SAUSAGE SIZZLE BBQ AFTER THE MEETING  
SO YOU ALL CAN STILL CAN GET HOME  
AT A REASONABLE HOUR !!!



## MEMBERS

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND  
The Annual General Meeting

PLEASE SIGN & RETURN YOUR  
PROXY VOTE FORM

ALSO YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED  
1999 to 2000 Memberships are due

## MEMBERSHIP FORMS

WHITE SHEET WITH RED WRITING

NEXT NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 1999

(providing there are no major hold ups)

DONATIONS \$2.00 and OVER  
ARE TAX DEDUCTABLE !!



BOAT TRIP DATA SHEET - DSOSSA-BTDS-V 2-1 30041999 SOSSA

SOSSA - (02) 4271 6004 - Fax: (02) 4272 4626. PO. Box 142 UNANDERRA NSW 2526

E-mail address: [sossa@ozemail.com.au](mailto:sossa@ozemail.com.au)

Seabird Records 1999

WOLLONGONG BRISBANE PORTLAND SYDNEY BUSSELTON PERTH TASMANIA EDEN

Sp No	Species	Brisbane			Wollongong			Sydney			Portland			Perth			Eden			
		Mar	Apr	May	Mar	May	Mar	May	Mar	Apr	May	Mar	May	Mar	Apr	May	Mar	Apr	May	
005	Little Penguin, <i>Eudyptula minor</i>			6		2			27		13	1								5
085	Common Diving-Petrel, <i>Pelecanoides urinatrix</i>								2			1								2
079	Giant-Petrel, <i>Macronectes sp</i>								1											1
937	Northern Giant-Petrel, <i>Macronectes halli</i>											4								
984	Cape Petrel, <i>Daption capense</i>																			
075	Great-winged Petrel, <i>Pterodroma macroptera</i>		2	67				2		5	40	40	25	2						
077	White-headed Petrel, <i>Pterodroma lessonii</i>																			
971	Providence Petrel, <i>Pterodroma solandri</i>		31			17														
920	Tahiti Petrel, <i>Pseudo bulweria rostrata</i>	32	15																	
935	Kerguelen Petrel, <i>Lugensa brevirostris</i>																			
076	Soft-plumaged Petrel, <i>Pterodroma mollis</i>																			
915	White-chinned Petrel, <i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>										1									
917	Black Petrel, <i>Procellaria parkinsoni</i>											2								
	<b>Fairy Prion, <i>Pachyptila sp</i></b>																			3
853	Streaked Shearwater, <i>Calonectris leucomelas</i>			1																
069	Wedge-tailed Shearwater, <i>Puffinus pacificus</i>	198	9	38	1											5	35			1
975	Buller's Shearwater, <i>Puffinus bulleri</i>																			2
072	Flesh-footed Shearwater, <i>Puffinus carneipes</i>	23	2	113				2		2		80	15							
771	<b>Great Shearwater, <i>Puffinus gravis</i></b>										1									
070	Sooty Shearwater, <i>Puffinus griseus</i>			1				1		3			10	11	5					
071	Short-tailed Shearwater, <i>Puffinus tenuirostris</i>			2				13		26	40									6
068	Fluttering Shearwater, <i>Puffinus gavia</i>					7		90		16	1									2
913	Hutton's Shearwater, <i>Puffinus huttoni</i>	3						4												1
	*Fluttering/Hutton's	2																		3

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**COMMENTS**

Unfortunately due to either poor weather conditions, or simply a lack of support, has meant that data for some trips are incomplete. It is disappointing that during this period (March - May) has not been better supported. I am at a loss to explain why. There have certainly been some very unusual birds about at this time of the year. Great Shearwater off Portland (Victoria), Brown Booby, Eden, Grey Ternlets, White Tern and Streaked Shearwater off Wollongong, 100 Soft-plumaged Petrels off Perth (May). The occurrence of numbers of albatrosses particularly, the Campbell Albatross (*Thalassarche impavida*) and Black-browed Albatross (*T. melanophrys*), off Portland in March (260), April (600), May (700) Mike Carter. Very few recorded on boat trips elsewhere, during this time. With lower numbers of Shy (*T. cauta*) sp.(362) and Indian Yellow-nosed albatross (*T. carteri*).(39). With 35 recorded from Eden (NSW) in April and 50+ in May. 30 off Perth also in May. It is only with the support of the birding public, that our understanding of the occurrence and movements of seabirds are beginning to improve.

