

Science Report

Seabirds

1. We set up all our gentoo and chinstrap reproductive success plots this past week. To date none of our reproductive study nests contain eggs.
2. The majority of the penguin colonies still have 85% snow coverage. A few gentoo penguin pairs have well-built nests and have initiated clutches. Two complete clutches have been observed throughout the colonies.
3. Most chinstrap penguins have established their nests. Less than 5% of nests have been observed with one egg; none have been seen with full clutches.
4. We have started re-sighting all banded birds. We are monitoring all known-age penguins that were banded here as chicks and have now returned to breed. None of these birds have been seen on eggs yet.
5. We recovered 41 of 61 overwinter GLS instruments from chinstrap penguins this past week.
6. Brown skuas are re-establishing pair bonds and have been observed in pairs around Cape Shirreff and at the penguin colonies. We've observed five brown skuas with overwinter GLS instruments.

Pinnipeds

7. There are two female elephant seals that are still suckling pups. We have captured and tagged 20 of 22 pups born on the Cape this year. There are an additional two pups that have weaned at Punta San Telmo. Tissue from the flipper tag hole punches was collected on all pups tagged. The tissue will be archived at the Southwest Fisheries Science Center archive for later DNA analysis.
8. At the last census of fur seal study beaches on 18 Nov we recorded only one adult female and no pups. We did record the first pup born off the study site yesterday.
9. Today we are setting up our fur seal attendance VHF receiving stations and will begin range tests of both stations.



10. We have recorded six tagged fur seals including two adult females. The rest have all been adult males first tagged as pups.
11. On 16 Nov we had what appeared to be a recently weaned Crabeater pup arrive on the Cape. It was hauled out for three days before departing. While on shore it spent most of its time hauled out with a recently weaned elephant seal pup. We also had two recently weaned Weddell pups arrive that must have been born somewhere off the Cape.

Weather

12. We got our weather station up and operating on 13 Nov. Sampling rate for temperature, wind direction, wind speed and barometric pressure are set at one per minute and averaged at 15-min intervals. The mean temperature for the week was -0.2°C (s.d.:1.8). The high temperature for the week was 6.2°C and the low was -8.2°C . Total precipitation (snowfall) this week was 0.69 inches. Most winds, this week, were from the west. It was generally a calm week with mean wind speed of only 11.3 mph (s.d:5.3). Maximum winds were 48mph. Sunrise and sunset are now 03:31 and 22:00 and we are gaining about 6 minutes of sun per day.

Camp

13. We had a birthday party on 15 Nov. for LTjg David Vejar. We celebrated with homemade cake with extra candles and lots of wrapped gifts from all the crew and David's family.
14. We put up our solar array and wind generator earlier this week and continued digging out. We have used one barrel of water thus far and will move another frozen barrel into the main hut today.
15. We had some difficulty getting our ATV from the landing site to camp but we had a couple days of colder weather (below freezing) that made it easier to transport it to camp.
16. We are all looking forward to Thanksgiving. In preparation for the holiday we have a turkey thawing.



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