



Copa Sitrep # 2  
10/20/07 - 11/1/07

The second and third weeks of the field season continued to provide us with ample opportunities to work on our shoveling muscles as the snow rarely stopped falling and if it did it just drifted in instead. Our fearless leader Sue's departure on Sunday the 28th left Copa a little empty but we are managing to endure and carry on. The high snow levels continue to make life difficult for the penguins as nest building rocks are still at a premium and the birds are being forced to initiate nests on deep snow, and the heat they generate from incubating tends to melt the snow beneath them, which leaves the eggs lying in puddles, which then freeze solid overnight.

1. Penguins: 45 out of 100 monitored Adélie penguin pairs have laid at least one egg as of Friday 11/2. The first gentoo nest with eggs was discovered on Ipanema Beach, but no others appear to be close to laying yet. Most of the penguin colonies are still covered in deep snow and only a few areas have rocks to make nests with. This has led to some dispersal, with Adélies being seen in gentoo colonies, as well as in other areas in which they have not occurred in recent years, as they search for suitable nesting areas.
2. Skuas: Regular checks of the Copa skua territories have begun, although the brown skuas that hold penguin territories have been the only birds regularly seen.
3. Seals: Large numbers of seals remain around the bay. Leopard seals are seen almost daily sleeping on the ice & patrolling the shoreline for penguins. Elephant and Weddell seals are also seen regularly. About 400 crabeater seals have also been seen loafing on the remaining landlocked ice in Ezcurra Inlet at the head of the bay.

End of Sitrep #2

The 2007-08 Copa Field Team  
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