



Copa Sitrep # 8
12/7/07 – 12/13/07

The snow is still melting around Copa and every day things we had forgotten about are appearing in the “yard”, including the bridge to the ocean. The hiking is still treacherous and tiring, but each day the snow-free stretches get a little bigger and most of the snow is now gone along the coast, so beach walking is at least easier. The large amount of snow has been replaced with deep puddles in some areas that have inundated a number of gentoo penguin nests. The majority of our Adélie penguin eggs that were going to hatch have done so this week, although there are a number of birds still sitting on eggs that are long past due. Gentoo chicks are slowly appearing here and there in the colonies as they get closer to their peak hatch date, which should be right around Christmas. We trudged through the melting snow to finish all of our skua routes and were able to finally complete our first seal census between Copa and Patelnia this week.

1. Penguins: The mean Adélie penguin chick hatch date was on 12/9. The first gentoo penguin chicks appeared in our Repro Study sites this week, and, at the same time, the final gentoo penguin Repro Study nest was selected, to complete the sampling for this year.
2. Skuas: All skua surveys were completed on schedule and many territory holders that have been missing have finally started to show up, as more ground is becoming exposed.
3. Seals: Just under 600 elephant seals were counted between Copa and Patelnia on Tuesday (12/11).

End of Sitrep #8
The 2007-08 Copa Field Team
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