



Copa Sitrep # 9  
12/14/07 – 12/20/07

The snow continues to melt and for the first time this year the decks around the hut are completely clear, just in time for solstice. The horrible hiking conditions are now limited to very few areas, and large stretches can be attempted without the need for snowshoes or skis. A small number of gentoo penguin nests were flooded by the melting snow in what we hope to be the last of our weather-related failures this year. The skua nesting grounds are opening up and many more birds are being seen. The Ipanema and new Cascade Head gentoo colonies have had a growing number of chicks for two weeks now, whereas Copa Beach just had their very first chick on 12/20 and some are still initiating relay nests. The weather cooperated nicely for us this week and we were able to begin the radio telemetry foraging study.

1. Penguins: 65% out of the 100 Adélie penguin Repro Study nests have failed and the remaining 35 have produced 57 chicks to date. Out of 40 initiated known-age Adélie nests, 12 remain active and have produced 14 chicks. The first Adélie penguin 21-day chick weight was taken on 12/18.

Out of 98 gentoo penguin Repro Study nests, 51 have failed, but 20 of those failed nests have re-laid so far and we continue to find new nests on a daily basis. The remaining 47 original gentoo Repro nests have produced 13 chicks to date. Out of 79 known-age gentoo nests, 54 remain active and 12 have chicks. Gentoo penguin egg measurements at Point Thomas were also collected, where the eggs in 50 2-egg nests are measured & weighed.

A single macaroni penguin was seen loafing on Copa Beach on 12/18 & 12/19.

2. Skuas: All skua surveys along the west side of Admiralty Bay were completed. A total of 28 skua nests have been initiated so far.

3. Txs: 16 radio transmitters (Txs) were deployed on Adélie penguins with chicks on 12/17 to determine their foraging behavior, specifically their at sea vs. on land times. Three more radios will be deployed this weekend to complete the total of 19 study birds.

3. Seals: Seal censuses were completed for the entire west side of Admiralty Bay (no numbers available at writing).

End of Sitrep #9  
The 2007-08 Copa Field Team  
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