



Copa Sitrep # 16  
2/1/08 – 2/7/08

Copa has finally finished the heavy workload part of the season and is now fully into the data entry stage. This week held the very last gentoo and chinstrap diet samplings, as well. The Adélie penguin fledglings have all but disappeared now, with a few stragglers hanging around in the gentoo colonies. The chinstrap chicks have all crèched and are becoming fully feathered. The gentoo chicks are now crèching in greater numbers, with a few young chicks still scattered about. The weather has been much more agreeable this week and allowed us to have great hiking days. All satellite transmitters deployed on chinstraps have been retrieved. The Copa crew is once again down to four people, as Susan Woods and Wayne left us this week to return home.

1. Penguins: All but a few Adélie penguin chicks have fledged. The fledging behavior this year was different from prior years as very few chicks were ever seen on the beach and our final fledge weight samples resulted in just 36 banded chicks & 70 non-banded chicks being weighed. Out of 98 gentoo penguin repro nests, 19 are still active with chicks. 62 chicks have crèched, out of the total 93 hatched for the year. Chinstrap penguin chick feathers were also collected from 20 individuals for use in another project at UNC-Wilmington.
2. Penguin Diets: The fourth and last gentoo & chinstrap diet sample sets were collected this week. More on the results of these later.
3. Skuas: Out of the 88 original nests, there are still 49 active nests with 22 eggs and 38 chicks.
4. PTTs: The last satellite transmitter on a gentoo penguin was not retrieved and is considered lost. The last 2 satellite transmitters on chinstrap penguins were retrieved. The data from these recent PTT deployments showed the penguins only going just out of the mouth of Admiralty Bay & up to the 1000m bathymetry line in the Bransfield Straits, suggesting that krill are nearby.

Hut Improvements: Massive floor and deck cleaning, in preparation for the arrival of the RPSC carpenter & the completion of the renovations that started last season.

Weekly weather: Wind conditions have much improved to just mild winds. This week remained cool with temperatures hovering just above freezing, with a couple of snow flurries. The past few days have continued to get warmer with lots of sunshine, which allowed for all the new snow to melt.

End of Sitrep #16

The 2007-08 Copa Field Team  
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