



NOAA Photo by M. Goebel

Sit. Rep. #16
US AMLR Field Station
Cape Shirreff, Livingston
Island, Antarctica
19 February 2007

Seabirds:

1. We concluded resights of banded penguins for the season on February 15. We are currently entering and processing all resight data.

2. Chinstrap fledge weights commenced on February 14; every morning and evening we search the beaches below

the penguin colonies for fledglings. A minimum of 200 banded and unbanded chicks will be caught and weighed as they fledge.

3. We are continuing to take measurements and weights of skua chicks when they are 48 days old. We made our second trip to Punta Oeste on 13 February. Both skua pairs there had one chick each, which we banded.

4. Kelp gull reproductive success was similar to last year. Approximately 57 kelp gull chicks fledged from the camp this year as the result of 62 nesting attempts.

5. The penguin observation blind will be closed for over wintering today and we are continuing to enter and analyze data.

Pinnipeds:

6. This week we finished up these seasons foraging location study by retrieving the last 4 of 5 round three PTT females. The females carried PTT's and TDR's for an average of 16.8 days. We have recorded 52 foraging trips from 15 females since 18 December.

7. We have 13 female/pup pairs remaining in our attendance study. Eight of the nine females (of the original 22 pairs) have likely lost their pups to leopard seal predation.

8. Ten of the twelve young attendance females are still remaining in the study. All have completed 6 trips to sea. Means trip duration for the six trips was 3.7 (S.D. 1.4, n =72). This was a day longer than the CCAMLR females (mean 2.8, s.d. 1.0, n = 127).

9. Fur seal diet sampling continued this week with the collection of 10 scat samples from areas of suckling females. This week there was an increase in the presence of fish and squid in the diet. Krill was still present in all of the scats, however, evidence of fish and squid was found in 8 and three of the scats, respectively.

10. Fur seals tagged as pups continue to arrive, although in small numbers. To date, we have seen the following percent return for the last nine year classes: (1997) 1.2%; (1998) 1.0%; (1999) 4.8%; (2000) 2.2%; (2001) 3.8%; (2002) 2.4%; (2003) 1.4%; (2004) 0.0%; and (2005) 1.4%. A total of 84 different known-age individuals have been seen so far on the cape.

11. We have tagged 243 pups this season. These tags are part of the cooperative Chilean - US deployment of 500 tags on pups. One hundred and nine of these are pups of previously tagged females. DNA has been collected from 125 of these pups.

Cape Shirreff Weather for the Week:

12. After a blustery start, the weather for this week has been pretty nice. Lots of sun, and at night a few fine star displays. The Milky Way was spectacular. The average temperature was 3.3 degrees C. The high was 8.3 degrees C, with a low of -0.3 degrees, just a bit below freezing, which left some frost on the decks and a glaze of ice on the puddles. A good rain on Monday added almost all of the week's 0.29 inches of precipitation. Winds averaged 11.3 mph, with high gusts up to 52 mph.

Field Station Notes:

13. The scientific projects are rapidly winding down, and preparations are being made to close the station for the season. Our scheduled departure is the 24th of February, aboard the *R/V Laurence M. Gould*.

Report submitted by AMLR researchers currently residing at Cape Shirreff. These reports are also posted at <http://swfsc.noaa.gov/aerd-field.aspx>.