

# 2010-2011 Weekly Field Reports

## Copacabana, King George Island

Volume 16  
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### Science Report:

1. Penguins: Nearly all of the Adélie penguin chicks left our beaches this week. As of Sunday, 30 January, fewer than 50 chicks remained dispersed throughout the general Copacabana area. This week we caught 154 Adélie penguin chicks just before they left the beach and weighed them. The average of these fledge weights was 3,328 grams, higher than the 30-year average of 3,152 grams and the highest average weight in the last 20 years.

We conducted our sixth and final gentoo penguin chick-rearing diet sample on Monday, 24 January. Krill (*Euphausia superba*) constituted the bulk of the samples. 57% of the krill were female and their lengths ranged from 40 to 57 mm. One sample contained less than 1% fish.

We retrieved the last satellite tag from the previous gentoo penguin deployment on Tuesday, 25 January, and sent out our last deployment of five tags on gentoo penguins on Thursday, 27 January.

We conducted our first chinstrap penguin chick-rearing diet sample on Wednesday, 26 January. Krill (*Euphausia superba*) also dominated these samples, and were mostly female (69%). The krill were 36-56 mm in length, and four of the five samples contained 1-25% juvenile krill.

We put out five satellite tags on chinstrap penguins on Wednesday, 26 January.

2. Skuas: Of the 167 currently active skua territories, 16% have eggs and 34% have chicks. In the last two weeks, we have observed uneaten fish on 1% of the currently active territories. This suggests that there is an abundance of food for the skuas and possibly explains some of the late clutch initiations we've been seeing. We banded one adult skua this week.

4. Seals: The elephant seals are molting and continue to be present in high numbers: 485 juvenile elephant seals and seven male elephant seals were counted on our Copacabana to Patelnia seal census on Wednesday, 26 January. We also counted 298 fur seals and six Weddell seals. On the Copacabana to Point Thomas census on Saturday, 29 January, we counted 31 juvenile elephant seals and 23 fur seals.

### Weekly Weather:

We had a brief storm on Tuesday, 25 January from the south with snow and wind gusting to 35 mph. A chilly wind from the south continued to blow until Friday, 28 January, when it swung around and came out of the north, bringing rain. Saturday, 29 January, the afternoon was beautiful, warm and sunny; a brief respite that lasted until the morning of Sunday, 30 January, when the wind and rain returned in intermittent bursts.

### The 2010-11 Copa Field Team:

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