

FIRST NEW ZEALAND RECORD OF THE GENTOO PENGUIN (*PYGOSCELIS PAPUA*)

By J. T. DARBY and A. W. WRIGHT

ABSTRACT

The first record of a Gentoo Penguin, a female found on St Kilda Beach, Otago, on 22 September 1970, is documented.

On the evening of 22 September 1970 a penguin of unusual appearance strode ashore on St Kilda Beach, Otago Peninsula. The presence of this unusual bird prompted some students (names unknown) to arrest this bird and hand it to the local police station who in turn handed over this bird to the Wildlife Ranger of the Department of Internal Affairs.

There was little hesitation by local ornithologists in identifying this healthy and vigorous immigrant as a Gentoo Penguin, *Pygoscelis papua*.

It is not altogether surprising to at last record this penguin from New Zealand waters particularly as Kinsky (1969) has already recorded three sightings of this species at Campbell Island.

Sightings of the Royal Penguin (*Eudyptes chrysolophus schlegeli*) which occupies a similar breeding zone to the Gentoo on Macquarie Island have been previously made in Otago waters and it has been recorded as far north as Hawkes Bay (OSNZ Annotated Checklist 1970). Warham & Keeley (1969) recorded the presence of a Macaroni Penguin (*E. chrysolophus chrysolophus*) at Snares Island and also a Royal Penguin (Warham 1971).

The white band of feathers across the head does not quite meet the eye, neither is the eyelid white, these characters together with the uniformly dusted grey throat merging to the white breast indicating that this specimen was a juvenile, probably a second year bird (Downes *et al.* 1959).

This specimen has been retained as a mount by the Otago Museum; catalogue number A72:1. and the carcass preserved in iso propyl alcohol.

The following measurements were taken five days after capture:—Weight on capture (22/9/70) approx 5.5 kg, at death 5.094 kg; sex female; total length 69 cm; tail 140 mm; tarsus 34 mm; mid toe 83 mm; flipper 257 mm; bill, length 56 mm, width 18 mm, depth 22 mm.

On dissection the bird proved to be in excellent condition and, as expected following five days in captivity, its stomach was empty.

We would like to acknowledge the help and consideration of Constable C. F. Barker, Dr R. K. Dell, Dr G. R. Williams, Mr F. C. Kinsky, Mrs Jill Hamel and Dr R. Smith.

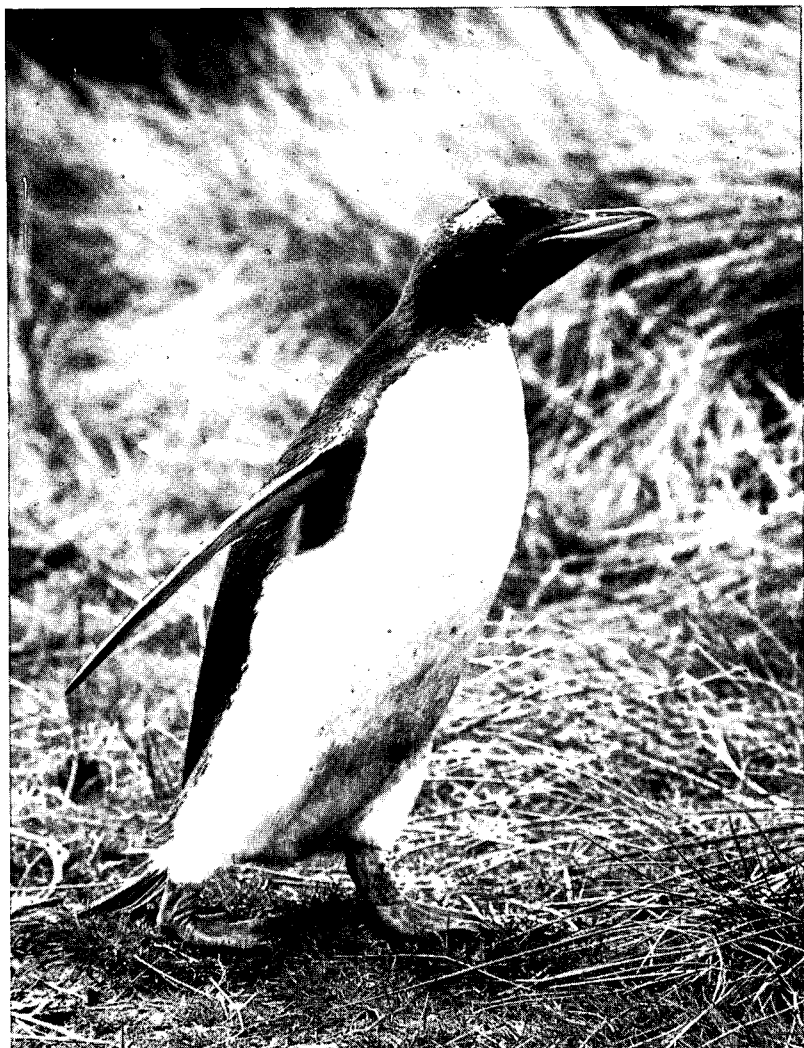


FIGURE 1 — Juvenile Gentoo Penguin (*Pygoscelis papua*), St Kilda beach, Otago Peninsula, 22 September 1970.

Photo: J. T. Darby

LITERATURE CITED

- DOWNES, M. C.; EALEY, E. H. M.; GWYNN, A. M.; YOUNG, P.S. 1959. The birds of Heard Island. ANARE Reports (B) 1, Zoology: 1-135, frontis., pls 1-67, 1 map.
- FALLA, R. A.; SIBSON, R. B.; TURBOTT, E.G. 1970. A field guide to the birds of New Zealand and outlying islands. 2nd ed. Pp. 1-256, 63 figs, pls 1-18. London: Collins.
- KINSKY, F. C. 1969. New and rare birds on Campbell Island. Notornis 16 (4): 225-236, pls XXXIII-XXXV.
- OSNZ, 1970. Annotated checklist of the birds of New Zealand including the birds of the Ross Dependency. (The Checklist Committee, F. C. Kinsky, convener), Ornithological Society of N.Z., Inc. Pp. 1-96, maps 1-4. Wellington, &c.: A. H. & A. W. Reed.
- WARHAM, J. 1971. Letter to the Editor. Notornis 18 (1); 61-64, 1 fig.
- WARHAM, J.; KEELEY, B. R. 1969. New and rare birds at Snares Island during 1968-69. Notornis 16 (4): 221-224, pl. XXXII.

*Mr J. T. Darby,
Otago Museum,
Dunedin*

*Mr A. W. Wright,
Wildlife Service,
Department of Internal Affairs,
P.O. Box 30,
Portobello, Otago*

[*Editor's note:* Classified Summarised Notes 1971-72, *Notornis* 19 (4), includes a record of a Gentoo Penguin found ashore at Tiwai Point, Bluff, 1 November 1970, photographed and returned to sea.]