

SHORT NOTES

EXTENSION OF THE KNOWN RANGE OF SOME SEABIRDS ON THE COAST OF SOUTHERN CHILE

The Totorore Expedition spent a full year on the coast of Southern Chile from May 1983 to May 1984, recording observations of seabirds and other avifauna. This work describes the most important new information.

GENTOO PENGUIN *Pygoscelis papua*

One observed closely in the bay east of Cape Horn on 28 March. The only previous record for this species in Chile was of two in the same locality in November 1981, seen by Carlos Mansilla (Venegas 1982).

Our attempts to find a suspected small colony mixed with the large numbers of Magellanic Penguins *Spheniscus magellanicus* in that area were unsuccessful.

ROCKHOPPER PENGUIN *Eudyptes chrysocome*

A small colony on Isla Solitario (47°42'S, 75°42'W) in the Gulf of Penas is the northernmost record in Chile. In January 37 adults and 6 chicks in down were seen.

Previously, the northernmost confirmed breeding place was a small colony on an island of the Verposten Group (49°22'S, 75°42'W). Another suspected small colony, unconfirmed, is in the Notables Group (48°54'S, 75°41'W) (Venegas 1978).

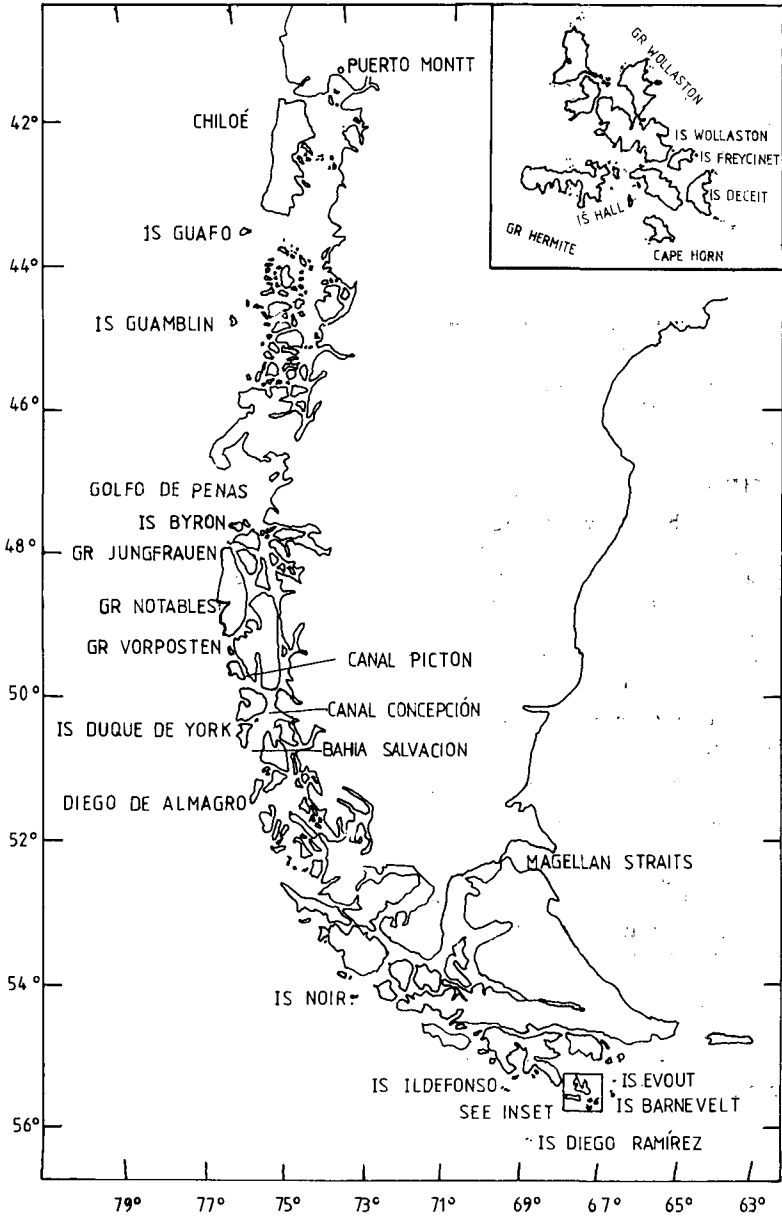
The Totorore Expedition found a colony of about 1000 birds on Isla Buenaventura (50°45'S, 75°09'W) in Canal Concepcion also in January. This colony was mixed with lesser numbers of both the Magellanic Penguin and the Macaroni Penguin.

MACARONI PENGUIN *Eudyptes chrysolophus*

The colony of 50-100 birds in a large colony of *E. chrysocome* on Isla Buenaventura in January (see above) is the northernmost breeding record for this species.

Breeding on Isla Noir (54°28'S, 73°04'W), previously suspected (Reynolds 1935), was confirmed by Venegas in December 1983.

We found a large mixed colony of c.40% *E. chrysolophus* and c.60% *E. chrysocome* on the north coast of Isla Noir and a colony purely *E. chrysolophus*, containing an estimated 25 000 birds, near Cabo Noir in February. This colony was in a penguin-made clearing in dense scrub on low land behind a shingle beach. About half the birds were in moult (20 Feb.).



BLACK-BROWED MOLLYMAWK *Diomedea melanophrys*

We found a large breeding colony with chicks in down on the west coast of Isla Diego de Almagro on 30 January.

An approximate distribution of this colony was

Offshore islet near Cabo Toplas (51°20'S, 75°13'W)	500
Cabo Gruta and offshore islet	10-20 000
Two points SW of Punta Negra (51°33'S, 75°18'W)	c. 11 000
Two small islets and two points NW of Cabo Jorge	1-2 000
Approximate total	30 000 birds

The nests were mainly on steep cliffs, more or less vegetated, 15-170 m above the sea.

Previously known colonies in Chile are on the islands of Ildefonso (55°47'S, 69°27'W), Diego Ramirez (56°32'S, 68°44'W) and Evout (55°34'S, 66°47'W).

SOUTHERN GIANT PETREL *Macronectes giganteus*

In February we found a breeding colony on a west-facing hillside towards the western end of Isla Noir. This confirms a report by Agostini (Reynolds 1935). We counted over 200 well-grown chicks in down, but the number was probably greater as they were hard to find in the scrub. Surprisingly for this species, the colony was widely spread over an area of about 3 by 1 km, with a few loose groups of up to 20 nests.

The only other known breeding colony in Chile is on Diego Ramirez Islands (Schlatter pers. comm.).

BLUE PETREL *Halobaena caerulea*

We found moderate to large numbers occupying burrows on Cape Horn on 31 March and up to 5 April, when we made our last excursion to the top. Some birds were in burrows during the day, and many flew in after dark and out to sea again before daylight. According to Watson (1975), some adults return to breeding grounds and occupy burrows in April to June. Most burrows were in soft ground under tussocks on the peak and the sides of Cape Horn down to about 200 m, but some were found under rocks, and a few in scrub.

One bird which was caught had the measurements: bill 26.5 x 9.7 mm, wing 229, tail 82 (worn), tarsus 36.6, mid-toe 46.5.

On 12 April three possible Blue Petrels were seen by spotlight at night near an island off the north-east point of Isla Freycinet (55°46'S, 67°10'W), where old skua middens contained remains of this species. Bad weather prevented further investigation, but one apparently recently occupied burrow was found on a rocky islet just to the south.

On 21 April, burrows were seen under tussocks on a small headland on the south-east coast of Isla Hall (55°53'S, 67°24'W). At night at least 100 Blue Petrels were seen by spotlight flying over the area, and one bird caught measured: bill 24 mm, wing 209, tail 88, tarsus 33, mid-toe 44.5. This was appreciably smaller than the Cape Horn bird.

At Cape Austin on Isla Deceit, c.10 Blue Petrels were seen by spotlight on 26 April.

From our observations we concluded that, in addition to the Cape Horn colony there seem to be many smaller colonies scattered among other islands in the Hermite and Wollaston groups. The only other previously known colony in Chile is on Diego Ramirez Islands.

NARROW-BILLED PRION *Pachyptila belcheri*

In February, we found a very large breeding colony of unknown extent on Isla Noir. The burrows were under dense scrub at 100-200 m a.s.l. on the same west-facing slope as the colony of Giant Petrels. Vast numbers of birds flew to and from this colony during the night.

Many skuas *Catharacta chilensis* and skua middens indicated heavy predation on the prions. Average measurements of nine birds caught were: bill 25.3 x 10.5 mm, wing 183, tail 85, tarsus 33, mid-toe 42.5.

This is the first confirmed record of prions breeding in Chile.

PINK-FOOTED SHEARWATER *Puffinus creatopus*

In addition to occasional sightings on the coast further north, this species was positively identified in the following localities:

One on 22 Jan. SW coast Isla Duque de York (50°41'S, 75°29'W)

One on 29 Jan. Bahia Salvacion (50°55'S, 75°15'W).

These are the first records south of the Gulf of Penas.

GREAT SHEARWATER *Puffinus gravis*

This has been considered only a rare and accidental visitor to the Magellan area (Venegas 1978, 1982). We saw a total of 18 in Paso del Mar, Magellan Strait, on 2 February, including a group of 12 near the eastern end. One was seen east of Cabo Froward on 15 March.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus*

In September 1983, we found a large breeding colony on Isla Guafo (43°46'S, 74°43'W) of an estimated 200 000 birds and, in November, a smaller number breeding on Isla Guamblin (44°50'S, 75°07'W).

In Chile, Sooty Shearwaters were previously known to breed only in the Cape Horn region.

MAGELLAN DIVING PETREL *Pelecanoides magellani*

We did not extend the range of this species, but on 1 March a movement of Magellan Diving Petrels was observed in Paso del Hambre, Magellan Strait. The birds were widely spaced in a band about 5 km wide, flying straight and steadily southward less than 1 metre above the water. During a transect across the flight line we counted over 300 birds in 30 min, but obviously, as only those birds which passed closely were within visible range, the number must have been very much larger.

GREY PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Formerly reported south to the Isla Chiloe with only a very few sightings of single birds further north (Venegas 1982), this species was one of the commonest birds we saw from Isla Guafo to Bahía Salvacion. At Isla Guafo in September, we counted a gathering of over 5000. Other large concentrations included the following:

- c. 300 on the shore of a saltwater lagoon on Isla Byron (47°49'S, 75°12'W), where they associated with, and behaved like, Sanderlings *Calidris alba* and Baird's Sandpipers *C. bairdi*, and were seen flying overland to an inlet in the centre of the island.
- c. 1000 in the channels between the Yungfrauen Islands.
- c. 690 in Canal Piçon.
- c. 3000 in south Canal Concepcion.

The southernmost positive record was offshore in 51°10'S, 75°03'W on 31 January. On 24 February, 7 phalaropes observed south of Isla Noir in 54°40'S, 72°24'W could have been of this species.

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