

## GPS tracking kororā / little blue penguins from Port Taranaki

The Projects Assistance Fund has allowed us to deploy GPS dataloggers for tracking work with the Port colony in 2022 and 2023. There were a number of early nest failures in 2022, and the decision was made to stop tracking after we had tracked only three birds due to a poor breeding season with birds abandoning nests or laying very late. Dr Thomas Mattern has been our training supervisor for the datalogging. Our volunteer team has been developing skills in deploying, recovering and downloading data from the dataloggers, which has required dexterity and patience. We have also been working with electronics experts. In combination, this is helping us get a better understanding of local bird behaviour.

This year the Port Taranaki colony seems in better health, and we have tracked nine birds during the incubation and early chick guard phases. We have RFID readers on the nest entrances to tell us when a bird arrives or departs, with field and security cameras to confirm the events.

We can see quite different foraging destinations between the August 2023 and October 2023. The birds travelled from Port Taranaki in a radius of between 28km and 65km in August /mid-September, but this reduced to 17km in October 2023.. Data on the sea and weather conditions has been collected during the deployments and will contribute to further analysis.

The tracks of all birds with charts showing the distances travelled may be viewed on Naturemaps, 'Korora in Taranaki'. <https://naturemaps.nz/maps/#/viewer/openlayers/708>

### Possible images attached in email

Fixing a datalogger



Bird 40591 carrying a datalogger in front of the nest with the RFID reader



Also see the sample map appended.

Appendix: sample map showing bird track

