

SHORT NOTE

Procellariiforms killed by fishers in Chile to obtain bands

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Recently the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme received recovery information for three procellariiforms banded in New Zealand, Australia, and the Crozet Islands that had been killed by fishers off the coast of Punta Lavapie, Chile (38°0'S, 74°30'W) between November 1998 and January 1999. A conversation between a school teacher and crab fishermen about seabirds that gathered around their boats revealed that banded birds were deliberately captured and killed to collect their bands, presumably to keep as curiosities.

One of these birds was a male black-browed albatross (*Diomedea melanophrys melanophrys*), which was banded as an adult in November 1986 on Campbell Island in the New Zealand subantarctic (52°33'S, 169°09'E). Small numbers of this subspecies breed amongst large colonies of New Zealand black-browed albatross *D. m. impavida* (Moore *et al.* 1997). This individual successfully bred with a New Zealand black-browed albatross mate from 1991 to at least 1996. Because of this, every year we searched for this bird to monitor its breeding.

A second bird was a New Zealand black-browed albatross which was originally banded as a 3-year-old off the coast of Wollongong, Australia (34°30'S, 151°10'E) on 10 August 1996. It was also of special interest as its energetics were studied by respirometry at that time.

The third bird was a northern giant petrel (*Macronectes halli*) which was banded as a chick at the Crozet Islands (46°S, 52°E) on 17 January 1998 (H. Weimerskirch pers. comm.).

There is a long history of humans killing albatrosses and petrels for food or sport at sea (Medway 1988). In recent years there has been much concern about population declines, particularly in some albatross species, as a result of accidental capture of birds during fishing operations (Brothers 1991; Robertson & Gales 1998). Even birds that may survive being hooked can be killed because of apathy (Stagi *et al.* 1998), as fishers would find little difference between killing a bird or a fish. To what extent having a band may increase a bird's chances of death is unknown. Deliberately targeting banded birds may be rare but it could have implications for estimates of survival from banding studies.

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SHORT NOTE

Spotted shags breeding on Kapiti Island

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On 16 October 1999, a small nesting colony of spotted shags *Stictocarbo punctatus* was found on the northeastern coast of Kapiti Island. Spotted shags regularly roost on a rock face midway between the mouths of Te Rere and Te Kahuoterangi Streams, e.g. I saw 19 there on 19 February 1997. I became aware that shags could be nesting at this site when I saw a flying shag carrying nest material towards the rock face. A scramble down from the public track revealed a group of 20 spotted shags, including 2 immatures, centred on 10 nests in a cleft in the cliff. All the adults were in prenuptial plumage, and it was evident that laying had only recently commenced. Contents of 6 nests could be seen, of which 3 were empty, 2 had single fresh eggs and 1 nest contained 2 fresh eggs. The modal clutch size for spotted shags is 3 (mean 2.7), laid between late August and November (mean 13-17 October) on the Otago coast and at Banks Peninsula (Marchant & Higgins 1990). The presence of

immature shags and a heavily stained old egg lying between 2 nests suggested that shags had bred at this site during at least 1 previous season.

On 22 January 2000 all 7 discernible nests were vacated, but 7 adult and 11 juvenile spotted shags were roosting nearby.

This is the first record that I have found of spotted shags breeding on Kapiti Island, and it is the second known colony in the southern North Island after Matiu/Somes Island in Wellington Harbour.

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