

SEABIRD ISLANDS

No. 36

Little Island, New South Wales

Location: 32°42' S., 152°15' E.; 3 km east of North Head at the entrance to Port Stephens, N.S.W.

Status: Crown Land.

Description: 175 m by 75 m at the widest, the highest point is 12 m. Mostly bare rocks with some small patches of soil in the crevices. The only vegetation is a succulent, *Sesuvium portulacastrum*, which grows in the soil patches and spreads in places over the adjacent rocks.

Landing: Onto rocks and possible only in calm conditions.

Ornithological History: A. F. D'Ombra¹ recorded a "fairly large concentration of Crested Terns" when trolling near the island in September 1953. Subsequently, early in January 1954 he visited the island and found Silver Gull and Crested Tern runners but gave no indication of numbers present. H. Battam, L. F. Lane, S. G. Lane and F. W. van Gessel landed on the island on 30 November 1975; they found Silver Gulls and Crested Terns nesting, with eggs and runners of both species.

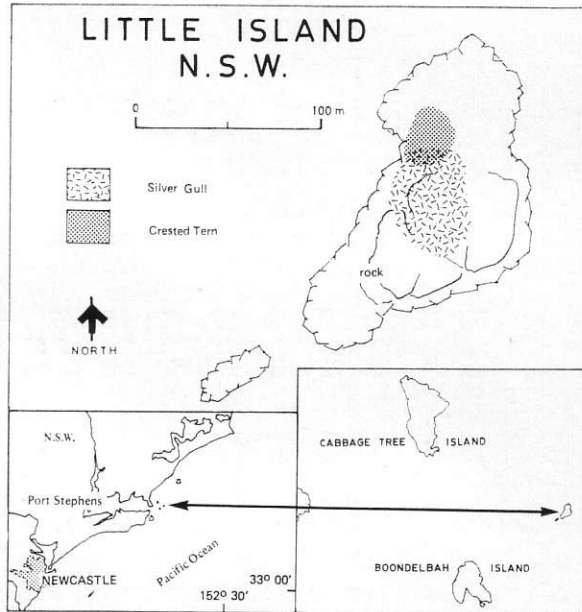
Breeding Seabirds and Status

Larus novaehollandiae Silver Gull — Breeds occasionally in small numbers during summer probably when the terns breed. Breeding season usually September to February. In 1975, there were 29 nests with eggs and 22 runners. Estimated 50 breeding pairs.

Sterna bergii Crested Tern — Also breeds occasionally on the island during summer. In November 1975, there were 23 nests with egg or eggs, and 22 runners. Estimated 40 breeding pairs.

Factors Affecting Status

Because of its small size, the island is exposed to rough seas which undoubtedly affect the breeding. D'Ombra¹ noted that some dead



nestlings "appeared to have been partly eaten by birds of prey".

OTHER VERTEBRATES
None recorded.

Other Seabirds Recorded

Phalacrocorax sp. Cormorant¹
Haematopus fuliginosus Sooty Oystercatcher

Banding

Nil.

Bibliography

- D'Ombra, A. F. (1954). 'Crested Terns and Silver Gulls nesting on Little Island', *Emu* 54: 210.

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