

## SEABIRD ISLANDS

No. 60

## Green Island, Oyster Harbour, Western Australia

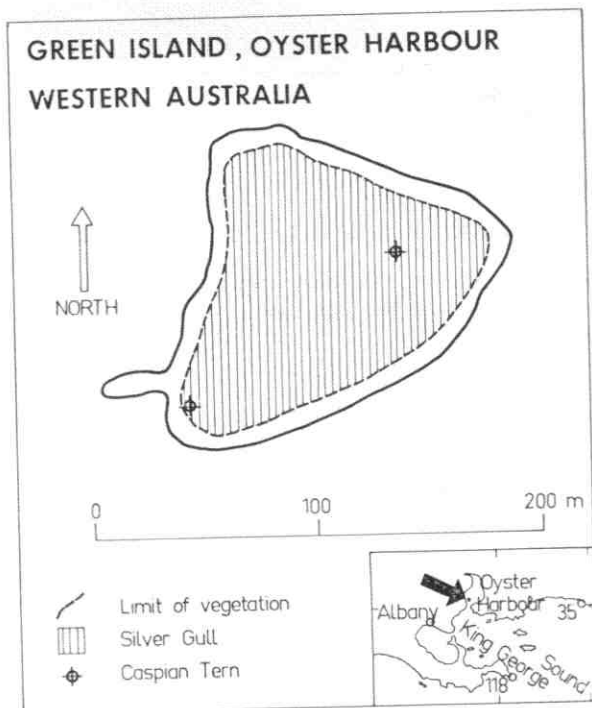
**Location:** 34° 59' S., 117° 57' E.; 600 m southeast of Bayonet Head, Oyster Harbour, near Albany, W.A.

**Status:** Recreation Reserve No. A24808.

**Description:** 1.7 ha; roughly triangular in plan, about 190 m by 130 m and rising to 12 m. The basic rock is granite-gneiss with a very deep layer of soil over most of the island. Thirty-four species of plants have been found, of which about 20 are naturalized aliens. Dominant species are Australian Hollyhock *Lavatera plebeia* (to 2 m high), New Zealand Spinach *Tetragonia tetragonioides* and Red Inkweed *Phytolacca octandra*. In winter the island appears a very bright green, hence its name.

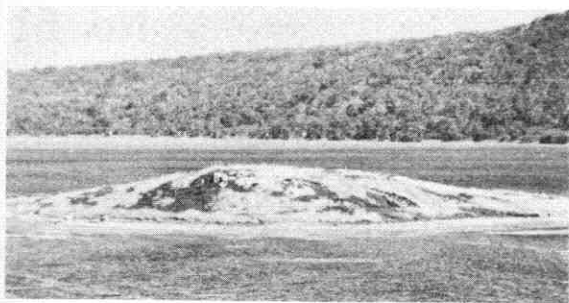
**Landing:** As Oyster Harbour is almost land-locked, the waters are normally calm and landing is little problem.

**Ornithological History:** There appear to be no published records of visits by ornithologists. However, in 1827 Major Edmund Lockyer stated<sup>1</sup> that natives were put on the island to catch muttonbirds (presumably *Puffinus carneipes*) and that three dozen were caught. (There is no other record of muttonbirds on the island). The Caspian Tern was recorded breeding on the island by Serventy *et al.*<sup>2</sup>. N. Kolichis and T. Allen (pers. comm.) recorded Pied Oystercatchers with eggs (12 October 1974) and with small young (16 September 1977). They also recorded Silver Gulls nesting on those dates and on 19 August 1976. I. Abbott spent about 45 minutes ashore on 28 November 1975.

**Breeding Seabirds and Status**

*Haematopus ostralegus* Pied Oystercatcher—One or two pairs probably breed regularly on the island from September to November.

*Larus novaehollandiae* Silver Gull — Breeds regularly on the island probably from August to about November or December in variable numbers. On 12 October 1974, about 100 pairs were on eggs



● Green Island (looking south-east).

and young; on 28 November 1975 there were only a few nests and one chick; on 19 August 1976 there were 300 pairs; but on 16 September 1977, some 4 000 to 5 000 pairs had eggs and young, the nests being constructed almost to the high tide level.

*Hydroprogne caspia* Caspian Tern — Two pairs usually nest on the island (T. Allen pers. comm.)

### Factors Affecting Status

The earliest recorded disturbance to the birds occurred in 1827<sup>1</sup> when birds were caught and shortly after, vegetables were grown on the island for the settlement at King George Sound. Currently, as the island is only about 1 km from a well-used boat ramp, considerable disturbance of nesting seabirds undoubtedly occurs, particularly at weekends.

#### OTHER VERTEBRATES

None recorded.

### Other Seabirds Recorded

|                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>       | Pied Cormorant.         |
| <i>Phalacrocorax melanoleucos</i> | Little Pied Cormorant.  |
| <i>Phalacrocorax sulcirostris</i> | Little Black Cormorant. |
| <i>Haematopus fuliginosus</i>     | Sooty Oystercatcher.    |
| <i>Larus pacificus</i>            | Pacific Gull.           |

### Banding

Nil.

### Bibliography

1. Lockyer, E. (1827), Despatches to Colonial Secretary Macleay. *Hist. Rec. Aust.* Ser. 3, Vol. 6, pp. 473, 479.
2. Serventy, D. L., V. N. Serventy and J. Warham (1971), *The Handbook of Australian Sea-birds*. A. H. and A. W. Reed. Sydney.

### Acknowledgements

I thank Messrs N. Kolichis and T. Allen for details of their visits. Transport for my visit was provided by Messrs D. Pearson and S. Randall, and was funded by a grant from A.R.G.C. in connection with my research on *Zosterops*.

Date compiled:  
17 March 1976

Revised 14 October 1977

I. Abbott,  
Department of Zoology,  
The University of Western Australia,  
Nedlands, W.A.