

SEABIRD ISLANDS

No. 90

Kanowna Island, Anser Group, Victoria

Location: 39°09'S., 146°18'E.; 4.5 km southwest of Wilsons Promontory.

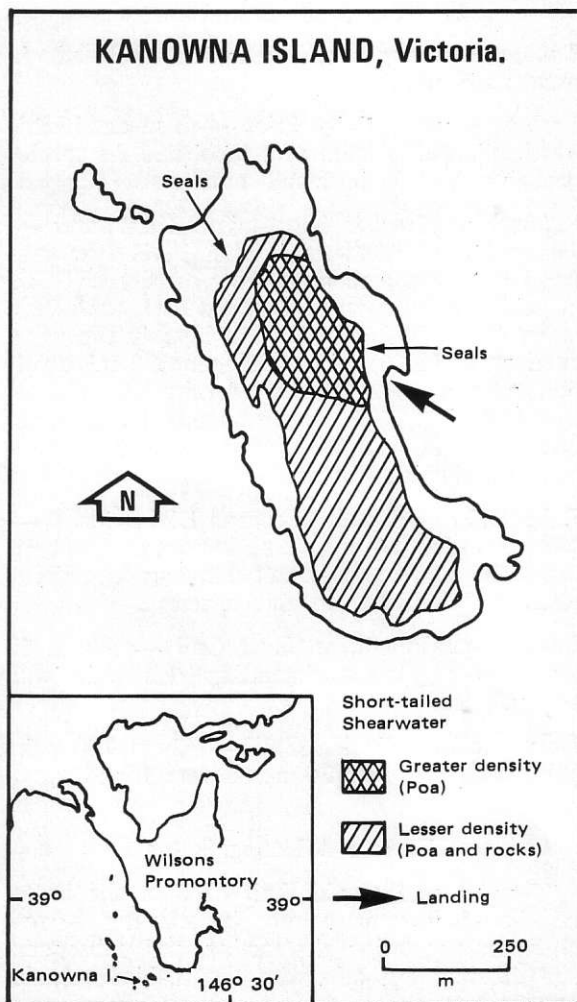
Status: Part of Wilsons Promontory National Park, controlled by the National Parks Service, Victoria; access restricted.

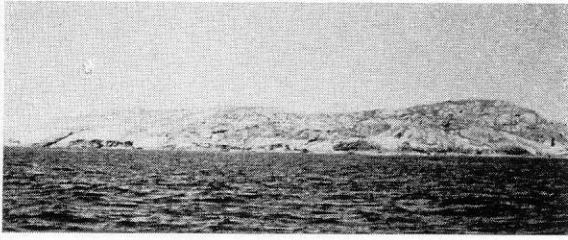
Other Name: Middle Island (formerly).

Description: 31 ha; an oblong granite island 1 km long by 0.4 km wide, the highest point of 95 m is on the southern end. *Poa poiiformis* is the dominant plant occurring over most of the island wherever there is sufficient soil. A fairly dense stand of *Poa* (c. 4 ha) occurs in the north-eastern quarter, north of which the vegetation has been worn away by some 1 000 or more Australian Fur Seals *Arctocephalus pusillus* which frequent the island. Elsewhere the *Poa* is dispersed between rocks. The periphery of the island is mainly exposed rock with a stand of *Carpobrotus rossii* on the eastern side. The only bushes were small *Leptospermum laevigatum* but many large long-dead trees show that the island once had a stand of scrub species.

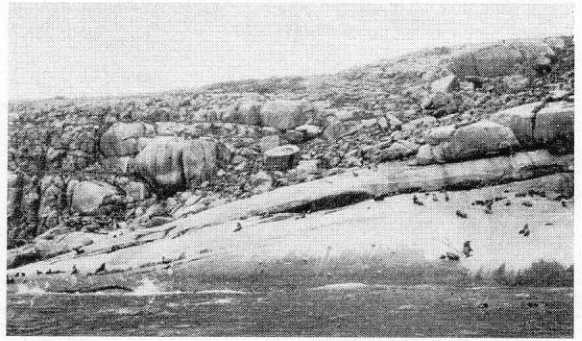
Landing: Onto the rocks on the eastern side, not possible in rough weather.

Ornithological History: D. F. Dorward and G. Pizzey² recorded three pairs of Cape Barren Geese in 1964 and Dorward¹ in later studies recorded 15 pairs present. S. G. Lane and H. Battam³ visited the island for about an hour on





• *Kanowna Island (looking south-south-west).*
Photo: S. G. Lane.



• *Part of the seal colony, north-eastern side.*

25 November 1978; they found Little Penguins, Short-tailed Shearwaters and Pacific Gulls nesting. Our visit, also of an hour, on 13 December 1978, was made in torrential rain.

Breeding Seabirds and Status

Eudyptula minor Little Penguin — Breeds in small numbers.

Pachyptila turtur Fairy Prion — Ten dead birds were collected in December 1978 and the species probably breeds in small numbers.

Puffinus tenuirostris Short-tailed Shearwater — Thirty 20 m² quadrats in the 'pure' *Poa* area (c. 4 ha) gave a mean burrow density of 0.56/m² with a population of 22 700 (95% confidence interval 19 300-26 000). Elsewhere in the vegetated areas (11.6 ha), twenty-nine 20 m² quadrats gave a mean burrow density of 0.28/m² with a total of 29 300 burrows (95% confidence interval 19 000-39 500). The estimate of burrows on the island was 52 000.

Pelecanoides urinatrix Common Diving-Petrel — Not recorded by us, but Lane and Battam³ found a number of small burrows containing feathers "attributed to this species".

Larus novaehollandiae Silver Gull — About 10 birds were present, including one pair with young.

Larus pacificus Pacific Gull — About 100 pairs held territories and 20 nests were found.

Factors Affecting Status

The fur seals could limit or alter the extent of the shearwater colony by causing burrow collapse, vegetation destruction and subsequent soil erosion, but otherwise the seabird colonies appear secure.

Other Seabirds Recorded

<i>Pelagodroma marina</i>	White-faced Storm-Petrel (one dead bird 13 Dec. '78)
<i>Leucocarbo fuscescens</i>	Black-faced Shag
<i>Cereopsis novaehollandiae</i>	Cape Barren Goose (24 recorded by us).
<i>Haematopus fuliginosus</i>	Sooty Oystercatcher

Banding

P. tenuirostris — 6 adults (25 Nov. 78).

Bibliography

1. Dorward, D. F. (1967), 'The status of the Cape Barren Goose *Cereopsis novaehollandiae*', *Bull. int. Comm. Bird. Preserv.* 10:56-71.
2. Dorward, D. F. and G. M. Pizzey (1965), 'Breeding of the Cape Barren Goose on the Anser and Glennie Islands, Victoria, Australia', *Rep. Wildfowl Trust* 16:64-67.
3. Lane, S. G. (1979), 'A visit to islands of Wilsons Promontory, Victoria', *Corella* 3:29-30.

Date compiled: 3 July 1979.

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