

## SEABIRD ISLANDS

No. 125

## Canning Island, Archipelago of the Recherche, Western Australia

**Location:** 33°55'S., 121°46'E.; 20 km south-west from Esperance, WA.

**Status:** Class A Reserve vested in the W.A. Wildlife Authority; entry permit required.

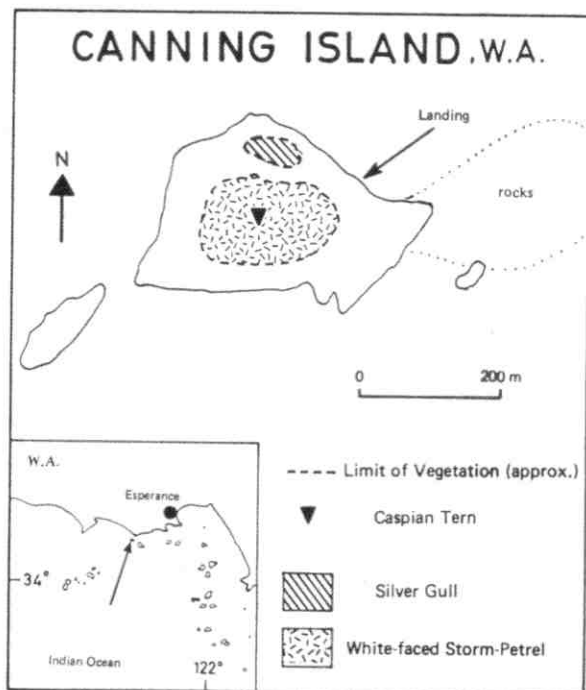
**Description:** 16 ha; 450 m long by 250 m at the widest and rising to 24 m high. The island consists of granite with extensive areas of bare rock around the edges and some outcrops interspersed among the vegetated parts. Stunted shrubs and grasses constitute most of the vegetation; there is a patch of "saltbush" about one metre high on the northern side.

**Landing:** Onto rocks and difficult except in calm weather.

**Ornithological History:** The island is recorded as a breeding station for the Caspian Tern<sup>2</sup> but no details are available. A. K. Daw and A. V. Thomas spent 1.25 hours on the island on 2 December 1981<sup>1</sup>. In addition to the Caspian Terns they found White-faced Storm-Petrels and Silver Gulls nesting.

### Breeding Seabirds and Status

*Pelagodroma marina* White-faced Storm-Petrel  
— Burrows "were well-distributed wherever the



soil depth was suitable."<sup>1</sup> Some burrows checked contained a bird incubating an egg. Estimated between 2 000 and 3 000 burrows.

*Larus novaehollandiae* Silver Gull — A small colony of about 50 birds was situated among the "saltbush" near the northern end of the island. One nest contained eggs, several were unoccupied, while flying young and some runners were seen.

*Hydroprogne caspia* Caspian Tern — A pair had a nest with two eggs in December 1981; a pair probably breeds regularly on the island.

#### Factors Affecting Status

Interference by humans is unlikely due to the island's inaccessibility.

No other interference was evident.

#### Other Seabirds Recorded

<i>Egretta sacra</i>	Eastern Reef Egret
<i>Cereopsis novaehollandiae</i>	Cape Barren Goose
<i>Haematopus fuliginosus</i>	Sooty Oystercatcher
<i>Larus pacificus</i>	Pacific Gull
<i>Sterna bergii</i>	Crested Tern

#### Banding

Nil.



- Canning Island from the nearby mainland at Observatory Point (looking south-west). Boxer Island is in the background at right.

Photo: S. G. Lane

#### Bibliography

1. Daw, A. K. (in press), 'Birds of Canning Island, Archipelago of the Recherche, Western Australia', *West. Aust. Nat.*
2. Serventy, D. L. and H. M. Whittell (1948), *A Handbook of the Birds of Western Australia*. Patersons Press Ltd., Perth, W.A.

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