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A Report on Visits to Stanley Island and Flat Island, Western Australia

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In November 1982 visits were made to Stanley Island (35°04'S., 117°09'E.) and Flat Island (34°51'S., 116°00'E.), off the south coast of Western Australia. Stanley Island* off Point Hillier, between Denmark and Walpole, is recorded as a breeding station of the Flesh-footed Shearwater *Puffinus carneipes* (Serventy and Whittell 1967). Flat Island, off Point D'Entrecasteaux, near Windy Harbour, about 100 kilometres further west, appears to be previously unknown ornithologically.

The following details were obtained during the visits to these islands.

Stanley Island

In company with T. Allen, H. Allen and my wife, this island was visited from 07:00 hours to 14:00 hours on 7 November 1982, access being by launch from nearby Parry Beach.

The island is about 700 m long by 350 m wide and rises to some 30 m in height. The vegetation mainly comprises *Poa* tussockland, *Carpobrotus* in rockier places, *Nitraria* (?) in some parts and areas of bare rock, mostly at the northern end.

* Formerly there was also a Stanley Island in the Archipelago of the Recherche; it has now been renamed Whickham Island.

Except for the rocky and shallow soil area on the centre ridge of the island, burrows were well distributed throughout most of the vegetated parts. About 400 "fresh" burrows were searched. Seventeen contained Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor* — three large nestlings, three small chicks, two adults each on two eggs and nine other "adults". At the time of the visit, most shearwaters would have been at sea during daytime, as laying was still two or three weeks away. Nevertheless, 65 burrows were occupied by Flesh-footed Shearwaters. Of these, 45 contained two birds, 15 contained a single bird and five were too deep to determine whether they contained one or two birds.

Four "pairs" of Sooty Oystercatchers *Haematopus fuliginosus* were present. From their behaviour, two pairs almost certainly had a chick or chicks in their territories. An old (recently used) nest with an addled egg in it was found in one territory while a large chick was found hiding among rocks in the other. One "pair" gave no indication of nesting and lack of time prevented a search of the fourth territory.

Twelve Silver Gulls *Larus novaehollandiae* were counted on the island. One of these was a young bird barely able to fly. No nests were seen but a small dead chick was found. Two pairs of Pacific Gulls *L. pacificus* were also present, each with a nest containing two eggs. A pair of Caspian Terns *Hydroprogne caspia* had a large chick near the top of the island.

Two single wings, well separated in different parts of the island were identified as those of White-faced Storm-Petrels *Pelagodroma marina*.

Other species seen on the island were a Rock Parrot *Neophema petrophila*, five Richard's Pipits *Anthus novaeseelandiae* and five Welcome Swallows *Hirundo neoxena*. A recently used swallow's nest was found in a cave.

Flat Island

Accompanied by my wife, this island was visited on 9 November 1982, from 09:30 to 12:00 hours. As the name implies, the island is low and flat, rising only about two or three metres above the high water mark. It is about 600 m long by about 250 m at the widest. There is a rocky shoreline with sandy soil and low vegetation. It has a small sandy beach on the north side but access to this is difficult due to numerous rocks close offshore.

Burrows were well distributed throughout the vegetated area and some 160 were checked. Nineteen "pairs" and five "single" Flesh-footed Shearwaters were found.

Tracks and other signs of the presence of Little Penguins were seen and eventually a broken penguin egg was found in a burrow. No doubt a few pairs breed on the island.

Three pairs of Sooty Oystercatchers were holding territories. A new nest scrape was located in one of these and a nest with half shells nearby was found in another.

Thirty Silver Gulls were counted; two nests with eggs, one large runner and a small dead chick were seen. Three pairs of Pacific Gulls were in territories and one new nest was found. About 50 Crested Terns *Sterna bergii* were roosting on the rocks along the shoreline.

Other birds observed were one White-faced Heron *Ardea novaehollandiae*, about 80 Rock Parrots and four Silvereyes *Zosterops lateralis*.

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