

TOURISTS AND LITTLE PENGUINS *Eudyptula minor* AT MONTAGUE ISLAND, NEW SOUTH WALES

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Little Penguins *Eudyptula minor* have been viewed by tourists at a penguin landing site (Jetty Bay) on Montague Island since 1991. Numbers of penguins coming ashore at Jetty Bay during November in the evening decreased significantly between 1994 and 1998 from approximately 250 to 66 per night, compared with no reduction in numbers coming ashore at a control site 600 m south (~270 to 284 per night). After watching penguins coming ashore at Jetty Bay, tourists walked to their boat along a roadway that was also used by penguins. The decrease in penguin numbers landing at Jetty Bay may be partly attributable to disturbance from tourists, because numbers at the control site and numbers of breeding pairs on the island showed little change. High and dense Kikuyu Grass *Pennisetum clandestinum* near Jetty Bay may also have caused penguin numbers to decrease during this period. In March 2001 a viewing platform and walkway were constructed at Jetty Bay, which enabled visitors to depart from the viewing platform to the tour boat without disturbing penguins. In November 2002, 37 penguins came ashore per night at Jetty Bay compared with 194 at the control site. There was a non-significant increase in numbers of penguins coming ashore at Jetty Bay between 2002 and 2006. The lack of recovery in numbers of penguins coming ashore at Jetty Bay after 2001 may be caused by the lag time for recovery as nesting penguins slowly return to the Jetty Bay area following cessation of disturbance from tourists and/or by the high, dense Kikuyu Grass in the Jetty Bay area. Work is underway to remove kikuyu in this area and replace it with native vegetation. Monitoring numbers of Little Penguins coming ashore in November at both sites should continue in order to determine responses to management actions.