

DISPERSAL OF CRESTED TERNS *Sterna bergii* FROM COLONIES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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The general dispersal of Crested Terns *Sterna bergii*, banded as chicks at breeding colonies in South Australia between 1955 and 1995 is described.

There was a considerable movement of breeding birds between nearby colonies, and even movement between more distant colonies. Most recoveries (78%) were immature one-year and two-year birds, and both immature and mature birds dispersed similarly. There were two patterns of dispersal. Recoveries from birds which were banded at colonies in the Spencer Gulf and the Gulf St. Vincent, were mostly local within these gulfs of South Australia. Those from the other colonies were eastwards along the Victorian coast and then northwards along the eastern coast of south-eastern Australia to southern Queensland. Such long-distance movements, over 2 000 kilometres, were accomplished within three to four months of banding.

The numbers recovered in various zones along the coast indicated that they were not solely a consequence of searching effort by people, but the result of a variety of ecological factors affecting mortality along a 3 500 kilometre coastline.