

SEABIRD ISLANDS

No. 83

Notch Island, Seal Islands Group, Victoria

Location: 38°56'S., 146°40'E.; 19 km east of Wilsons Promontory, Vic.

Status: Crown land, reserved under the Lands Act, 1958.

Description: 10 ha; an elongated granite island about 600 m long by 260 m at its widest point and rising to 38 m high; a valley through the centre gives the island a notched appearance, hence the name. There are two distinct areas dominated by *Poa poiiformis*, which include stands of *Senecio lautus*, *Tetragonia tetragonoides*, and *Pelargonium australe*, and a few stunted *Correa alba*. Much of the island is surrounded by steep cliffs some 20 m high. Large areas of the eastern side are devoid of vegetation because of excreta from roosting shags.

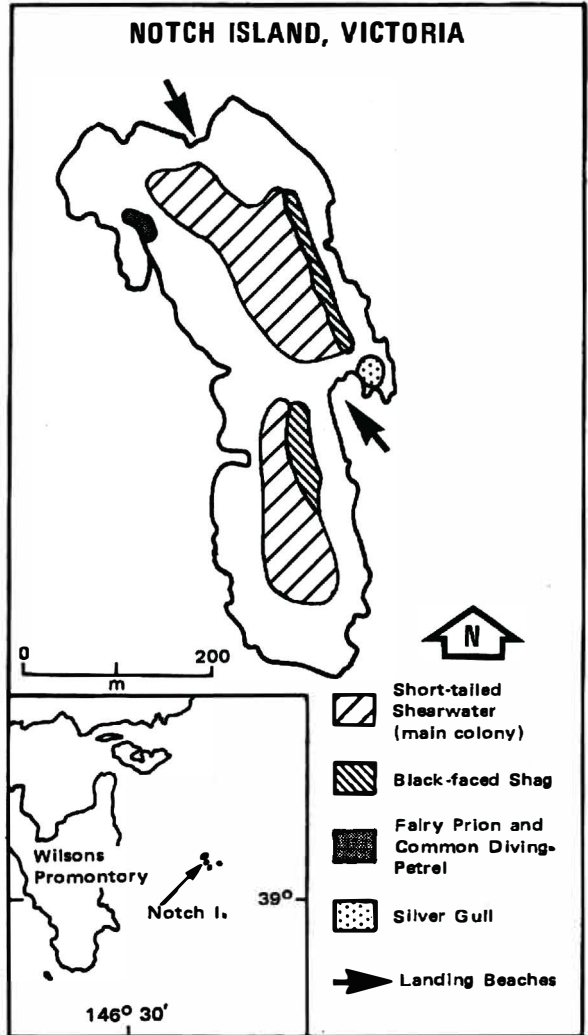
Landing: At the boulder beaches on the northern end and midway along the eastern side. Both require fairly calm conditions for a safe landing.

Ornithological History: Except that D. F. Dorward¹ referred to three pairs of Cape Barren Geese on the island, it is virtually unknown ornithologically. We spent about 1.5 hours on the island on 21 December 1978.

Breeding Seabirds and Status

Eudyptula minor Little Penguin — No count was made but many breed on the island, perhaps at least 500 pairs. We found numerous dead young.

Pachyptila turtur Fairy Prion — A small colony was found in *Carpobrotus* at the north-western corner and one young was found. Two dead adults were also found.



Puffinus tenuirostris Short-tailed Shearwater — Most burrows were found in the *Poa* tussocks. The mean burrow density in the northern colony of 1.6 ha was 0.20/m² (twenty-three 20 m²



• *Notch Island (looking south).*

quadrats) suggesting a population of 3 300 burrows (95% confidence interval 2 700-3 900). The southern colony of 0.97 ha had a higher burrow density (0.28/m², 22 quadrats) and an estimated population of 2 700 burrows (95% confidence interval 1 900-3 400). The island therefore had some 6 000 burrows.

Pelecanoides urinatrix Common Diving-Petrel — An almost fledged juvenile was found near the north-western corner.

Leucocarbo fuscescens Black-faced Shag — Although the breeding season was finished there were at least 20 unfledged young and 100 juveniles at the colony. R. Truscott (pers. comm.) advised that this is a regular nesting site.

Larus novaehollandiae Silver Gull — Five pairs with young were present near the eastern landing.

Larus pacificus Pacific Gull — about 10 pairs were holding territories and two broods of young were seen.

Factors Affecting Status

As there appear to be no predators on the island and landing is difficult, it seems that the seabird populations are not threatened.

Other Seabirds Recorded

Cereopsis novaehollandiae Cape Barren Goose
(15 on 21 Dec. 78).
Haematopus fuliginosus Sooty Oystercatcher

Banding

Nil.



• *Looking towards the southern tip.*



• *Shag colony, north-eastern side.*

Bibliography

1. Dorward, D. F. (1967), 'The status of the Cape Barren Goose *Cereopsis novaehollandiae*', *Bull. int. Comm. Bird Preserv.* 10:56-71.

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