

SEABIRD ISLANDS

No. 107

Woody Island, Archipelago of the Recherche, Western Australia

Location: 33° 58'E., 122° 01'E.; 7 km from the mainland and 15 km south-east of Esperance, W.A.

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

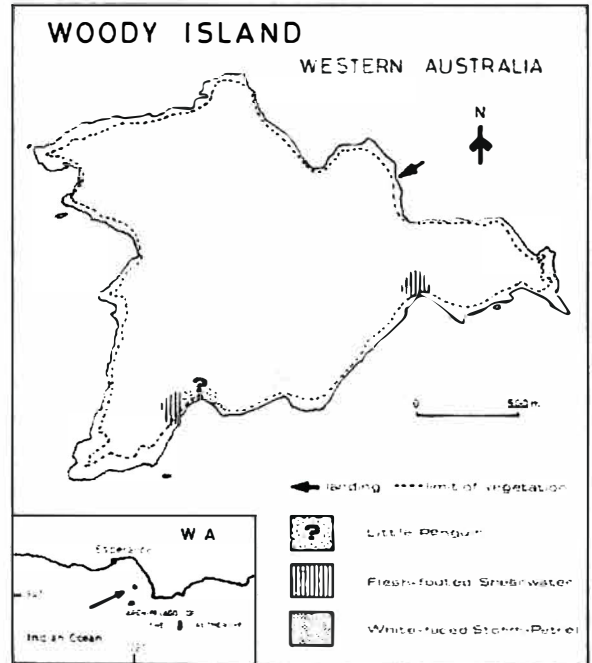
Description: 188 ha; some 2.7 km (SE-NW) and about 2.1 km at the widest, it is comprised of granite-gneiss and rises to 130 m near its centre. In the past the island has suffered greatly from interference, as have many of the islands in Esperance Bay. It has been burnt several times, timber has been cut and sheep were placed on it to graze^{2,8} (also D. Mackenzie pers. comm.). However, apart from a small paddock of wild oats and the presence of numerous weeds, the vegetation has made a rapid recovery. Vegetation comprises six well defined plant communities, including extensive *Eucalyptus* forest and low heath; some 150 plant species have been recorded. Deep soil occurs in places although the eastern half of the island is rocky.

Landing: A wharf, built to provide access for tourists, is used by vessels of trawler size; otherwise landing is onto rocks.

Ornithological History: Earlier ornithological visits to the island were made by A. F. Bassett Hull⁴ on 6 December 1921, D. L. Serventy⁵ on 6 January 1944 and V. N. Serventy⁶ in November 1951. J. Goodsell, A. Tingay and S. R. Tingay conducted a resource survey on the island from 26 October to 3 November 1975³. I. Abbott spent from 3-16 February 1976 on the island.

Breeding Seabirds and Status

Eudyptula minor Little Penguin — None was seen by Abbott but characteristic guano of this species was noted by him on the southern shore. A few may breed on the island.



• *Woody Island (looking south-west).*

Puffinus carneipes Flesh-footed Shearwater — Hull⁴ found only "old traces of long-deserted Mutton Bird burrows . . ." while V. N. Serventy⁶ recorded "A few burrows." Fewer than 100 burrows were found by Abbott on the southern coast, under Moonah trees towards the south-western end, and also towards the south-eastern end. Estimated 80 breeding pairs (1976).



• View of the landing place, showing part of the north-east side of the island.



• The north coast of the eastern part of the island.

Pelagodroma marina White-faced Storm-Petrel — D. L. Serventy² found a number of burrows of this species on the island and the few opened were all unoccupied. Abbott found seven or eight burrows on the south coast. A few probably breed regularly on the island.

Larus pacificus Pacific Gull — Recorded breeding⁷ but no details available. One or two pairs may breed on the island occasionally.

Factors Affecting Status

Mr D. Mackenzie has permission from the W.A. Wildlife Authority to take tourists to the island on one-day picnicking trips. The tourists generally do not venture far from the paths and cleared areas. No large *Egernia* lizard occurs but the Black Rat *Rattus rattus* is common and no doubt predated eggs. Some Grey Kangaroos *Macropus fuliginosus* occur¹ (<5 in 1975).

Other Seabirds Recorded

<i>Leucocarbo fuscescens</i>	Black-faced Shag
<i>Cereopsis novaehollandiae</i>	Cape Barren Goose
<i>Haematopus fuliginosus</i>	Sooty Oystercatcher
<i>Larus novaehollandiae</i>	Silver Gull
<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Caspian Tern

Banding

Nil.

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