

Further Notes on Visits to Islands of the South Coast of Western Australia

S. G. LANE

In 1981 and 1982 I made 33 visits to 23 islands off the south coast of Western Australia to obtain details of breeding seabirds. Appendix I lists the islands visited and the dates of each visit. Much of the information obtained during the 1981 visits has been published in various papers. A list (Appendix II) sets out the details of these, and also subsequent papers covering some of the 1982 visits.

This paper summarises information obtained during the visits, most of which has not previously been covered. Special mention is made of new or confirmed seabird breeding records, while notes on all birds observed on the islands are included.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Little Penguin *Eudyptula minor*

Found breeding in small numbers on most islands; none recorded on Nares, Woody, Gull Rock and Sandy. Not previously recorded on Hood (1 chick, 1 adult), Stanley (adults on eggs and chicks — see App. II vii) and Flat (broken egg in burrow — see App. II vii). Breeding confirmed on Lorraine (adult on 2 eggs, 4 adults in burrows), Figure of Eight (1 adult with 2 chicks, 3 adults, 1 large nestling dead) and Michaelmas (1 adult on 2 eggs, 1 adult on chick). Also found on Coffin (8 occupied burrows with adults on eggs, small chicks and 2 large nestlings), Seal (4 burrows — adults with chicks) and Mistaken (in 1981 about 70 “fresh” or occupied burrows; 5 contained an adult on eggs and a number contained one or two adults. In 1982, 1 adult with 2 large chicks, 1 adult on 2 eggs, 1 large chick and 1 adult). On Charley, one well-used burrow was found but no birds were seen.

Great-winged Petrel *Pterodroma macroptera*

Breeding on Hood (15 large nestlings, 2 adults), Coffin (41 nestlings in 1981; 92 nestlings in 1982) and Gull Rock (2 nestlings and 2 addled eggs in 1981; 1 nestling in 1982). On Hood Island over 250 burrows were searched. The remains of eight nestlings and five sets of wings were also found. Three Australian Ravens *Corvus coronoides* were seen pulling a large nestling from a shallow burrow; the nestling was killed and partly eaten before the ravens could be driven off. On Coffin Island about 400 burrows were checked during each visit; in 1982, one dead adult and the remains of four nestlings were also found.

Flesh-footed Shearwater *Puffinus carneipes*

Found in burrows on the following islands: Woody (14), Charley (21), Coffin (12), Michaelmas (14), Seal (10), Stanley (104 — see App. II vii), Sandy (20 in 1981; 27 in 1982) and Flat (48 — see App. II vii). These birds are not recorded breeding on Hood Island and the only evidence seen during the visit to that island was an old skull. On Woody (see Abbott 1981), additional breeding areas were found on the south-eastern side towards the centre of the island. Burrows were well distributed in this area under the thick vegetation which made access to them difficult. On Michaelmas (see Abbott 1978) an additional breeding location was found on the north-eastern side. Four adults were found in 35 “fresh” burrows searched. During the 1981 visit to Seal Island, about 30 burrows which appeared to have been freshly dug, were found among a grass patch on the southern side. No birds were present at the time. However, in 1982 these burrows were searched again; three contained two adults in each and two contained an adult in each. Two other burrows contained a bird or birds but these were too deep to be extracted. Flesh-footed Shearwaters were not found on Figure of Eight Island during either visit (see App. II v).

Short-tailed Shearwater *P. tenuirostris*

Found only on Figure of Eight Island. Some 150 burrows were checked in 1981 and 19 birds were found (see App. II ii). In 1982, about 100 burrows were checked and 47 adults were found, all but two incubating an egg (Lane, in Press).

Little Shearwater *P. assimilis*

On Hood Island a dead nestling and a skull were the only evidence found. On Figure of Eight Island, three dead birds were found among recently-used burrows. Not previously recorded breeding on Coffin Island where, in 1982, a dead adult and a large nestling, almost ready to depart, were found.

White-faced Storm-Petrel *Pelagodroma marina*

Evidence found only on Nares (3 fresh burrows), Lorraine (147 burrows checked; 53 contained a bird on an egg, 2 contained a cold egg, 2 contained a broken egg, 52 were too deep to check and 38 were empty), Woody

(4 fresh burrows) and Stanley (remains of one or two birds, probably discarded by a predator).

Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*

One seen on Green Island, Oyster Harbour, Albany in 1981.

Black-faced Shag *Leucocarbo fuscescens*

One seen on Woody and one on Gull Rock.

Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

One seen on Gull Rock.

Pied Cormorant *P. varius*

One seen on Gull Rock.

Little Pied Cormorant *P. melanoleucos*

One on Gull Rock in 1981.

White-faced Heron *Ardea novaehollandiae*

One seen on Flat Island.

Cape Barren Goose *Cereopsis novaehollandiae*

Seen on Lorraine (2), Hood (1 adult and 4 large young), Woody (3), Charley (8 including 3 flying young; 2 old nests) and Figure of Eight (9).

White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*

Seen on Hood (1) and Charley (1).

Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax*

Seen only on Michaelmas (1).

Brown Falcon *Falco berigora*

One seen on Breaksea in 1981.

Australian Kestrel *Falco cenchroides*

Seen on Hood (3) and Charley (1).

Swamp Quail *Coturnix ypsilophorus*

Seen on Hood (1), Charley (3) and Figure of Eight (3).

Pied Oystercatcher *Haematopus longirostris*

On Gull Rock a pair had a nest with one egg in 1981, and one seen in 1982. On Breaksea (2 in 1981) and Sandy (2).

Sooty Oystercatcher *H. fuliginosus*

Seen on Lorraine (4), Hood (4), Woody (2) Charley (2; nest with 2 eggs), Figure of Eight (4), Coffin (5 adults and 1 small chick), Michaelmas (3), Gull Rock (2; nest with 2 eggs in 1981), Seal (2; nest with 2 eggs), Mistaken (2; nest with 2 eggs) and Stanley (8; nest with addled egg; large chick).

Red-capped Plover *Charadrius ruficapillus*

Found only on Sandy (2; nest with 2 eggs).

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Seen only on Sandy (5 in 1981).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

One on Figure of Eight.

Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos*

One on Coffin (1981) and one on Mistaken.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*

Seven on Sandy (1981).

Silver Gull *Larus novaehollandiae*

Recorded on all islands but Nares. Nesting on Lorraine (15; 3 nests with eggs and chicks), Charley (60; 12 nests with eggs, 7 new nests), Coffin (60 in 1981; new nests through to flying young), Gull Rock (c200 in 1981 and c150 in 1982; each year with new nests through

to flying young), Seal (c80 in 1981 and c200 in 1982; nests with eggs, chicks and runners on each visit), Stanley (12; one young barely able to fly and one dead chick), Flat (30; 2 nests with eggs, one large runner, one dead chick) and Green (c300 in 1981 with nests at all stages).

Pacific Gull *L. pacificus*

Recorded on Nares (1), Lorraine (4), Hood (15), Woody (6), Charley (9), Figure of Eight (7), Coffin (5), Gull Rock (4 in 1981), Mistaken (1 in 1981), Stanley (4) and Flat (6). Nesting on Lorraine (1 nest with 2 eggs), Woody (1 nest with 2 eggs), Coffin (2 nests; 2 eggs, 1 egg and 1 chick), Stanley (2 nests each with 2 eggs) and Flat (1 new nest).

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia*

Recorded on Lorraine (3), Charley (2), Coffin (2 in 1981), Gull Rock (6 in 1981, 3 in 1982), Stanley (3) and Sandy (1 in both 1981 and 1982). Nesting on Lorraine (1 egg), Coffin (1 egg), Gull Rock (3 nests in 1981 — 2 chicks, 1 egg, 2 eggs; 1 nest in 1982 — and addled egg and 1 chick) and Stanley (1 chick).

Fairy Tern *Sterna nereis*

Recorded only on Sandy Island where 91 nests with eggs were counted (see App. I vi).

Crested Tern *Sterna bergii*

Recorded only on Coffin (30 in 1981, 1 in 1982), Breaksea (1 in 1981), Gull Rock (10 in 1981), Seal (c20) and Flat (c50).

Brush Bronzewing *Phaps elegans*

One seen on each of Woody, Coffin (1981) and Mistaken (1981).

Rock Parrot *Neophema petrophila*

Seen on Lorraine (17), Hood (3), Charley (2), Figure of Eight (18), Coffin (c30 in 1981, 20 in 1982), Gull Rock (8 in 1981, 5 in 1982), Seal (7 in 1981, 2 in 1982), Green (4 in 1981), Stanley (1), Sandy (c40 in 1981, 5 in 1982) and Flat (c80). Nesting on Gull Rock (1 nest with 4 eggs in 1981) and Green (1 nest with 1 egg in 1981).

Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena*

Recorded on Lorraine (7), Hood (7), Woody (25), Charley (14), Figure of Eight (27), Coffin (7), Michaelmas (4), Stanley (5) and Sandy (a few in 1981).

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

Seen only on Stanley (5).

Golden Whistler *Pachycephala pectoralis*

Seen only on Woody (3) and Michaelmas (1).

Grey Fantail *Rhipidura fuliginosa*

Seen only on Michaelmas (1).

White-browed Scrubwren *Sericornis frontalis*

Seen only on Mistaken (2 each visit).

Singing Honeyeater *Lichenostomus virescens*

Recorded on Lorraine (3), Hood (19), Woody (5), Charley (18) and Figure of Eight (c40 in 1981; 24 in 1982). On Figure of Eight in 1981, an adult was feeding a fledgling able to fly only a few metres at a time.

New Holland Honeyeater *Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*
Seen only on Woody (9).

Silvereye *Zosterops lateralis*
Seen on Woody (19), Coffin (a few in 1981), Mistaken (5 in 1981), Sandy (a few in 1981; 4 in 1982) and Flat (4).

Grey Currawong *Strepera versicolor*
Seen only on Mistaken (2 in 1981).

Australian Raven *Corvus coronoides*
Seen on Lorraine (2), Hood (5), Woody (3), Charley (1) and Sandy (3).

Acknowledgements

Once again I thank those who assisted with the surveys and provided the water transport. I also thank the Director, National Parks and Wildlife Service (WA) for permission to visit the island reserves.

References

(see also Appendix II)

- Abbott, I. (1978), 'Seabird Islands No. 56, Michaelmas Island, King George Sound, Western Australia', *Corella* 2(2): 26-27.
- Abbott, I. (1981), 'Seabird Islands No. 107, Woody Island, Archipelago of the Recherche, Western Australia', *Corella* 5(3): 62-63.
- Lane, S. G. (in Press), 'Further Notes on the Short-tailed Shearwater in Western Australia', *Australasian Seabird Gp. Newsl.*

S. G. Lane,
Lot 6 Fairview Road, Moonee,
via Coffs Harbour, N.S.W. 2450.

APPENDIX I

Islands visited by me off the south coast of Western Australia in 1981 and 1982, with dates of visits for each. The islands indicated by an * are not included in the detail of this report as they have been dealt with previously.

Archipelago of the Recherche			
Nares I.	2.11.81	23.10.82	
Lorraine I.	2.11.81	28.10.82	3.12.82
Ram I.*	11.11.81		
MacKenzie I.*	9.11.81		
Hood I.		2.11.82	
Frederick I.*	30.10.81		
Woody I.		26.10.82	
Remark I.*	28-30.10.81		
(satellite islet)	10.11.81		
Long I.*	10.11.81		
Cull I.*	4.11.81		
Charley I.		21.10.82	
Observatory I.*	24.9.81		
Figure of Eight I.	1.11.81	7.12.82	
Two People Bay			
Coffin I.	4.10.81	5.11.82	
King George Sound			
Breaksea I.	3.10.81		
Michaelmas I.		4.11.82	
Gull Rock	3.10.81	4.11.82	
Seal I.	3.10.81	4.11.82	
Mistaken I.	3.10.81	4.11.82	
Oyster Harbour			
Green I.	3.10.81		
Off Point Hillier (between Denmark and Walpole)			
Stanley I.		7.11.82	
Off Point D'Entrecasteaux (Windy Harbour)			
Sandy I.	7.10.81	9.11.82	
Flat I.		9.11.82	

APPENDIX II

Summary of papers covering visits made by me to islands off the south coast of Western Australia in 1981 and 1982.

- i. Avifauna of islands of Esperance, Western Australia. *Corella* 6(2): 37-39, June 82.
- ii. A visit to Sandy Island, Western Australia. *West. Aust. Nat.* 15(3): 76, July 82.
- iii. Seabird Islands. *Corella* 6(3), Aug. 82.

No. 114	Nares I.	pp. 51-52.
No. 115	Lorraine I.	pp. 53-54.
No. 116	Ram I.	pp. 55-56.
No. 117	MacKenzie I.	pp. 57-58.
No. 119	Frederick I.	pp. 61-62.
No. 121	Remark I.	pp. 65-66.
No. 122	Long I.	pp. 67-68.
No. 123	Cull I.	pp. 69-70.
No. 124	Observatory I.	pp. 71-72.
No. 126	Figure of Eight I.	pp. 75-76.
- iv. Short-tailed Shearwater on Figure of Eight Island, Archipelago of the Recherche, Western Australia. *Emu* 83(1): 37, March 1983.
- v. Further notes on the Short-tailed Shearwater in Western Australia. *Australasian Seabird Gp. Newsl.* (in press).
- vi. Nesting of the Fairy Tern along the south coast of Western Australia. *Aust. Bird Watcher* (in press).
- vii. A report on visits to Stanley and Flat Islands, Western Australia. *Corella* 8(3): 69-70, September, 1984.