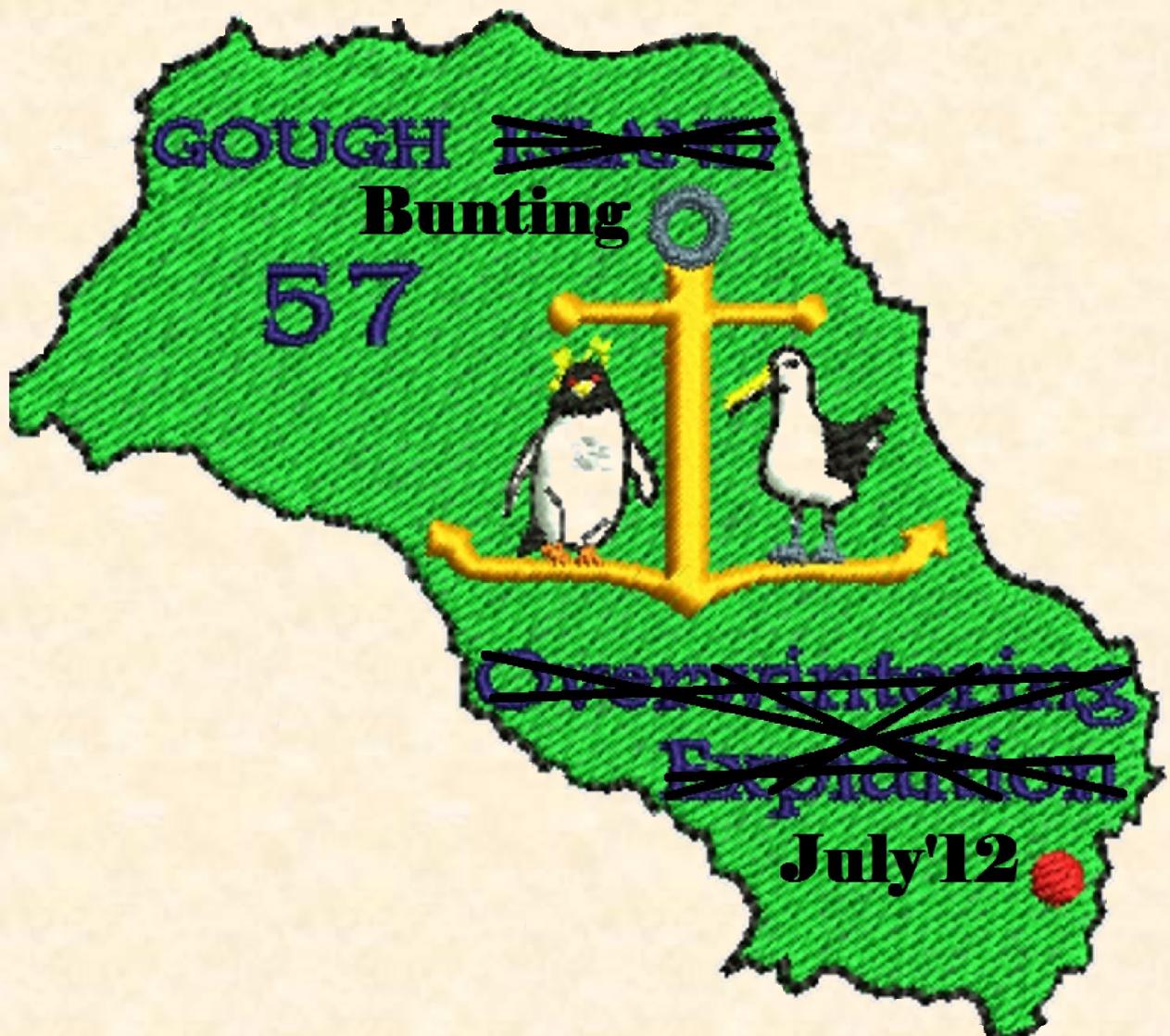


Gough



Index:

1. Preparing for new arrivals
2. A Whale and Spider Tale
3. The Goff's Part 7
4. From the Lab
5. A To Savour every moment
6. Mon Anglais
7. Waling the walk
8. I have Grown
9. Down the Rabbit Hole
10. Weather Stats

Preparing for new arrivals

The Team is preparing for new arrivals birds, G58, and all the other people coming for takeover. I can see that the team is in mixed emotions about leaving the Island. Going to sleep with the sounds of the bird life at night, waking with sun's ray's pushing past clouds in the morning is going to missed in all our hearts. Being able to take a walk in the vast beauty of this place is going to be no-more. Then it's going home to all our family and friends we haven't see in a year, seeing their happy smile's on our return. It brings a tear to my eye to see us all being split emotionally wanting to stay wanting to go home. They say all good things need to come to a end. The thing, I think we need to keep in mind if we don't leave we can't take on new experiences, new journeys. But we will always have Gough Island in the depths of our mind.

Sunette



A Whale and Spider tale.

This month we were lucky enough to have a great sighting of a whale at Gough. It is seldom that they visit the Island and then usually not close inshore. I was standing on the catwalk in front of the base when I spotted a few puffs of mist on the ocean. There she blows! I said to myself as the old whalers would and rushed into base to call the other team members for a look at our visitors.

Lucky for us one whale decided to swim right up to the island and we could observe it as it passed less than 50 meters in front of crane point. Just a pity that in all the hurry to get my telescope up I forgot to take my camera down for a photo and the telescope which I bought for star gazing was of no use because the whale was too close. We are also not sure exactly what type of whale it was and I must guess that it could be a Southern Right Whale (*Eubalaena Australis*).

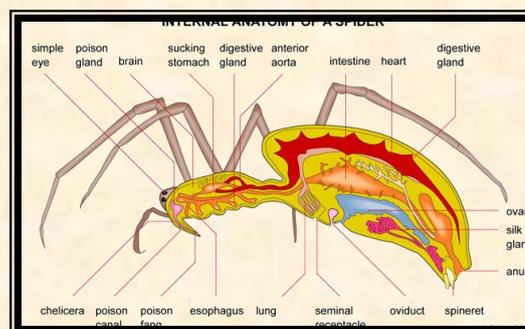
But in any case, I am sure all of you have had the opportunity to spot a whale or two in your lives so I want to dedicate this article to the smallest but most scariest of creatures that lives in Gough base. I will call it the Gough base spider for now. I am not easily scared as I usually live on a farm between a lot of wild creatures as well as very poisonous snakes which I encounter on a weekly basis. But if there is one creature that scares the daylight out of me it must surely be a spider. The thing about spiders is that you cannot look them in the eye like you could a snake. It would take the whole Gough team to look one spider in the eye as it has 8 eyes and each of those could be wandering and not giving you its full attention and might be surveying the rest of your anatomy to establish a soft spot where it can apply some mischief.



Even if it walks away from you it is still looking backward, upwards and on the periphery. You might think yourself to be safe because the spider has only short legs and can only travel very slowly over surfaces or wait in ambush behind your desk, you would be mistaking because some are very acrobatic creatures that can jump, bungee jump, abseil and don't forget the fact that some species can fly. So if Mr spider decides he wants to visit the other side of the Island or the other side of the world for that matter, all it has to do is wait for a nice day with some thermal activity, get onto a reed, let out a few centimetres of sail and off he goes, soaring through the sky to whichever downwind destination pleases him. And then most of them can even walk on water. I mean. Have a heart.

I have only encountered one type of spider so far at Gough and I did not know about any research that has been done on it on the Island. I also needed a photo of one so it's off to the Bird lab now to borrow a microscope and find out what information can be gained from talking to the scientists. Now how does a totally arachnophobic person take a photo of a spider? Well. Very carefully I suppose.

Now I realised that I was mistaking by suggesting that a study should be made of the flies at Gough in last month's article. I stumbled on a scientific study and the resulting book: *Gough Island. A Natural History* by Christine Hanel, Steven L Chown and Kevin J Gaston with a detailed explanation of most of the Invertebrates on the island but very little information about the spiders. There is however information on the types of Arachnids, and thus a few spider species, that occur in the book: *Field guide to the animals and plants of Tristan da Cunha and Gough Island* edited by Peter Ryan, but alas no photos or pictures of spiders. So sorry, I am afraid a spider or two must be hurt in compiling this article as they don't seem to be very keen to be photographed while they are still alive. And have you ever tried taking a photo of a small running spider with a digital camera through a microscope, quite a daunting task



I had to do a bit of surfing on the net *wiki* to get an idea of the anatomy of a spider. And the fact that they only have simple eyes and cannot see properly, almost convinced me of their innocence although I am still sceptic and if you are lucky enough you might just run into a Button spider or the very venomous Australian Red-backed spider with neurotoxic venom. An Australian outback website however suggests that not many people die of these bites and that Ice is a good antidote if applied to the wound. Not taken with brandy as is the custom on the Island. So here is some information of the Anatomy of a spider which I gained from *wiki* on the internet and a photo or two that will explain why I will rather share the ocean with one of our bigger buddies than being housed alongside the tiny ones.

Now why exactly did I choose this topic again? Oh je. Maybe it is because I cannot sleep at night anymore. Suppose this will help!

Internal anatomy of a spider: arthropod animal with eight legs and an unsegmented body.

Simple eye: non-complex sight organ of a spider.

Poison gland: venom-producing glandular organ of a spider.

Brain: seat of the mental capacities of a spider.

Sucking stomach: sucking part of the digestive tract.

Digestive gland: glandular organ that produces digestive enzymes.

Anterior aorta: first part of the blood vessel that carries the blood from the heart to the organs.

Intestine: last part of the digestive tract.

Heart: blood-pumping organ.

Ovary: egg-producing reproductive organ.

Silk glands: silk-producing glandular organ.

Anus: exit of the digestive tract.

Spinneret: opening through which the spider emits its silk.

Oviduct: passage that carries the eggs.

Seminal receptacle: part of the spider that receives semen.

Lung: respiratory organ of a spider.

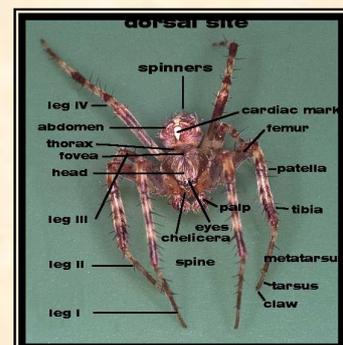
Oesophagus: first part of the digestive tract.

Poison fang: hard structure with which the spider injects venom.

Poison canal: passage that carries venom.

Chelicerae: pair of venomous hooks on the spider's head.

Leo



THE GOFF'S

Cold, rain and wind has become the norm on the little island of Goff in the middle of the Great Lake. With the weather being what it is, the Goff's have been eating and sleeping more than usual, and this seems to cause their clothes to shrink more and more.

Tall was really excited a week or two ago, as he got to experience Gonydale for the first time. Going out into the field with the expert guide Zoom it was a dream come true for Tall. Tall is normally stuck in the house making sure all the rain, wind and sunshine is packaged correctly for the people in the real world. Princess has been entering data about her feathered friends for so long, that Techie thinks she's going to run out of data or get square eyes from staring at the screen for so long. Princess has not realized yet that all work and no play, makes for a grumpy Goff.

Redcross and Techie have been busy in the garden for a fair bit now, the winding pathways started getting a bit over grown. In the morning's rain or sun, they have been trimming the grass and reeds and then sweeping the cobble stone pathways clean. The winding little pathways now look like they belong in a fairy tale, which is what Goff is, as Techie says they have their own special Princess and so many feathered friends. Redcross and Techie always have fun while working, with cut grass being made into "snow balls" flying to and fro. Showers are always a must after they have been working as mud and grass clippings seem to get in everywhere. Short and Mopp are going to run out of movies soon, as they spend every evening watching something new till the wee hours. With the movies mid night snacks become an additional pastime, Mopp's clothes seem to be shrinking day by day.

Grandad spends most of his time in his computer room, sorting and arranging things for the people in the real world, many days the Goff's only see Grandad in the evenings. Winter time on Goff slows time down, but expands the waist line, fortunately Spring is approaching and many feathered friends will be returning, then the Goff's will be out and about more often.

From the Lab - by Karen & Sylvain

As July marks the end of the Atlantic Petrel laying period (15th June to 21st July), we started to check and scope their burrows to estimate breeder density and identify breeding burrows for breeding success monitoring. Burrow-scoping was more difficult than for great shearwaters, burrows being narrower, deeper and more winding. However, we counted, characterized and scoped all the burrows within one third of the 43 monitoring quadrates, resulting in more than 200 checking and the observation of more than 80 adults apparently incubating an egg. We also started to mark burrows that will be visited 2-3 further times until the beginning of the fledging period (early December) in order to estimate the breeding success. Finally, we recovered and deployed some geolocators. Like the Tristan Albatross, the Atlantic Petrel is an emblematic seabird species of Gough as it breeds almost only on this island since black rats have almost certainly extirpated the less than 100 pairs that bred on Tristan. The breeding population size on Gough is huge with about 1.8 million pairs. However, the species is endangered because of its limited breeding range and its low productivity (annual breeding success averages < 25 %) mainly due to mouse predation on chicks. Moreover, annual adult survival has never been estimated but it could be less than the 93 % expected for such a gadfly petrel given the huge number of carcasses that we find on the island probably resulting from Skua predation.

This month, Tristan Albatross chicks have not been spared by mice although they reached almost their maximum size. So we recorded again about 20 failures, about the half occurring in the Hummocks where we found a chick in only 40 % of nests we marked in January. In addition to mouse attacks, we found that Tristan Albatross chicks have to face harassment from giant petrels.

Atlantic Petrel
incubating in its
burrow



Atlantic petrel
burrow marked
for breeding
monitoring



It was known that Giant Petrels seized the opportunity of an easy meal preying upon chicks wounded and weakened by mouse attacks. However, we observed two Giant Petrels harassing a healthy and vigorous chick bravely defending itself. Unfortunately, we can expect that sometimes Petrels win, particularly when they are more numerous, as it has been observed on Marion Island.

The seabird life is still low on the island as several species started to return but numbers of individuals are far from their maximum. Soft-plumaged Petrels already started to come back. Common Diving Petrels are more and more garrulous at night. Broad-billed Prions are apparently mating and are noisy all night long. We know that Great-Winged Petrels and Little Shearwaters are here even if we have not seen them yet. Atlantic and Grey Petrels are obviously still in numbers on the island. We have seen some individuals of the elegant White-faced Storm Petrel. Next month will be prolific with the long-awaited return of Rockhopper Penguins, Yellow-nosed Albatrosses and Great Shearwaters, and maybe, if they are in a hurry to come back and do it in advance, we will be gratified by the presence of some Sooty Albatrosses...

Broad-billed Prion



White-faced Storm Petrel



Diving Petrel



Sylvain scoping
an Atlantic
Petrel burrow



Savourer chaque instant / Too savour every moment - by Karen

On s'entend dire par nos proches pour nous encourager pour notre fin de séjour : « Moins de 2 mois encore d'isolement. Moins de 3 mois et vous nous revenez ». Mais voilà, on n'a pas forcément envie de rentrer... Quand le 14 juillet est passé, un gros pincement au cœur s'est installé et ce n'était pas parce que je ratais le défilé du 14 juillet, journée nationale en France. Non, non ! C'était parce que je réalisais que dans 2 mois, l'Agulhas II devrait arriver... Depuis lors ce pincement n'est pas parti et il s'accompagne d'une petite déprime. On se dit alors qu'il faut profiter de chaque moment restant ICI, mais ce n'est pas évident quand tout nous rappelle que c'est bientôt la fin et que les choses se précipitent : inventaire du matériel à faire, grand nettoyage de la base, marquage des terriers en sachant que ce ne sera pas nous qui finirons le suivi, programmation du lancement de certains suivis pour nos successeurs mais aussi candidatures pour du travail ou des financements à notre retour...

Our close relations say to encourage us for the end of our stay: "Only 2 months of isolation to go. Only 3 months to go before your come back". But, what if we do not want to go "home"? On the 14th of July, I felt a twinge of sorrow and it was not because I was missing the parade of the French National Day. Really not! It was because I realized that in 2 months Agulhas II will arrive... Since that moment, the twinge has still been there and is now accompanied with the blues. So, you say to yourself that you must enjoy every remaining moment HERE, but it is not so easy when everything reminds you that it is the end soon and when things start to happen in a great rush: material stocktaking, thorough base cleanup, burrow marking knowing that other persons will finish the monitoring, planning of some monitoring beginnings for your successors, but also applications for a job or for funding for your return...

Alors on essaie de mettre en lumière les « avantages » de notre départ. A nous famille, amis et autres compagnons qui nous attendent ! A nous fruits et légumes frais, les plats qu'on aime mais qu'on ne peut pas préparer sur l'île, nos friandises préférées ! A nous équitation, kayak, natation, cinéma et autres loisirs qu'on affectionne ! Mais voila, désolée, ça ne suffit pas... Pour le moment, l'envie de rester est plus grande... Je vois s'égrener les jours et la mélancolie grandir. J'aime cette île avec ses courbes, ses roches, sa végétation, sa côte, ses montagnes, ses rivières, cascades, tourbières... J'adore ses oiseaux, les ambiances diurnes et nocturnes qu'ils créent, leurs comportements, leurs bruits, leurs odeurs... Je suis toujours surprise par la beauté « goughienne » quand le brouillard se déchire et que les rayons de soleil dorés illuminent les monts et plaines, quand les éléments se déchaînent le vent faisant trembler la base, la pluie s'abattant soudainement, le tonnerre tonnante, les éclairs déchirant le ciel assombri de nuages, la houle s'écrasant sur la côte, et quand le « ciel » nous offre une nuit étoilée qu'aucune lumière de la civilisation ne vient parasiter. Tout n'est pas facile ici. Il faut bien souvent le mériter pour pouvoir profiter de ces beautés. Mais ça en vaut la peine !

So we try to highlight the "advantages" of our depart. To us family, friends and other companions who are waiting for us! To us fresh fruits and vegetables, the courses that we like but that we cannot cook on Gough, our favourite sweets! To us horse riding, kayaking, swimming, cinema and other entertainments we are fond of! But, sorry, it is not sufficient... For the moment, the desire to stay is bigger... Days fall one by one and melancholy increases. I like this Island with its curves, its rocks, its vegetation, its coast, its mountain, its rivers, waterfalls, ponds... I love its birds, night and day atmospheres they create, their behaviours, their noises, their odours... I'm still surprised by the island magnificence when the mist breaks up and golden sun rays illuminate mounts and plains, when elements rage furiously the wind shaking the base, the rain beating down suddenly, the thunder rumbling, the lightning piercing the sky darkened by clouds, the swell crushing on the coast, and when the "sky" offers us a starry night without civilisation light interference. Almost nothing is easy here. We generally have to deserve to enjoy these beauties. But it is worth it!

Mon anglais

As my stay on Gough is ending I remember my first sentence during my interview to get the job: « *My English could be improved by a long stay with English speaking people* ». Indeed, this is one of the **benefits** gained from this experience but not as expected. Why? (because **wildlife** does not speak English.) This answer should meet with **total disapproval**. Actually I should have gotten the "learning **attitude**", writing every day the sentences I learned, the forms used to ask something... **If** I have improved my **vocabulary**, my English is still rough and **badly needs** a serious teaching. Learning a language has never been my **favourite** challenge but I like **cosmopolitan** atmospheres as I met **here**. How **can** one learn easily a new language? **Start** learning language as young as possible, may be as soon as you are **due** as a baby. Does the "language gene" exist? If it does, the **gene therapy** could be an efficient way to improve one's language learning abilities even if it would be a **daunting** task! No, I **have a preference** for conversations and movies, both happening many times on Gough. All the things we miss, we get in movies and conversations as well. Fruits, vegetables, fresh food and the **like** are undoubtedly the most recurrent, and the hardest to watch. When a man is **shot down**, we know that is not true, but if he was eating a grapefruit a few second before, the latest was a real one! Fortunately we haven't got **commercial breaks**... Only one **interlude** around nine, for the metkassie duties. Thanks to that, I can ask who the hero is and learn who took the **role of** the wicked. But what I would like to watch on the wide screen in the TV room is a western with the stretches of the desert, the train with its **tender** and the **manoeuvre** of the cavalry. **Like so**, the base shackled on its **piles** by the wind could make us feel the motions in the train. In a few months, when I will take the train for the first time again, I would have just to close my eyes and feel me in the Gough base again. I hope I'm not a **misery**; even if I can't help **rehashing** we will soon leave this island. That is **par for the course**... But I can't **put** my poor English **down to** this beguiling island. I should open my dictionary more often as I did this evening to draw lots for 41 words or expressions to put in my newsletter...

Sylvain

Walking the walk and talking the talk

The month started with the usual. I kept going on with my learning of the languages. I finally realised that I might have loaded a bit too much hay on my fork. Doing three languages at once is a lot of work. To try and memorise that amount of data and not having someone to talk to makes it feel like I am not progressing. I have tried to get myself into a cardio mode for all the weight that I have gained but it is slowly and I mean very slowly coming along. I jog for about 5 minutes and then it feels like I have to lie down. Hopefully I will get into it very soon want to get back to exercising hard.

I had a nice trip to Gonydale and Albatross plain with Sylvain and Nkoane. We left the morning around 7 o'clock with our headlamps on. It was still bit dark outside even though the sun was busy rising. Sylvain and Nkoane set a nice and easy pace, because they had to take me into account for not being as island fit as they are. As per usual the road was all slips and trips, stumbles and tumbles and even some places landing on your chest.



Then nice thing is that the vegetation is so thick you don't get hurt. I had to ask the guys to hold up a couple of times especially on the way up the side of the hill it felt like my legs want to just drop me right there. When we reached Gonydale something happened I didn't expect because the hardest part was done. In the soft grassy part as you basically start Gonydale I injured my right knee. I decided, no way I came that far I was not going to stop I am going to enjoy myself. We walked further on to Albatross plain and I decided instead of heading down and coming up again with my leg I sat against the side of a hill at Albatross plain and watched the two guys work.

On the way back we took some pictures at a big square rock with a nice view of the ocean in the background. As we went through Gonydale again on our way back we had something to eat quickly and set off for home. I am really glad I got the opportunity to experience it even with the sore knee I don't mind it was all worth it. The beauty and splendour of Gough is just something you have to see and experience yourself someone telling you about it just does not cut it. So two months left till take over so we are busy cleaning in and around the base so we keep busy a bit and hopefully the time does not pass to quickly because I still really enjoy it here. Freedom and nothing but nature around you, who can ask for more?

Readying for a busy couple of months ahead, so until next time:

さようなら - **Goodbye**

Gerard



I have grown

One more year added on my journey in this life but I know I've grown more as a person, mentally and spiritually. It's amazing what this place can do to one's thinking and spiritual level. I've also learned so much from the other team members to a point where I'd ask myself how much I've known prior to this expedition

For obvious reasons I've never had birthday parties at home and when it happens on the island it's always special. That being the case I would like to thank those who went out of their way to make it special and memorable, G57, DEA personnel and friends through Facebook and phone calls.

When a friend introduced me to the island lifestyle he told me, "you will learn a lot and grow as a person once you do these expeditions". Now I've come to realize that he was definitely right. When I started training at the South African Weather Service back in 2007 I felt clueless even though I've always loved reading and learned a lot through books, magazines and newspapers. The voyage down here was a totally new thing for me and it felt like a dream. Even today when I play the music I listened to in the cabin it still takes me back to relive that dream all over again. Music has always played a very important role in my life, reminding me of people and places.

I've also learned that every expedition is different, giving one the opportunity for a different experience. The peace and serenity that this beautiful place in the middle of the ocean far away from everything affords us the opportunity to look deep into ourselves, appreciate nature as well as the people around us and even the smallest things. With our work there's never a dull moment here on Gough as the weather changes within a very short space of time. Since May we've been experiencing a lot of rainfall, occasionally reporting moderate to heavy rain. We've seen a lot of cumulus clouds bringing showers; we even had lightning and thunder, rare occurrence here on Gough. What I also find more fascinating is when one goes out to do an observation just before 07:00 to find it darker outside than it was an hour ago. Cloud cover, with or without precipitation plays a major role in this regard.

The birds are always amazing to see. At the moment we see and hear a lot of Prions as it's the start of their breeding season.



Sometimes one or two will fly into you while out at the Met camp when you have a head lamp on whilst out for the first observation of the day. The Skuas are also making some noise as they are starting to mark territories for their breeding season. The Tristan Albatross chicks are getting bigger and this month all three met-kassies have had the opportunity to go check them out. Firstly, Boy and I joined Sylvain to Albatross Plain. We left the base around 7:00 and it wasn't yet clear enough outside and head lamps were only switched off at Swemgat after 15 minutes of walking. It was a very beautiful day, partly cloudy with very light wind. We took it slowly to accommodate Boy as this was his first time going that side of Gonydale. We arrived at Gonydale, rested a few minutes at the container before continuing with our walk. At Albatross Plain I was fortunate enough to help Sylvain by writing down the data for him. It felt so great to actually do some work. We took it easy on our way back to the base and got back in time to shower before supper. Then came the time to do what we normally do after supper. Watch a movie! That's when I felt really tired and apparently I wasn't the only one.

I guess towards the end of next month we will be seeing the Yellow Nosed and Sootie Albatrosses again, as well as the Shearwaters and Rock hoppers. Strangely enough I actually miss the unique call of the Shearwaters and the Sooties.

So long! God Bless!

Nkoane



Down the rabbit hole

Have you ever been so torn between two worlds that you feel the pull of each tearing you apart? Because truthfully that thought seems to come to mind when confronted with the reality of having to leave Gough, or head home. "Head home", or "Leave Gough" Each has the same inherent meaning but a completely different outlook on the situation, with the result still remaining the same, Right?

So read it as you like, but there is this constant tug to each place, and it makes the outlook on the fast approaching and inevitable situation varied and the desire to stay or go, something very real. The joy, warmth and happiness of loved ones weighed up against the joy, warmth and happiness of such a stunning speck in the ocean. Door number one and door number two! Fortunately I don't have that problem and that was just the thought I figured so many would have to reconcile with. But the truth is I am thrilled to be going home. I have had the unique privilege of being able to step through door number one already and now get to step through door number two on the return home. It's not often in life you are spoiled for choice like that.

I have been able to step through the first door and have absolutely relished my time out here, and feel fairly confident in saying that I have really taken in all I can. Now it's just a matter of twisting the handle of door number two and stepping through to the warmth and love of family and friends. It's rather exciting to be perfectly honest. Despite going back to familiar surrounds, it will still be a whole new experience as a new world of opportunity awaits. I feel like Alice going down the rabbit hole.

Just as Alice dreamt of wonderland and it become so familiar in her mind's eye, so it is when it comes to the thought of home. The years at home are but a dream past and soon I will be falling down the rabbit hole into the place I feel I know so well and am so familiar with, only to be surprised by so much more than I can imagine or recall from my dreams. The new characters I will meet and the new challenges I will face. The parts of the dream that were never included, the parts of the story that got written by new choices. How excited I am to soon be reunited with my family and friends at what I can affectionately and appropriately refer to as, "The Mad-Hatters Tea Party". This will be an absolute riot.

See you all soon. So that's what has been rattling around in my head this past while. Now for an update on the month's happenings and events of major significance.



Having spent the past month typing away at my computer trying hard to get my CV up to scratch again, I felt a fair bit of muscular dystrophy occurring in my lower extremities. It felt as if the time spent tapping away at the keyboard had left my legs looking rather skinny and twig like! Although the fingers seem to have developed some fine form, which made the typing of this month's contribution swift and easy. But the legs were in desperate need of some island terrain to bolster up some muscle development. Karen and Sylvain our fantastic birders are always looking for some extra help out in the field and had the notice up that they would be going out. But much to my dismay, I was once again working.

But great reward came from this. It afforded Boy the opportunity of a lifetime and he took the chance to go visit another of the islands great treasures. The day trip to Albatross Plain by the sounds was a huge highlight for him. Made even better as he had the privilege of having Nkoane being able to join him with his first trip out to Gonydale and Albatross Plain. The joy of seeing another person experience more of this incredible place for the first time is so rewarding. I would have taken over a week of Boys shifts if it meant affording him the opportunity like this. Hopefully there will be another opportunity where I will be able to do just that. It really is hard to explain how passionate I am about Gough and how I would love for all of you reading this to be able to see this remarkable landscape.

So that was that. Then a couple days later I am approached by Nkoane who proceeded to explain that there was going to be another trip to finish the Albatross count at Gonydale. He then offered to cover my shift so I could go. What made this even nobler is that this was on his birthday that he was prepared to do this. And it seemed he was not going to take no for an answer. So it stood that I was able to join Karen and Sylvain for the day and spend some time meditating on the past month whilst inspecting nests and admiring how the young chicks have grown since I saw them as hatchlings. What a fantastic bird. From hatchlings that would fit into the palm of your hand to these behemoth birds that waddle about in their nests as you inspect them. It brought a smile to my face that grew with each nest that was checked. The mood grew to a point where I was even thanking them for cooperating after having woken them from their sleep. Yes it might sound rather daft, but this happened to be the expression of my mood.



It seems the happier I become the more oddly I behave. Thank goodness I was able to figure this out. It helps explain the odd behaviour throughout my life and my time here on the island. Indeed I have been blessed with an enchanted life and the time here on Gough has only added to that. Upon returning from Gonydale we all got into the mood and had an absolutely class time celebrating Nkoane's birthday. With top class pizza from our resident pizza professionals, Sunette and Marius, as well as some truly delicious birthday cake from Boy. The days walking saw me develop a monstrous appetite and it was all so good. The evening continue with good music and some time dancing as we shot a few games of pool and watched our darts champion, Leonard, valiantly defend his title against Sylvain. Indeed it was a great evening and a great way to round off the perfect day. And I do hope Nkoane enjoyed his party as much as I did. After all, it was his birthday.

Happy Birthday, Nkoane. I hope there are many more to come!

I trust everyone reading has had a great month, and those waiting for us to return are as excited about seeing us, as we are about seeing all of you.

Till next month, for our farewell newsletter. I wish you all well.

God Bless,

Brendan



Nkoane's B-day
Pizza, music and games



CLIMATE STATS: July 2012

Ave. Max Pressure	1011.8hPa
Ave. Min Pressure	1007.3hPa
Ave. Pressure	1016.3hPa
Max Pressure	1029.8hPa
Min Pressure	989.9hPa
Ave. Max Temp	12.8°C
Ave. Min Temp	4.7°C
Ave. Temp	10.8°C
Max Temp	16.5°C
Min Temp	4.7°C
Ave Humidity	80%
Max Humidity	96%
Min Humidity	54%
Max Wind Gust	46.3 m/s or 166.68 km/h
Total Rainfall	296.8 mm
Highest in 24 Hours	55.6 mm
Total days with rain	28 days
Total days >1mm	21 days
Total Sunshine	63.9 hours

For the month of July we experienced less rain than in the previous month even though there were more rain days than in June the day totals we received measured less as can also be noticed by the highest rainfall in 24 hours. (June - 96.2 mm)

The overall temperatures has decreased as we passed the middle of winter and we received plenty of particularly cold days, but was surprised for some mornings waking finding the wind calm, the temperature mild putting a smile on the scientist's faces as they can work comfortably in the field.

We are receiving more sunshine as the days start to get longer again but we find it still chilly in the sun rays as the wind cools the air down considerably. We had a few nights during the month with the wind sounding like a tornado howling. The maximum wind speed recorded for the month was 46.3 m/s = 166.68 km/h.

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