

Gough Bunting

April 2008



Crushing

Exercising featured a lot this month! Swinging axes, hammers machete... it's hard work. Hope that will make up for the ice-cream I ate last night!



One thousand Three hundred and... Dang I've lost count

1 times Expedition base, Check
1 Handful of Expedition members, Check
Several Containers with Assorted goods, Check..
Right Stock taking done!



Home Alone

Most of the chicks at Gonydale and Tafelkop are already left alone at their nests.



Miscellaneous

Off to work. Heigh-ho, Heigh-ho!!



A time for every thing

"To every thing there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven": Ecclesiastes 3:1

Crushing

This month we had a preview of what the winter will be like. The evenings are getting shorter and as soon as the sun goes down behind the mountain, then it is like someone left the fridge open. We as a team decided in the beginning of April that we will be crushing the cans, which were so much fun as a team, working together. We did it on a Friday after skivvy (cleaning); we worked hard, laughed, had so much fun and talked a lot. Before we left the helipad we saw a Moor-hen playing in the water that was under the helipad since the last rain. It was having such fun with the water. It kept dunking its head under the water and naturally the water just kept running off its feathers. After the work the showers were hit first and then we all gathered for a nice lunch, everybody had a big appetite.



Johan needed a hand with cutting the grass where the antenna is. Kholekile and I helped him. It was fun getting to the wires, getting out, I was walking at a snail's pace. The day after that I was so stiff I could not laugh without feeling it in my stomach muscles. It was fabulous!

The only chick that was at Crane Point has shed his fluff and has got his feathers. It has grown so fast, I am so proud! After that it started flying and is now joining the bigger birds. I do not see it any more but I know it survived.

Well that is enough from me on Gough, till next month!

-Charlene

One thousand three hundred and... Dang I've lost count

One...,Two,...Three, this month was stock take. All of us was (and some still is) busy with counting all our supplies for re-order. As such it is a yearly thing and a necessary evil. Within a few days we'll place our orders for the next team.



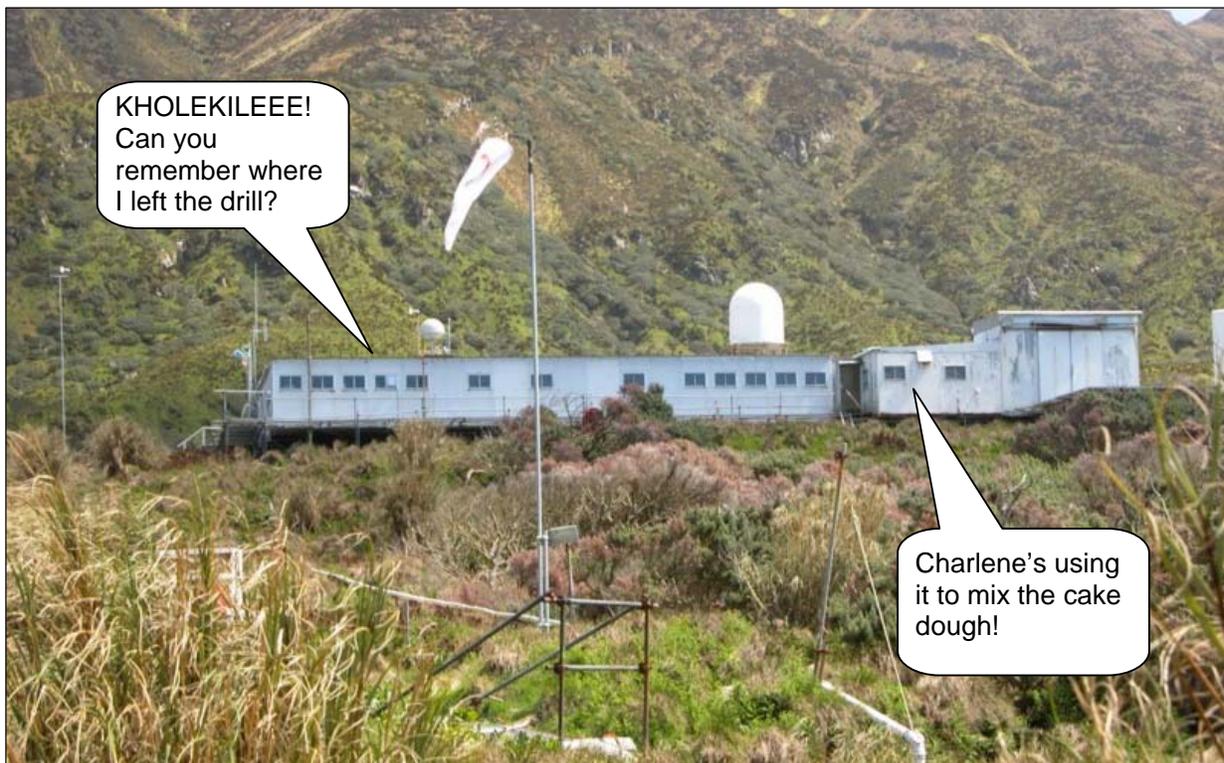
Also this is our opportunity to make requests for equipment, which will make life on the island a little bit easier for our replacements.

Several times during the year I've gone: "If I could just get to the Hardware store now, I could get..." and that's usually where it stops. The nearest shop is 2600km away via a rowboat. <laugh> It sounds worse than it is. We are very well taken care of. Most of the extra's we request are what we **want** and not what we **need**.



I would like to personally thank all the logistics people back in South Africa. You've catered for us very well. Thanks

-Johan



Home Alone -Kholekile

This is what happened when we visited Goneydale this month.



Give us a break, and Don't try any of the things you see here at home We've got years of experience, which keep us safe.

Notice the safety harness.



Miscellaneous

Dear Reader, it has come to this. We all knew it had to, eventually. It is just completely and utterly sad that it has come so quickly. I mean the year is not even an infant!! What a pathetic state of affairs. I am, of course, talking about the fact that I have nothing (shock and horror!) interesting to say. So here is my essay on: what I did during the month of April. (Sounds like a primary school essay. Yeuck!)



We started off the month by going prospecting. See, there, I have a pickaxe and everything! Sadly, I am not expecting a gold rush any time soon. To help things along, the ladies decided to open a bar, supplying, wait for it...homemade brew! However, the only thing we could brew was ginger beer so we're hoping for some tea-totalling miners. It could happen. I don't recall reading anything about

Sneezy or Dopey drinking anything other than water. (Apparently, Snow white was just a pretty face.)



Jack and I decided to wait for the rush (if not for gold at least to the local pub) at Admiral's beach. Where I didn't have the courage to go down and swim to any of those minute islands beckoning from the water. Oh, and I experienced a teeny weeny bit of vertigo. Before you laugh, have a closer look and then tell me you don't feel the same!



Sadly, the tee-totalling miners have yet to make their appearance. And the only visitor we can definitely see coming is winter, which doesn't even have the decency to do it slowly and quietly.



So long, dear Reader, until next time. -Mellany

-Mellany

A time for every thing

Winter is just around the corner, leaving us with less than five months before we come back home. Looking back, I wish I could have been to some places on the island in summer, taking advantage of those longer days and warmer nights. Unfortunately that time has past and is not coming back, the next summer I will be home. This leaves me no choice but to battle the bad winter weather if I really want to see these places.

We did a little walking this month with Kholekile and me going to Gonydale to check the Tristan Albatross since the last time we went there some of them still had eggs. This time all of them hatched with very few nests failing. There is however a bigger problem though not new, the mice. There was one chick with a head wound presumably from mouse attack and some nests have holes on the side going under them. By doing this, the mice will not only stay warm this winter but they are also getting very close to their victims.

Next to the base the Yellow Nose Albatrosses are gone, I guess until the next breeding season. The Sooty Albatrosses are still flying around joined by among others the only surviving chick from the three nests that were at the Crane Point. Most of the Skuas are also gone but I can't really tell how far, maybe just away from the base as we saw a lot of them at Gonydale coming even closer to us, I suppose hoping we will share our food.

The Shear Waters and the Petrels are continuing to grace the sky in the evenings, especially when it is raining.

Weather wise I would say everything was fine up until now. The winds have picked up and we are having more showers, just a preview of what is still coming. Speaking of weather conditions, it is clear that a lot of people there at home are facing major challenges this winter due to the ongoing electricity crisis. On that notion I hope everyone stays warm and blessed.

So long!!!

Nkoane Jack Mathabatha

Climate Stats: April 2008



Pressure

Ave. Max	1010.9 hPa
Ave. Min	1002.4 hPa
Average	1006.5 hPa
Maximum	1025.5 hPa
Minimum	976.7 hPa



Temperature

Ave. Max	17.2 °C
Ave Min	12.3 °C
Average	14.8 °C
Maximum	20.7 °C
Minimum	7.2 °C



Humidity

Average	80%
Maximum	96%
Minimum	45%



Wind

Max Gust	35.9 m/s or 129.2 km/h
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Rainfall

Total	192.2 mm
Highest in 24h	56.4 mm
Total days with rain	21 days
Total days >1mm	16 days



Sunshine

Total sunshine	119.1 hours
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Gough 53 team members

Charlene Oppel – Meteorologist

Johan Hoffman – Radio Technician

Kholekile Cita – Medic
(Deputy Leader)

Mellany McPherson – Meteorologist(snr)

Nkoane Mathabatha - Meteorologist

Sarel Steyn – Diesel Technician
(Team Leader)