

# -The Wanderer-

*Marion Island Newsletter, Issue 11, February 2002*



## WHERE HAS THE TIME GONE?



A year is a long time, but it is not. That we learnt on Marion Island. We came here with a year ahead of us, now it is almost behind us and we have adapted to this life. We learnt to live with and love bad weather, no fresh fruit and no Kentucky.

The article "So, what do we miss most from home?" appeared in the September issue of the Wanderer. It is now six months later and we ask the reversed question "So, what will we miss most from the island?"

Once again I asked my team mates my question and it appeared to provoke emotional responses. It took long, deep thoughts, some tears, smiles on faces and sighs to get their answers.

Segale and Tambu had their own discussion that revealed the following, "Going to the kitchen at 3am, taking out spare ribs and T-bones, braaing it without a mom yelling at you for making a mess. Here you never need to reach into your pocket." This was more Segale's side of the answer. Tambu's is a bit more difficult to explain. Being the only sealer Tambu had to spend a lot of time alone in the field. This is where he met his new friend Tambu. "I am going to leave him behind and will miss him dearly.

It goes without saying that I will miss my seals and other indigenous fauna."

I lost my notes, which resulted in Sarette being interviewed twice on this sensitive issue and both times there were tears. In the end her answer was something like this, "Every time I step out the door I walk into a documentary. I live it. To lie flat on my stomach at Trypot, smelling the moss while I collect insects. To walk back to base, spreading my arms wide and open, pretending that they are wings and I am gliding on the wind."

With SQ2 and Aldo the answers were sweet and short. SQ2, "Die vryheid om te doen wat ek wil en Juniors." Aldo, "Ek weet nie, ek kom gewoonlik gou weer terug."

Beneke gave it a lot of thought while sitting in front of his beloved computer, "Die alleenheid. Die vryheid en gebruik van jou eie tyd. Ek gaan dit mis om die seisoene weer so intens te beleef."

For Erika it was easy, "Katedraal. Om so naby aan die sterre te wees, heeltemal op my eie maar tog nie alleen nie. En dis veilig. Om daar bo te wees maak jou deel van poësie. Trypot Fault en die golwe. Ek sal die krag van die wind verskriklik mis. Want eintlik is is ons maar almal kinders van die wind."

With David things were a bit more difficult. Every time just before we got to his answer he would change the subject. Eventually it went something like this, "Marion itself, just as it became homely I have to leave again." Puff sat comfortably in a lounge chair studying previous teams' photos on the wall, "The time for myself. Back home you are never alone. Here I have time to think and make my own decisions without other influences."

SQ1 was busy in the darkroom and had much to say, her concentration was lost while printing black and white photos, "Dat mens kan rondstap in 'n veilige omgewing, jy kan gaan net waar jy wil met die

enigste gevaar mistige weer. Hier is dit bietjie anders, die enigste petrol prys wat opgaan is as jy jou nuwe gumboots moet inloop.”

Sam didn't take long to answer. Her only problem was to state things according to priority. She didn't succeed so here is the full list, “Apart from the birds, because of course I will miss the birds... everything, the way of life, the ocean, my work, o ja, definitely my work, albatrosses, Ship's Cove, being so close to nature. Oh, and the view from my window.”

When I asked myself the question I realised why my team mates hesitated to answer, “In short, not needing to consider buying a *how to work out your budget* book every month. No eight to five routines. Falling asleep with the sound of rockies and white chin calls, looking out my window to see if I can spot any killers. And having those conversations with the wanderer sitting outside the lab window.

There it is and *man* did it take long to finish!

*Wilna*

### Alien of the month



A specimen of *Sonchus* sp. (thistle) was discovered in front of base and destroyed.

### Is dit moontlik om teen 120km/h te stap?

Dit vat fyn beplanning. Gewoonlik het jy 'n rugsak op wat jou darem 'n bietjie swaarder maak. Maar dit is nie die probleem nie, die probleem kom in as jy jou voete lig om te trap. Dit vat ongelooflike koördinasie om jou voet op te tel, te kyk waar jy moet trap, daar te trap, moontlike valplek te soek en asem te haal.

Daar is darem al 'n danspassie na die wind vernoem... die Karookop *two-step*. Die wind waai altyd op Karookop. As jy jou voete hoog genoeg lig, waai jy sommer af... tyd-effektief... jy hoef dan nie af te loop nie. Een probleem van hierdie *two-step* is die landing... grys lawa is nie lekker om op te land nie... pyn met inpak.

Party mense het al die klipsaamstap kunsie probeer vervolmaak. Al wat jy hoef te doen is om 'n groot klip op te tel en dit saam met jou rond te dra. Die kuns is nog nie vervolmaak nie. Jou arms word ongelooflik moeg, die wind is gewoonlik van agter as jy klippe ronddra. Die vergelyking kan getref word deur te sê dit is soos om dringend toilet toe te moet gaan (en dit is nou nie om te gaan piepie nie), maar jy is besig om waatlemoen rond te dra en jy kan nie nou by 'n *loo* uit kom nie. Jy breek-breek so al die pad.

Dan is daar altyd die vermaak-jou-vriende-windstap. Jy leun met al jou krag teen die wind, jy weet as die wind nou gaan lê is jy in jou peetje. Jy loop nog so teen die wind en ewe skielik is daar niks nie. Al die weerstand wat jy gebied het is onnodig en jy slaan net daar neer. Jy ontwikkel 'n toestand wat hulle lawa lippe noem... dit is seker omdat jy 'n lip tot lawa verhouding het met die klippe.

Maar deur dit als, kom jy tog veilig terug by die basis en is te bly om die wind te hoor huil vanuit jou kamer.

*Tips are given about surviving Marion winds, techniques to conquer Karookop, carrying heavy rocks to steady yourself and ways to arrive at base safely.*

*SQ1*

### Visitor of the month



Jano, the fisheries observer of the Koryo Maru II, visited the island for medical treatment. Here he is on his way back after a recovery of three days.



## A day in the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow

As the sun rose on paradise, a golden glow illuminated my soul. The ocean was unseasonably tranquil. The greens, reds and blues were somehow brighter.

Albatross-speckled mires are still freshly covered in a soft dew reminiscent of farewell tears, shed only days before. Filled with tangible excitement and amazement I ventured onto the island, pondering over what this day would hold for me.

By midmorning my world made a transformation into a magical winter wonderland. It was a time that my imagination ran wild with the innocence of a child. There was too much to see, too much to experience, too much beauty to comprehend. Growing quickly, the white fluffy albatross chicks were now sitting on snow-covered nests.

By midday the sun rose high in the sky melting the snow. As if driven by the sun's energy the island came alive. The birds returned in their hundreds, chicks of all shapes and sizes appeared. Orcas delighted us with their antics, while the wandering albatross chicks held out their awkwardly large wings in an attempt to gain the coordinated elegance of their parents. It was a time when it was important to learn a lesson from each mistake in order to learn to fly.



*The sealers pot on Trypot Beach*

During the late afternoon the mist rolled in. All of a sudden the landmarks I came to rely on disappeared... Just as I was about to despair I looked down and there was a newly hatched wanderer chick, reminding me of the miracle of life. Far in the distance I could hear the penguin chicks calling out and I realized that I *was* home.

The mist cleared as the night closed in. The birds have flown away and all too soon so must we. Where did the time go? Can someone tell me? Where did the time go? As the sun sinks into the deep blue ocean, tears fall from the sky blurring the reflection painted in the water. It's so hard to say

good-bye. A newly fledged wanderer soars overhead as a rainbow appears, wiping away the sky's tears and bringing the evening sky to life once again. The wonderful reflection returns and I can see my memories dance in the waves.

Even though night inevitably falls, the sun in turn will rise on a new world. One I will enter richer than before.

*Sam*

## Iceberg of the month



We saw icebergs for the entire month of February. A few, such as this one, got stuck on Natal Bank off the island.

## Liewe Ma

Hoe gaan dit met Ma met my gaan dit goed. Ma dis ampir nou hystoekomtyt. Dalk is dit maar goet want partymal raak ons maar lekkir dik vir mikaar. En dit is nou nie dik van te veel eet nie Ma. En dan is ons ok nie meer gewoont om met baie mense deermikaar te raak nie. Tog is ons nie so annirs as die mense by die hys nie want ons het ok nou 'n plymbal klub en ons stig vriendskappe. En ons het selfs 'n sportkomitee wat help met die darts proebleeme wat ons het. Ma weet mos nog van daai klein spiesies waarmee ons na 'n bord gooi vir pinte. SANAE se tyk ouvir is al verby maar een van die ou span se ouens het wraggies agtir gebly en nou het hy vir hille die kroek tegniek aangeleer en het ons weer nie 'n kat se kans nie. En die heel ergste van als is Ma hille is nie eers skaam daaroor nie.

Ma weet mos nog van die donkir kamir waar die mense skyfies sonnir sout en asyn ontwikkel. Nou het dinge biekie verandir en hille doen swart en wit. Dit is darim nou nie weer omdat die een mysie te veel wyn gedrink het nie dat dit so yt kom nie. Dit moet swart en wit wees Ma mens noem dit ok kins. Ma moet seblief net vir Oom Koos se bierman sê dit is glad nie 'n rassistiese ding nie dit is rerig footoes met net swart en wit kleere op.

Ma het nou gewonnir as die annir mense in die lab baie kompleks is wat is ons annir twee dan. Ons is

laif history Ma en dit is maar net 'n saak van lewe of dood. Ek moet die dierkies aanhou en probeer dat hille kleinkies kry. En die mysie wat saam met my werk toets basies of die goggas ook anti freez in het soos die kar se rêdihyter. En dan bêre sy hille in alkohol. Nou nie bier of wyn nie Ma maar lab alkohol en daarvan gaan iets vinniger dood.

Ma hier was 'n rymte manniekie met so oranje watirdigte pakkie aan. Hy het gemaak asof hy van die Kori Maru is wat hier vis vang Ma. Ma moet nou nie dink ek kan nie spel nie dit is regtig Kori Maru en nie Cora Marie nie want dis die naam van die skip. Die ou noem homself 'n obsivir en toe weet ons sommir hy is yntlik hier om te spiejoeneer. Maar hy was nogal siek Ma en ons mediek het hom vreeslik goed gedoktir. Net die eerste aand was hy nie lekkir nie. Die Iyer se kamir is langs my en hy ris nie veel in die nag nie want hy saag balke. En toe in die annir kamer langsaan het die obsivir geslaap en gelê en kreen asof hy die balke is wat gesaag word. Maar binne 'n paar dae was hy soveel betirder gedoktir dat hy sommir saam met ons eet en help om die skottilgoed te was. Hy het ok die kerk bygewoon. Van wattir planeet hy okal is sy Ma moes hom goet groot gemaak het. En toe die Kori Maru hom weer kom haal toe kan hy darim selfs loop want hy het hier ingefiltreer op 'n draagbaar.

Ek het mos vir Ma virtel van die eskieemoos wat trek en met hille ysskippies hier verbykom wat lyk soos ysberge. En sjoe hille is 'n groot nasie want hille kom nou nog gereeld verby. Maar party gaan virkeerde kant toe hille het seekir koue voete gekry van die ys.

Die bidir en die diesil mac werk soms met die rekkies. Ma weet mos nog dis daai pikkewyne met die kywe. En dan lyk die bidir en die mac ook sommir soos gekamoevleerde rekkies as hille trig kom. Dit is yntlik nogal 'n morsige spul Ma want al lyk dit of hille in 'n moddir geveg was is dit yntlik die vools wat op hille kots en skyt. Dan is ek baie gelukkig om met die vlee en die vrot kelp te werk. En ek het selfs nou nog dierkies. Dit is Pluto se vrou haar naam is Plutella maar sy is yntlik 'n mot wat se engilse naam die daimint back mof. En dan het hier ok 'n vlieg yt 'n papie gekom Ma en dis nie gebore of ytbroeie nie Ma maar sommir net ytkom. Ampir soos wannir ons wegkryperkie gespeel het en in die uitgeholde boomstam gekryp het. Dan as Sanna van langsaan skree kom yt ek kry jille nie dan kom jy net yt. Niks snaaks nie. Dis wat goed doen wat yt papies yt kom Ma.

Ma ons het in 'n lawa tonnill ingekryp vir vyf en twintig meetir en dis nogal ongilooflik. Dit laat mens ok nogal aan wegkryperkie dink Ma want lank trig was daar sikke goet onnir die gront wat magma genoem word en dit beteekin maar net dit mag ma yt

kom en dan word dit lawa genoem en spyt dit yt by die tonnills. Dit is hoe vilkane werk Ma weet mos.

Ma sê seblief vir ouboet hille moet nie nog 'n babakie kry voor ek daar is nie want dan moet ek weer te veel niese mense leer ken op een slag.

Groetnis Kleinsus

*Kleinsus tells Mom about the eskimous that still move past on their icebergships. But some are going the wrong way ... they probibly got cold feet from the ice. The island had another visitor and he might have been from anathir planit beecoz he calls himself an obsivir and that is just a code name for spy from outer space. It is almost homegoingtime for the team but the island is still great.*

### Marine invertebrate of the month



Since the killers left we are stuck with the small things of the ocean...

### Weather statistics for the month:

Average Pressure	1006.0hPa
Highest Pressure	1023.7hPa
Lowest Pressure	977.5hPa
Average temperature	12.1°C
Highest temperature	17.5°C
Lowest temperature	2°C
Maximum wind gust	127km/h
Sunshine hours for the month	132.3h
Total rainfall	106.7mm



Metkassies David, Phaff and Segale

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*Thank you! Marion would not have been the same without your support!*



Swartkop Point on the west coast of Marion Island