



The wanderer

ISSUE 2

16 JUNE - 15 JULY 2012

*PLEASE GIVE A THOUGHT TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND DON'T PRINT THIS IF YOU DON'T NEED TO. THANKS, M69

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There must be something in the water

Nine and three-quarters expeditions to Marion, 3 Gough expeditions and one SANAE expedition. That is the amount of SANAP experience M69 has under its belt. It most likely makes us one of the most experienced teams in Marion history. When I consider the amount of Marion expeditions I can only conclude: there must be something in the water!

Here in the "Roaring Forties", Marion experiences 40+ knot wind on more days than not, it rains for c. 317 days of the year, in excess of 2000 mm's. It snows. It pummels your face with ice-pellets (fine hale). Walking in wet and cold conditions. Sinking into mires. Gumboots filled with water. Aggressive seals chasing you. Penguins splattering your face with their faeces. You might ask "why on earth would anyone punish themselves like that more than once?"

I endeavoured to question the M69 ex-Marionites as to their reasons for returning and what it is like being back. Most im-

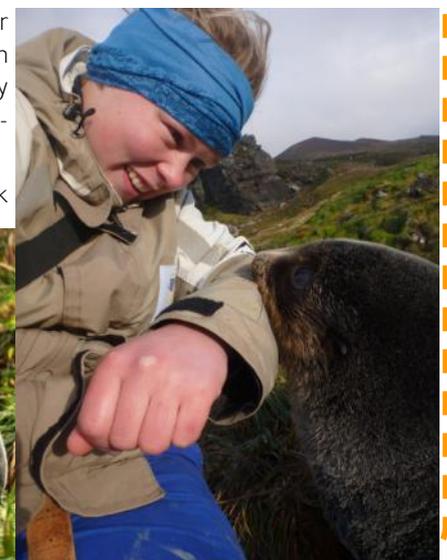
mediately reminisce about the old base and the amount of character it had. "But luckily the field huts and work outside are still the same" is the standard answer. Jacqui says she loves the peaceful island life and the quietness of the place. No news about murders and robberies over the radio, no traffic, just seals and penguins. Innocent enjoys all the time you get to think as just being alone. He also likes the group things we do as a team here on the island (I am certain "group things" excludes base skivvy). Ben said he never realised how much he missed lying in the sun on a soft blechnum slope until he could once again snuggle up on one. Delia...well she just came back for the cheese curls! Unfortunately Clokie was unavailable for an interview. However, I am certain her answer would have been in the lines of "Kildalkey hut and the Gentoo penguins!"

Personally, I came back

for a multitude of reasons but the one thing that gives me joy every day I am out in the field, is to witness how each individual animal has its own personality. Some are grumpy, some are friendly, some are skittish and some just want to play! And the weather? There is no better feeling than struggling against wind and rain, over mountains and through mires the whole day, but despite these struggles at the end of the day you achieved all the goals you set out to accomplish. Oh—and of course—there is something in the water! Nothing beats a cold drink from a fresh mountain stream!

Some say we are brave. Most think we are crazy. Maybe we are. Then again, I am not stuck in traffic now!

Mia Wege



Going Green

Word from the ECO

As winter drags her cold feet across Marion we are custodians to a relatively quiet and empty island with most of **Marion's fauna only returning in spring**. Last month, however, the sea brought us a gift in the form of a dead Sperm Whale **that washed up on Ship's Cove beach**. It proved a popular attraction for us Marionites and was a very exciting event indeed (although, admittedly not **for the poor whale I'm sure**).

Not only has the whale provided us with something remarkable to see, experience and talk about, but it has also afforded the Giant Petrels (GP's) and Lesser Sheathbills (Paddies) with an extra food

source.

Watching GP's feed is always entertaining; they come bounding across the sand with wings splayed, tail fanned, and with neck and back feathers raised they smack their bills, growling and hissing at their competition. Intimidation is the game, and they have refined it to an art. Individuals lobby for the best feeding position; grunting, growling, snapping at each other. Landing on the whale, they compose themselves and proudly strut around emitting a guttural call, as if boasting about their newly acquired status, and warning others to stay at bay. Plunging their head and neck right down into the whale they feed with gusto, looking rather comical at times with just a rear end visible. Waves crash over, and the **GP's slide and surf the slippery whale** before returning to a jousting match with rivals.

While the birds have a field day, and we enjoy the entertainment, we are hoping that **our whale isn't reclaimed by**

the sea – a whale skeleton would be a fantastic addition to the landscape. See pictures on the next page.

Ship's Cove played host to other visitors of the feathered kind – a pair of Pintado Petrels. They do not breed on Marion but occasionally visit and a few of us were lucky enough to spot them.

Winter has brought with it the usual wet, windy, snowy, overcast, stormy weather, and I'm sure many of us are looking forward to spring when sunshine is on the increase and **Marion seems to 'wake-up'** from her winter slumber and welcome the throngs of animal life back to her blossoming shores. It also marks the commencement of the alien eradication plan which we are looking forward to implementing.

Next stop, however, is **Repetto's hut to start promises to be an epic adventure!**

Jacqueline Davis

Marlon Island Weather Statistics

June 2012

Supplied by Marlon Island Weather Office

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Ave. Max Pressure | 1010.6 hPa |
| Ave. Min Pressure | 996.9 hPa |
| Ave. Pressure | 1004.1 hPa |
| Max Pressure | 1025.0 hPa |
| Min Pressure | 974.1 hPa |

| | |
|---------------|---------|
| Ave. Max Temp | 6.0 °C |
| Ave. Min Temp | 1.5 °C |
| Ave. Temp | 3.8 °C |
| Max Temp | 9.7 °C |
| Min Temp | -1.6 °C |

| | |
|--------------|-------|
| Ave Humidity | 85 % |
| Max Humidity | 100 % |
| Min Humidity | 56 % |

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| Max Wind Gust | 168.5 km/h |
|---------------|------------|

| | |
|----------------------|----------|
| Total Precipitation | 180.4 mm |
| Highest in 24 Hours | 31.2 mm |
| Total days with rain | 27 days |

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Total Sunshine | 57.0 hrs |
|----------------|----------|

Carrion, carry on...

(top) View of the dead Sperm Whale and scavenging Paddies and Giant Petrels. Dawn shows the scale of the dead whale, measuring in around 15 m.



Jacquiline Davis

(middle) Giant Petrel feeding on the whale carcass.



Jacquiline Davis

(bottom) Giant Petrel showing aggressive behavior on Ships Cove beach, the sperm whale carcass in the breakers.



Rory Meyer

Marion Orca Awards



"Quote of the month" to Mia for "Jou lemon meringue is soos 'n single blondien in Dropzone—dit gaan nie lank daar wees nie!"



"Flop of the month" awarded to Fred, who took a short cut and consequently served up a cold lasagne. Don't take it to heart, Bergie.



"Darwin award of the month" awarded to Jason, who waited in the wind and wet for an hour, sitting beside a note telling him to head back to base—he just didn't turn it over to read it.



"Meal of the month" awarded as a tie to Jason (chicken schnitzel), Dawn (pizza) and Christelle (soup and baguette).



"Dessert of the month" awarded to Christelle (lemon meringue).



"Photo of the month" to Jason Nel (shown overleaf).

Cont'd on next page...

Celebrity spottings!



(top & middle-left) Wiam perfecting his act as Nosferatu.

(middle-right) Jason the acrobat.

(bottom) Mia gets the chance to meet Sarel the Snowman.



WANTED

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS GIANT PETREL?



Bushnell

05-29-2012 08:29:12

WANTED IN CONNECTION WITH MISSING ALBATROSS..
CULPRIT STILL AT LARGE **APPROACH WITH CAUTION**
CONSIDERED COCKSURE AND CRAFTY
IF SIGHTED CALL BIRDERS AT MARION BASE (ON 45)
REWARD: ONE COOKING SKIVVY

Marion Orca Awards cont'd

Jason explains how he composed this photo: 30 second exposures over a period of an hour, late one night, gave him the individual pictures. These he juxtaposed to yield a static time-lapse photo of the stars swirling about a point in the universe.



The Gogga-man speaks

Gogga education

Firstly, many people have been asking, "What is a Gogga?" Well, a "Gogga" on Marion Island stands for any scientist that works on insects and other creepy crawlies found on the Island. For this year my project involves collecting collembolan, shown below. Let me introduce you to collembola or Springtails. A Springtail is a very small, wingless insect about 1 to 2 mm long, but some species can grow up to 9 mm. Springtails have a spring like organ under the abdomen. The organ enables them to leap when disturbed, but not all species have this organ.

Springtails occur in nearly every climatic condition throughout the world; high mountain regions, pools, streams, snow-covered fields, forest floors, and more. They live in the soil, leaf mould, decaying logs, on the surface of freshwater pools and under bark. Populations are often high

– up to 100,000 per cubic meter of surface soil and many millions per acre. Springtails' diversity can be related to plant communities. Springtails feed on algae, fungi and decaying organic matter and they are abundant only in damp, moist or relatively humid locations.

Thanks to Tshepo Tawane

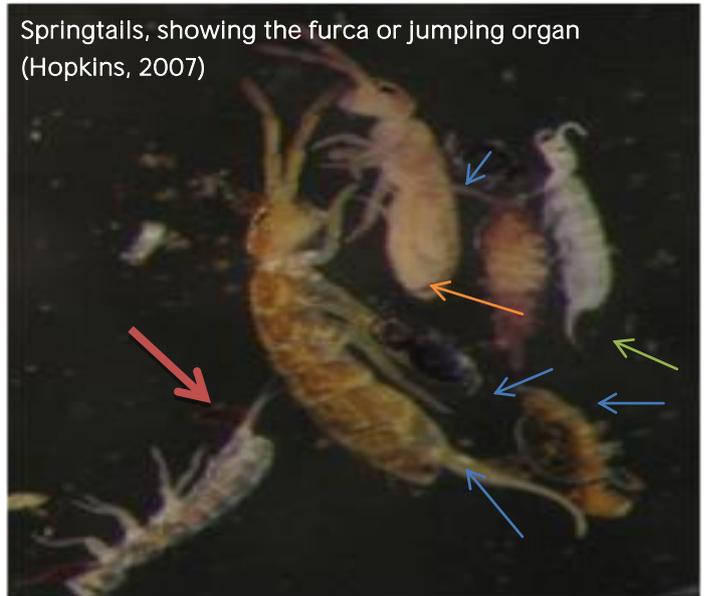
and everyone who had the chance to come with me in the field and joined in my work.

For now it's goodbye. Gogga-man out.

Rashawe Kgopong

Reference: Hopkin, S.P. 2007. A key to the Collembola (Springtails) of Britain and Ireland.

Springtails, showing the furca or jumping organ (Hopkins, 2007)



In the life of Rash

With take-over long gone it's time to take the bull by the horns. The consequence of being the only Gogga this year is that everything is on my shoulders and I believe in doing things "right" at all times. My mottos are "work-work-work", "time wasted is never regained" and "make the best of every day". As the day begins and Gogga-man is out, some team members would wonder "What is he up to?" Sealers, ECOs and birders would find small holes in the field next to a pole and they would wonder about it. Well, Gogga-man has passed and sampled over the site. From the words of Ben, "Rash is carrying

the whole island on his back". My sites are all over the Island, from the west to the east.

This month's work needed me to travel far-off and spend some time in the huts. So far I went to Cape Davis, Kildakey and Repettos. All the times in the huts were great fun, as Inno, (birder) Nompilo (birder), Tshepo (metkassie) and Zandile (ECO) each took opportunity to join me. Talk, talk and more chatter until the last person sleeps and in the morning we would head back to base.

Work is always on my mind, but during special days such

as midwinter the Gogga-man made an exception and cut the working day short. Midwinter was so awesome and everyone in base had lots of fun with the winter games. Oh! I would like to thank my mother, Mmane and family for the presents; you rocked me during midwinter.

I just realized that everyone on this team has a very important role to play. When the high gradient extractor (H.G.E) started to act funny, I almost went off my head. This equipment is very important and without it my work will be slow. I called Yanga (base

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 engineer) and Rory (radio tech) to come and fix the H.G.E. Then, with the help of Ben Beninin (Birder and wet lab and co-conspirator!!!) and Mornay (diesel mech), it took us two days to fix it. Then it was finally up and running. I would like to thank everyone for their help.

Rashawe Kgopong



Rashawe Kgopong



Rashawe Kgopong

(clockwise from top left) Rash with midwinter presents from home; Rory, Yanga and Ben "handy-manning" in the Wet Lab; Tshepo, Nompilo, Innocent and Rashawe near Reppetos; Zandile making her way back from Kildalkey.



Rashawe Kgopong



Rashawe Kgopong

What-the-weather!

PRECIPITATION

Even though the discussion following this will relate purely to the weather statistics for the month of June, the newsletter relates our experiences into July and we had such great snow that **it's difficult to remember what else happened.** It's a fantastical view to have snow covered landscape juxtaposed with sea spray and seagulls. The snow fall was particularly heavy on the 10th of July and there was general commentary from field assistants that traversing the island was tough going through the deep snow. Those around base didn't mind so much though and had a good time with snow-man building and snow-ball fights. One feels your heart going out to the Wandering Albatross chicks sitting quietly with the snow mounting down their sides, turning into animated snow mounds; showing them gray, not white, against the fresh snow.

Back to June and its precipitation. **June 2012's rainfall is on par with that of 2010 and more than that recorded for the same period of 2009 and 2011 respectively.** It appears **from the last 4 years' data that precipitation in June is characteristically more than that of the preceding May.** However in 2012 we experienced a particularly wet May.

The past four years' data would suggest that July 2012 should see us with total precipitation

on par or exceeding that recorded for June. Being already mid-month of July, it is apparent that the proportion of solid to liquid precipitation has increased from the first two months on the island.

TEMPERATURE

The average daily maximum temperature for June 2012 was on par with that of June 2011, but more than 1°C lower than the average

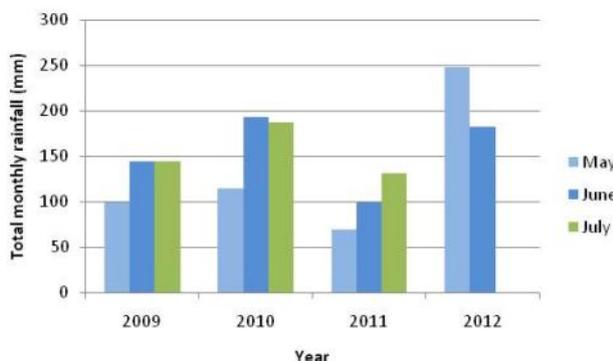


Figure 1: Monthly precipitation 2009–2012 (April–June)

maximum recorded for the same period of 2010 and 2009. The temperature has dropped from 8.7°C average maximum of May 2012 to an average maximum of 6.0. In 2011, the average maximum increased again in July, so it may be that we can expect a

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warmer July if that is a trend. The lowest daily max recorded for June 2012 was a chilly 2.4°C.

In June 2012 we had 5 days that the minimum temperature dropped below 0°C. The average minimum was the lowest recorded for that of the past 4 years, at 1.5°C. Going by last year's figures, we can't expect much improvement for a while to come.

SUNSHINE

On average, the daily sunshine during June 2012 was 1 hours 59 minutes out of a possible (average) 8 hours and 35

minutes. This is less almost an hour less per day than in May 2012. It seems the past four years has seen the same daily sunshine on average. In effect we experienced 8 completely overcast days during June 2012.

July 2011 saw an increase of average sunshine from June, so we may be in luck in July 2012.

21 June was the winter

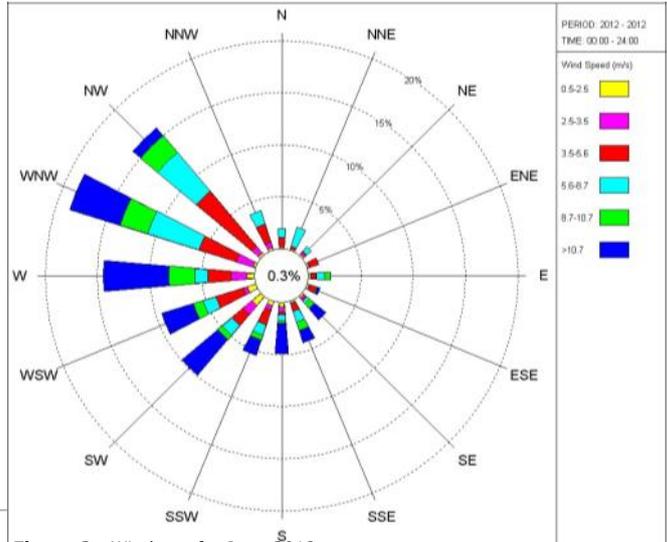


Figure 2: Windrose for June 2012

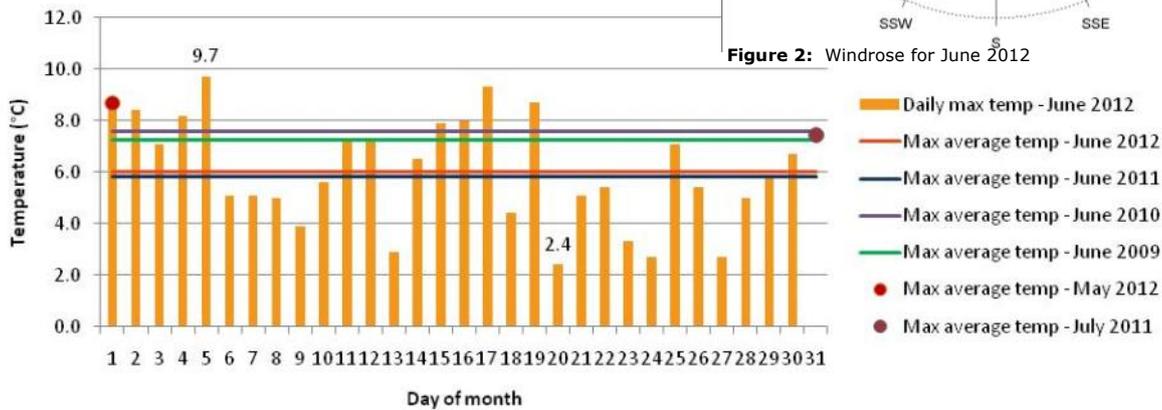


Figure 3: Daily maximum temperatures in June 2012, daily average maximum in June 2012 (6.0°C), June 2011 (5.8°C), June 2010 (7.6°C) and June 2009 (7.2°C); average daily maximum in May 2012 (8.7°C) and July 2011 (7.5°C).

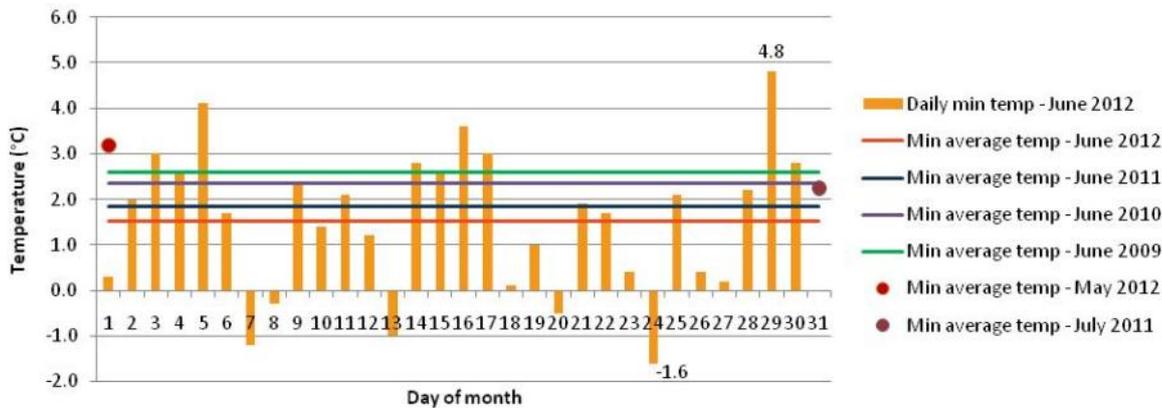


Figure 4: Daily minimum temperatures in June 2012, average daily minimum in June 2012 (1.5°C), June 2011 (1.8°C), June 2010 (2.4°C) and June 2009 (2.6°C); average daily minimum in May 2012 (3.2°C) and July 2011 (2.3°C).

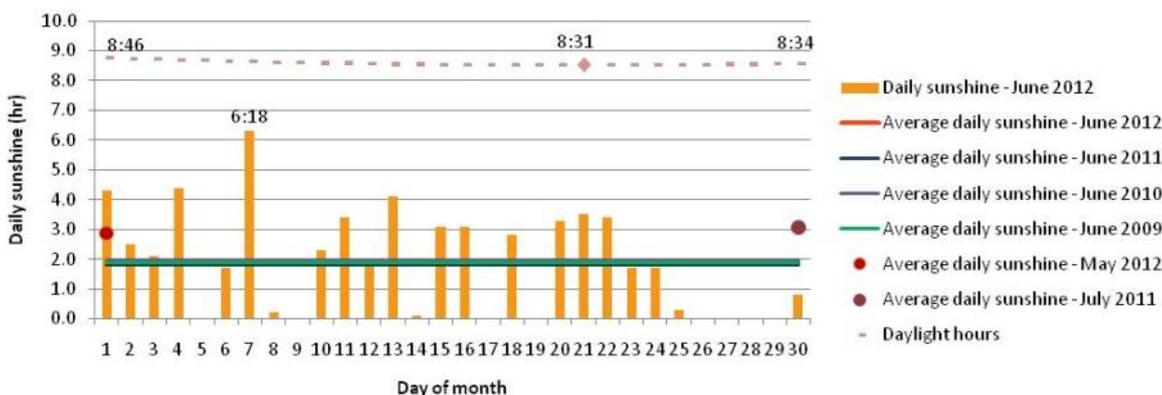


Figure 5: Daily sunshine hours in June 2012, average daily sunshine in June 2012 (1.9 hrs), June 2011 (1.8 hrs), June 2010 (2.0 hrs) and June 2009 (1.9 hrs); average daily sunshine in May 2012 (2.9 hrs) and July 2011 (3.1 hrs).

solstice, the day of the year in which the shortest day and longest night is experienced. The daylight hours increase from there until 21 December. The difference in a month from mid-winter to the time of writing this piece is considerable—the sun is up already by the time I get to crane point for the sea temperature measurements in the morning. Watching the clouds light up is saline for the soul.

WIND

During May 2012, it was only wind-still for 2 hours during the whole month, otherwise the wind predominated from the WNW. The wind blew roughly from the south. The highest gust speed reached during the month was a tremendous 169 kph.

Christelle van Vuuren

Interviews

Get to
know the
team.

This month we have introductions made to Christelle van Vuuren (Junior Met Officer) and Nico Lübcker (Sealer), as the next two birthday's on the team.



CHRISTELLE VAN VUUREN

Q: What is your name, age and do you have a nickname?

A: Name's Christelle. I turned 27 on the island in May. I have various peculiar nicknames. My friends often call me Chrissy.

Q: What were your reasons for coming to Marion Island?

A: A break from the norm, a chance in a lifetime, an opportunity for self-discovery.

Q: What were you doing before coming to Marion?

A: I stayed in the bustling metropolitan of Jo'burg and worked as a Process Engineer in air quality and other environmental studies.

Q: Where do you come from?

A: Pretoria is very near my heart.

Q: Tell us about your family.

A: Mom = steel-fisted shopaholic liberal. Dad = breakfast-in-the-sunny-spot conservative. Younger sister = always-near-derailing happy dreamer. Little niece = wily, cute little devil. Younger brother = terse Rowan Atkinson impersonator. I am very much part of this haphazard collective....

Q: What type of movies do you enjoy?

A: Nouveau and period drama. I know what you're thinking. And the more tragic the ending the better.

Q: What music do you listen to?

A: All sorts. Mostly classical, popular jazz and big band, a little bit of alternative, industrial & synth.

Q: What has been your greatest achievement in life so far?

A: That's a tough one – it's an on-going project. I suppose a happy (8 years so far) relationship with my boyfriend.

Q: What has been your biggest challenge coming to the Island?

A: Stepping over the threshold, breaking from my own preconceived/over-calculated plans.

Q: What are your plans after Marion Island?

A: Return to normality...as much as that is possible after this.

“NICO” LÜBCKER

Q: What is your name, age and do you have a nickname?

A: Nico, but my friends call me Kieliebom.... I'm the youngest on the team at 23.

Q: What were your reasons for coming to Marion Island?

A: The long walks on the beaches and all the "tapping" appealed to me. Also—how impressive is the proboscis of the male elephant seal!

Q: What were you doing before coming to Marion?

A: Kielie-ing fresh water fish.

Q: Where do you come from?

A: The short answer is Pretoria.

Q: What type of movies do you enjoy?

A: I'll watch anything with Jake Gyllenhaal in.

Q: What music do you listen to?

A: I'm wild about Elton John and Nataniel.

Q: What has been your greatest achievement in life so far?

A: Keeping all my limbs intact —although there have been some close calls.

Q: What has been your biggest challenge coming to the Island?

A: Leaving behind my chihauhau, Sprinkles.

Q: What are your plans after Marion Island?

A: My dream is to start a clothing range for short people. We're really under-represented as a market!



Spying on the petrels

Life in a Grey Petrel cave

Grey Petrels are fairly large petrels, with ash-brown upperparts, white underneath and a pretty yellow bill. They occur throughout the southern oceans, breeding in winter.

On Marion Island the population of Grey Petrels is fairly low since the chicks were a favourite prey of cats prior to 1991. Now the cats are gone, we suspect the mice are also preying on the chicks, so we have cameras in some burrows to see what is really going on.

The other winter breeder we are monitoring is the Great-winged Petrel, but they are only just hatching this week so more on that next month!

Ben Dilley and Della Davies

(Snap shots from an infra-red camera inside a cave where a grey petrel pair is raising their chick.



The web of life

All things are connected, like blood that unites one family. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand of it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself. I have come to realize that without research the conservation of our earth will be impossible. Through research one gets to understand the web of life.

Birders are working around the clock monitoring the life cycle of seabirds. The breeding of my favorite penguins—Gentoo—is in full swing. Most of the colonies are doing very well. Sadly one of our study colonies seems not to be doing well. The ships cove colony. On the 4th of June the carcass of a Sperm Whale was spotted at about six meters from the shore; within a week the huge dead sperm whale had been washed onto the sand on the beach.

Our birders have noticed that the number of Gentoo penguin coming from the sea to the colony has decreased intensively. This carcass has attracted a big number of scavengers; mainly Giant Petrels. The beach is overcrowded with Giant Petrel feeding on the carcass, which makes it difficult for Gentoos to get out of water because they are attacked by these scavengers.

Giant petrels are violent when feeding, so **it's not easy for gentoos to get out of water. It's a pity because the carcass is lying on the beach where they come out, so it difficult for them to access the colony.** We were hoping that the carcass would be decomposed by now but the island is cold which makes the decomposition processes very slow. This is one of our concerns at the moment, but we understand the web of life very well – we **can't interfere when nature calls. Let it take its course!**

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Before putting my pen down, I would like to thank my fellow birders one by one

To **Benjamin aka-Ben**: thanks so much for your dedication & determination. Nobody can doubt your experience. I have no doubt that by the end of this expedition, my knowledge would be broadened.

To **Delia**: Many thanks for being supportive; the birders would be very cold without you.

To **Nompilo Ka- Spijoe**: Many thanks for **being you & being part of birders' team. You are so informative & always keen to learn. Let's keep flashing those smiles**

To: **Linda aka-Clokes**: Wow! Your experience is unbelievable; thanks so much for being hands on in everything you do. Keep shining!

Till next time.

Innocent Mthembu



(top-left) Inno on the snow;

(top-middle) Gentoo male;

(top-right) Gentoo peering over the grass.

Die Paddy

Marioneiland behoort aan 'n vreemde versameling diere wat mens op min ander plekke in die wêreld sal teëkom. Een van my gunsteling is die komieklieke Paddy, of te wel Chionis minor marionensis , wat mens inteendeel nêrens anders in die wêreld behalwe as op die Prince Edward-eilande sal gewaar nie. Hierdie spierwit voëltjie is omtrent so groot soos

'n tortelduif en die manier waarop hulle om pikkewyn- en robkolonies patroleer herinner my sterk aan daardie kampus-duiwe wat ewig op die uitkyk is vir iemand om sy toebroodjie te laat val. Die Paddy ken geen vrees vir mense nie en hy sal nie skroom om jou padkos uit jou hand te kom gaps as jy te diep vir die see sit en staar nie. Vir my is die opvallenste ding van die Paddy egter sy roep. Elke keer as hy sy roep roep, soek ek ver-waas rond vir 'n tarentaal!** Net om **'n oomblik later te besef- O ja ! dis 'n Paddy. Ek wonder of ek, na 'n jaar op die eiland, weer eendag in die bosveld gaan rondloop en verwoed na Paddies gaan soek elke keer as 'n tarentaal roep?****

Wiam Haddad



I wonder if *that's* edible....
I'll pad over and have a nibble.

(left) a Paddy investigates on Ship's Cove beach.



Spot the Paddy!

Jacquiline Davis

Giants, Hearts and Mountains

A poem by Yanga Sapepa

Fear of fear grab my heart,
Heart of hearts feel, think;
Think mind not of minds but both independent and dependent.
The giant is awakening.

Imply, apply ply and eye;
Eye an opportunity to move.
Move mountains and callous cataract scales covering the eye,
The mind's eye.
I don't remember what;
For I have seen beyond mountains and seas alike;
"by standing on the shoulders of giants".

Gentle giant rise up and truth you must accept,
And reject all deceptive concepts.
Accept the unflinching truth, that's life's work;
Work for the treasures of life;
Treasure what treasure, a life of opulence?
For this treasure, acquiescence to the concept of pestilential exploitative opulence is nil.
For treasure is to be found in the heart of hearts
That is; treasure immaterial, intangible, permanent, incorruptible
The treasure is love, joy, peace, forbearance,
Kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...

Look around Marion Island and acknowledge God with awe,
Balance wisdom with being just, being fair;
With temperance; with fortitude.
Fear of the LORD grab my heart;
And don't let go!



Christelle van Vuuren

Beards, Briefs and Beard Briefing

As you should recall from last month's beard-briefing, the facial hair fever on the island is an infectious disease flooring young and old. This month we would like to introduce you to the fierce facial hair freaks competing for the ultimate honour and glory of "Best Beard".



CONTENDER 1

Wiam Haddad and Fred Fourie

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Name: | John "the Yeti" Lucas |
| Physical dimensions: | Gargantuan |
| Beard colour: | Scoria Red |
| Beard thickness: | As thick as a Boksburg blonde |
| Beard intimidation factor: | 8/10 (due to fierce colour) |
| Habitat: | Mostly found stuck in mires |
| Signature move: | Size 14 foot stomp |
| Favourite animal: | Wookie |

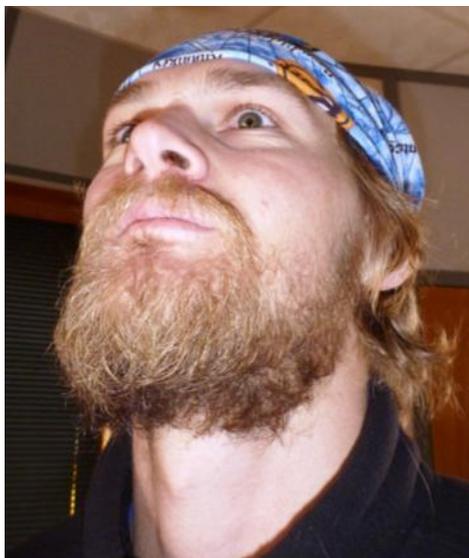
Due to John's absence from base at the time this paper went to press, this true-to-life sketch (left) was deemed fit-for-purpose.

CONTENDER 2



| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Name: | Nico "Mieliebom" Lubcker |
| Physical dimensions: | Minute |
| Beard colour: | Italian Marrone |
| Beard thickness: | Comparative to the hair on the top of his head |
| Beard intimidation factor: | 6/10 (higher mark awarded for creepiness) |
| Habitat: | Extremophile (Jacuzzi to Ice-plateau) |
| Signature move: | Icy bum-slide |
| In-trouble-O-meter rating: | Deep! |

CONTENDER 3



| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Name: | Jason "Son of Jay" Nel |
| Physical dimensions: | Cellphone tower-like |
| Beard colour: | Busy Mottled blonde |
| Beard thickness: | As thick as Elephant seal blubber |
| Beard intimidation factor: | 3/10 (due to likeness to a grandfather's beard) |
| Habitat: | Cookie Isle in food store |
| Signature move: | Chocolate Chomp / Ice-cream Annihilator |
| Favourite activity: | Out-pacing the field workers when walking in the field |

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Beards, Briefs and Beard Briefing cont'd



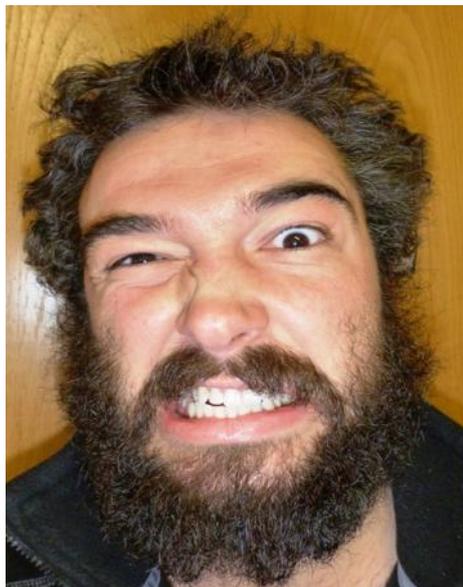
CONTENDER 4

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Name: | Rashawe "No-Rush" Kgopong |
| Physical dimensions: | Pocket rocket |
| Beard colour: | Needle in a haystack black |
| Beard thickness: | As thick as the tree cover on Marion |
| Beard intimidation factor: | 0/10 (due to Rash believing he is competing in a "BEER" competition and not a "BEARD" competition) |
| Habitat: | Cosmopolitan, EVERYWHERE |
| Signature move: | Corridor Industrial Rap |
| Energy levels: | 8541857481218873% |



CONTENDER 5

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Name: | Rory "Radio Rascal" Meyer |
| Physical dimensions: | Varies between HF and VHF |
| Beard colour: | N/A |
| Beard thickness: | N/A |
| Beard intimidation factor: | -18/10 (due to absence of beard growth) |
| Habitat: | Sub Antarctic radio waves |
| Signature move: | Sauna shuffle |
| Favourite animal: | Naked mole rat |



CONTENDER 6

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Name: | Fred "die Bergie" Fourie |
| Physical dimensions: | Fits into an average 52" TV box |
| Beard colour: | Busy black with respectful individual grey |
| Beard thickness: | The likes of Capt. Haddock's beard |
| Beard intimidation factor: | 8/10 (due to likeness to an old sailor) |
| Habitat: | Some computer generated alternate world |
| Signature move: | <i>Tropicalis</i> pup scream |
| Fatal weakness: | Phone calls from Roger |

Beards, Briefs and Beard Briefing cont'd



CONTENDER 7

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Name: | Wiam "Wille Wragtig" Haddad |
| Physical dimensions: | Abnormally average |
| Beard colour: | Seal Bull Brown |
| Beard thickness: | Similar to that of a 40% shade net |
| Beard intimidation factor: | Between 4/10 and 7/10 (grooming dependant) |
| Habitat: | Mixed Pickle hut's long drop |
| Signature move: | Voice overs on 5pm radio skeds |
| Life's aspiration: | To pass into beard legend |

Wiam and Sarel pictured here together.

CONTENDER 8

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Name: | Sarel "Snowman" Frost |
| Physical dimensions: | Three stacked spheres, ranging from beach ball to soccer ball size. |
| Beard colour: | Grassy green |
| Beard thickness: | As thick as an un-mowed lawn |
| Beard intimidation factor: | 2/10 (few people are intimidated by a grass-like things) |
| Habitat: | Anywhere a snowflake may fall |
| Signature move: | Standing very, very, very still |
| Greatest fear: | That global warming is not a myth! |

Follow these star players (and maybe a few surprise guest performances) over the next few months to see how their stats change and their beards grow into the history books!

Bandit action

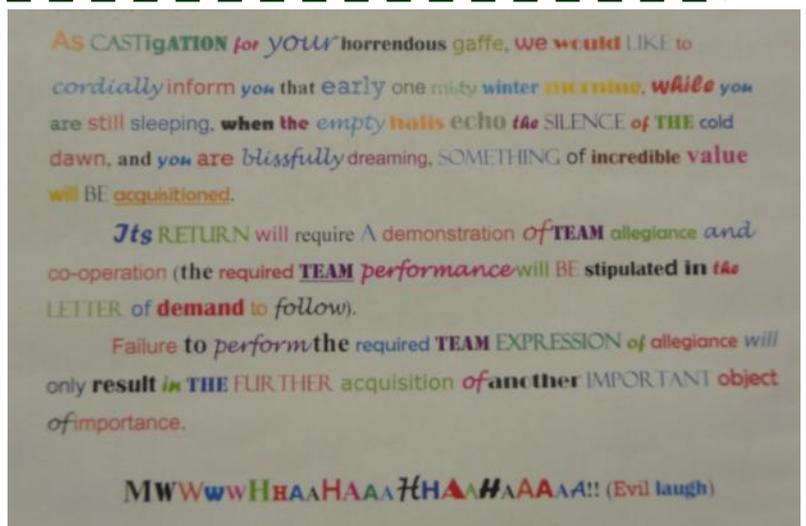
The M69 team found a message on the dining hall fridge on 15th July, from the terrorists who made their first appearance on the international radar screen last month, with a daring abduction. This paper reported on the incident and appears to have incensed the criminals.

This note has indicated that their affiliation is not with any particular international organism and that, in return for the insult they are planning a heist of some sort. The promised price for return of the item of value has been stated to be a demonstration of "team allegiance", yet to be described.

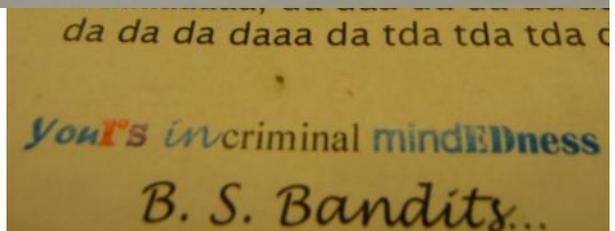
The duo have atleast named themselves—the "Black Skua Bandits" - or B.S. Bandits for short....

The best criminal profiling professionals on the island are in the process of compiling profiles for the duo. Authorities have indicated to the team to remain calm in these times of uncertainty.

Christelle van Vuuren



Snippets of memo from "B.S. Bandits" found on 15 July.



Birthdays and special occasions

This month we had the chance to celebrate Dawn and Zandile's birthdays—held jointly as a soiree and sing-along. We also celebrated Midwinter on the 21st June, with the Midwinter Games (a tribute to the Olympics) and a fondue dinner party—a first for some team members! In the following two pages we'd like to share the photos of these occasions as well as some of the invitations we received (and issued) for the Midwinter party—a subantarctic and Antarctic tradition that imparts a sense of camaraderie. Aside from the well-wishes received from other bases (SANA E, Gough, King Sejong Station (Korean Antarctic Station), Vernadsky Research Base (Ukrainian Antarctic Station), Dumont d'Urville Station (French Antarctic Station), Kerguelen Island, Base Cientifica Antarctica Artigas (Uruguayan Antarctic Base), old Marionites also dropped us a line, notably Graham Tilbury (Ex Marion 31) and Mariette Wheeler (Ex Marion 61). The department (DEA) sent us their well-wishes and passed on a general message from President Obama.

(top left) M69 mid-winter invite sent to other stations.



Ben Dilley

(top right) Jacqui and Dawn watching their food cook at the fondue.

(bottom clockwise from top left) Vernadsky midwinter invite received; King Sejong Station mid-winter invite received; Mornay plotting his next cooked fondue theft; Nompilo and Inno enjoying the fondue; Ben and Fred can scarcely contain themselves, whilst Clokie poln-tificates; Mia in stitches with Della; Antarctic commenda-tion from the White House, USA.

Hello all,
We hope you have a happy midwinter in all your out-of-the-way places. If you can then come on over to Marion Island! We'll keep something to drink in the fridge for if you show up.

Regards,
Marion 69 Overwintering Team



Ben Dilley



Ben Dilley

(bottom centre) Midwinter invite received from the Uruguayan Antarctic Base.

Friend greetings to the international community wintering in Anta. Guided by a passion for innovation and discovery, your research changing the way we view our world. Carrying forward a rich leg-acy of scientific advances in Antarctica, your efforts provide vital insight raising sea levels and increase our understanding of global climate. As you continue to brave harsh winter aigles, know that your hel- example will inspire future generations to expand the horizons of knowledge. In keeping with the enduring Antarctic Treaty, your will lead to broader cooperation among nations as we promote environmental stewardship and preserve our planet. May your new findings and friendships continue to benefit us all, extend my best wishes for a productive and satisfying year, and I you for a job well done.



Ben Dilley

Ben Dilley

Continued on next page...

Birthdays and special occasions cont'd

(clockwise from top left) hellhangar soccer; dawn demonstrates field-flirtation techniques; the referee watches for over-step in the mire-javelin competition—Inno (the zulu) went on to win; base-paddy vs. filled workers tug-o-war (base-paddies won!); base personnel celebrating their victory; Ben demonstrates his (unsuccessful) fling technique in the mire-javelin competition;



Tshepo Tawane



Tshepo Tawane



Tshepo Tawane



Jason Nel



Jason Nel



Jason Nel

Birthdays and special occasions cont'd



Tshepo Tawane



Tshepo Tawane



Tshepo Tawane

(clockwise from top left) sign for "Marion Café", the venue for Zandi and Dawn's birthday solree; Nompillo Incognito; Tshepo softly accompanies Zandi in her spoken poem and singing performance; group strain to left Yeti; the musicians jam; Dawn and Zandi cut their cake; Wlam performs his choreographed dance act.



Tshepo Tawane



Tshepo Tawane



Tshepo Tawane



Tshepo Tawane

Photo Gallery



Mia Wege



Rory Meyer



Christelle van Vuuren



Jason Nel

(clockwise from top left) seal scratching its nose; Mia and Jason with a well-equipped snowman; kelp on water; a field-worker's throne; Ship's Cove landscape; conquerors scaling to Katedraal hut; Rory and Ben as the snow comes down.



Mia Wege



Rory Meyer



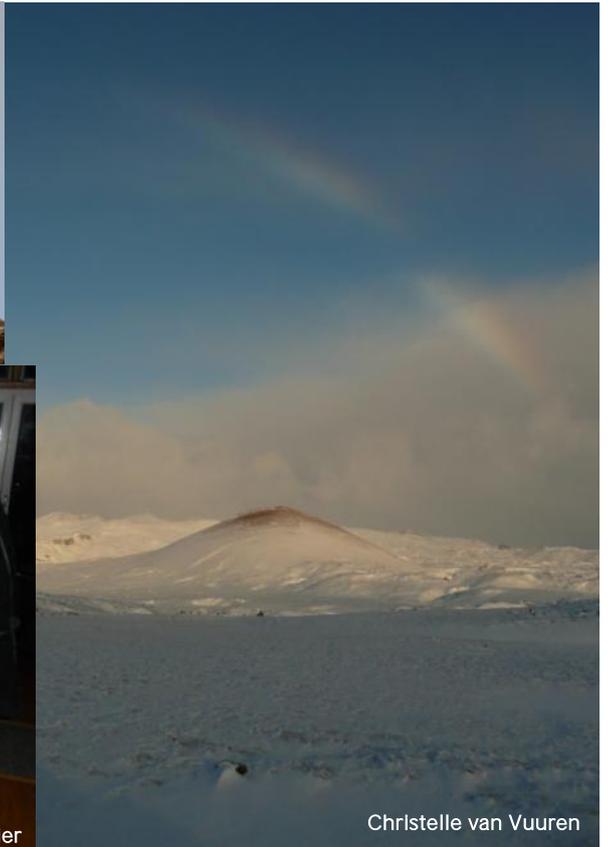
Jason Nel

Photo Gallery cont'd

(clockwise from top left) Skua after feeding; rainbow after snow; pods washed up on Ship's Cove beach; synchronized itching; night sky with green led reflections on radio tower; Saturday rugby fest.



Nico Lübcker



Christelle van Vuuren



Leonie Ollvier



Jason Nel



Christelle van Vuuren



Nico Lübcker

Mememes from the editor...

This last month has just simply **flown past. We've been on the island** just over three months now, two of those on our lone-some. Although, apart from the occasional reminiscence, the mainland seems a very far way **off and we've had a good deal of fun and laughter** the past month.

The whale washing up was met with a great deal of excitement and there have been regular detours there to peer over the **cliff's edge to see its current position and scavenging activity**

on the beach below.

The snowfall also had many of us outside frolicking. We even enjoyed the excitement of **"skipping a skivvy"**—with permission—to go outside and take pictures in the dawn of the fresh snow fall.

All of this and more has been supper-table talk with schemes hatched and hilarity all around. **All month long the words "for the Wanderer"**.

Of course, from my perspective

this has been wonderful—because we have wonderful **pictures to show you of what we've done and seen**. Of course, that makes for a hefty document, but we hope you enjoy and can taste the beauty all about us. I have had to twist a few arms to get articles, but they were produced eventually.

Let's hope the best for the next month.

Marion, Out.

Christelle van Vuuren

"If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same"

Rudyard Kipling

We would like to thank our kind sponsors.



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In fact, The views expressed here do not necessarily represent the unanimous view of all parts of the expressing mind.