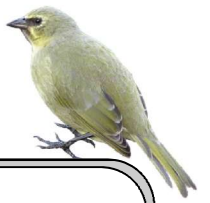






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Recreational activities on Gough island

One thing is for sure here on Gough island, if one is not careful, one can easily stack up some unwanted extra kilo's, within an amazingly short period of time. That's for sure! ☺ And I'm not even mentioning the threatening health issues that go along with it!



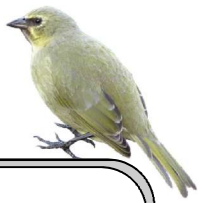
Now why's that? Well, in my opinion, here are too many extraordinarily talented cooks and way too much food luxuries, like chocolates, ice cream, sweets, chips etc. With Leon and his different cooking styles, and Tshepo who's quickly becoming the "muffin king" around here! ☺

So, each and every one of us, have to accept full responsibility for his or her own health....and weight.

Personally, I have gained an enormous amount of weight and had no choice as to take my whole fitness routine into perspective. Due to the ever changing weather conditions and thick vegetation, staying active by taking frequent excursions here on Gough, is just sometimes impossible. Especially if you are a passive "indoor-person" like myself, you don't need much encouragement to stay indoors.



GOUGH BUNTING



Going camping is not really my scene, but for Graham, Kalinka, Martin and Llewellyn, it seems like the most natural way of spending a night or two up in the mountains. In fact half out of the eight of us are preferring a warm, comfortable bed at night, whereas the other half are more than happy to spend the night in a tent.

But Gough Island boasts with its own gym. So, by doing some research on the internet, I have worked out a fairly easy work-out routine for myself. Most of us make use of the gym facilities by pumping iron and do some cycling as well. Sonja has brought along her personal "Orbitrec" bicycle, and the two of us seems to prefer the 'standing' way of cycling more to the 'sitting' version. ☺



Fishing is also a very good pastime activity in which Martin, Llewellyn and Tshepo mostly indulge in. Gough's fridges cannot take any more of their 'catch-of-the-day', so these days we've discovered we could put the raw fresh fish to good use, by having regular Sushi-evenings!

☺ Now isn't that something! Yeah, Llewellyn has brought along all the Japanese frillings and trimmings, to make it a most memorable event. Top that with Kalinka and Graham's treasure of general knowledge about this Japanese delicacy, and you've got yourself a definite winner there!

Gough also has its own cinema! Yes, a big screen with projector and surround sound, the works! Not to mention a library full of a great variety of movies to choose from. Most of the guys have brought along their own movies as well, so I don't think we would ever run out of something to watch. We've also discovered we could organize a regular photo evening, whereby we share our own personal collections via

GOUGH BUNTING



a slide show on the big screen. Then you take your audience on a tour through your own archive of pics with comments and all. Must say, the big screen really does something to an ordinary picture!

The pool table also provides for hours of entertainment. The ladies here on Gough seem to be very tough competition for the boys. And when Martin takes out his famous guitar, total bliss surrounds his awesome voice. In fact, he even moved quite a few of us to start playing the guitar as well.

Yeah, the isolation that Gough brings causes us to develop into some really unexpected artists!



Llewellyn seems to be quite capable with his keyboard as well.



I have even discovered that baking bread is not as scary as I thought! ☺ Must say, Graham is a very talented teacher when it comes to baking a variety of breads. Like Italian Focaccia with olives and cheese topping, sprinkled with extra virgin olive oil, just to name but one.

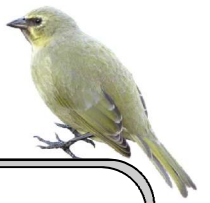
Sonja has also discovered a hidden talent of hers. She has successfully designed her first dress ever! We did not think that she would be able to pull it off, but she has surprised even herself with her creation.



Needless to say; Gough Island brings out the hidden potential in all of us! Now isn't that something!

Daphne Hollenbach

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AN AFRICAN NIGHT ON GOUGH ISLAND

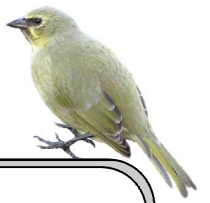
Being away from home is really very difficult at times and there for we decided to have an “Africa-night”.

We got real African songs to perform by, like Ipi Ntombi, The Gumboot dance and Shosalosha. We also have to dress accordingly and that already had its deal of laughter. So on the night of 24th March we had “The Party”.



First it was Daphne and Sonja with Ipi Ntombi. Next on were the guys with the Gumboot dance. Martin – our musician- led the men with Shosalosha

GOUGH BUNTING



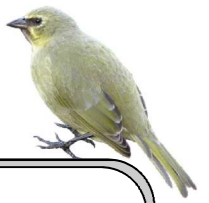
What is a party with out refreshments?



And the after party.....

We just proved that you don't have to be in a city with a crowd to have a very nice party, 8 people on an Island can do it just as well.

Sonja Lizemore

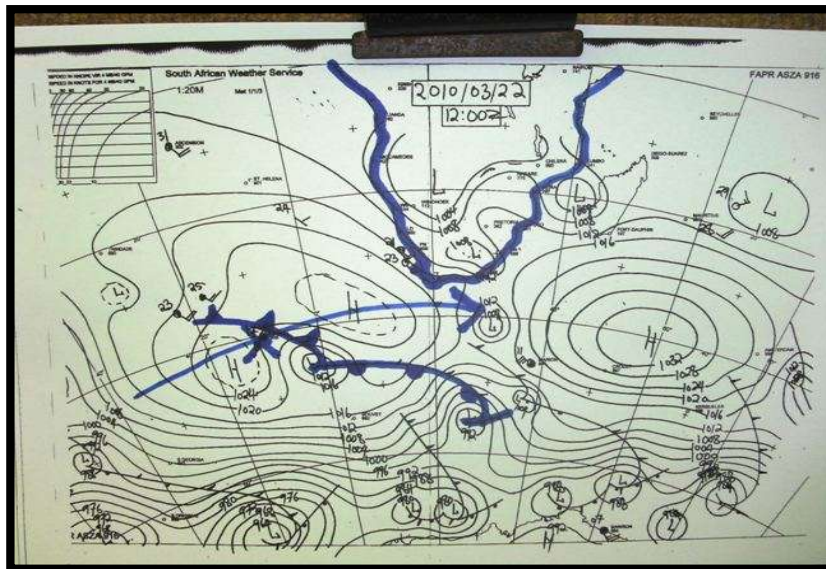


AUTOMATIC WEATHER STATION

On Gough Island the Weather Station is one of the most important reasons why the island is being inhabited by humans. The greatest interest for scientific reasons, would be the bird and plant life on the island.

Collection of meteorological data on Gough island is paramount to help forecasters in weather predictions. Why?

Gough island is located in a position that is in the path of cold fronts that are generated in the far Southern Ocean. These cold fronts are on their way to South Africa. So, the conditions that are experienced on the island, serve as early warning for those that can be expected in South Africa and along the Cape sea route.



Notice how Gough island is highlighted on this Synoptic chart with a bold X. A cold front is passing through the island. The cold front's path is marked with the curved arrow. Moving from a westerly to an easterly direction on its way to Cape Town.

A study of the island's weather is thus very helpful to forecasting in South Africa. Since the prevailing winds in the region are mainly Westerly, and the depressions (Low Pressure Systems) passing over Gough, usually arrive off the Cape sea route about a week later.

That is why a South African Meteorological Station has been maintained at the island in an agreement reached with the administration of Tristan da Cunha.

In order to collect meteorological data, Weather stations make use of Automatic Weather Stations (AWS).

GOUGH BUNTING



An 18cor cable is connected to an Amphenol plug which is in turn connected to the AWS system. This 18cor cable is coming from outside where the weather sensors are connected to it.

What is an Automatic Weather Station?

It is an automated version of the traditional weather station, either to save human labor or to enable measurements from remote areas.

More accurately, it is a device that electronically performs all basic weather observing functions, including the acquisition, processing and transmission of that data.

Visual weather observations can either be captured by a Weather Observer or omitted.

The system may report real time via the cell phone technology and global telecommunications system, or save the data for later recovery.

What does an Automatic Weather Station consists of?

It consists of a weather-proof enclosure, containing a data logger, a motherboard/termination board, a pressure sensor, a power supply/regulator board, a LPU-16 board, a rechargeable battery, a cell phone modem and a cell phone processor board.

In areas where there is no cell phone network coverage, the AWS system would not include a cell phone modem, but would make use of a landline modem. At the weather office self, the AWS is directly connected to the computer, and no modem is thus necessary for the transmission of data.

This AWS system is powered up by an external electrical mains power supply of 220 Volt AC. This 220Vac is then converted to 18Vdc via the power regulator board. On this board, by means of a Potentiometer, the 18Vdc is further converted down to 13,6Vdc.

The 13,6Vdc is then distributed to the Termination board and to the rechargeable battery respectively. The rechargeable battery acts as backup power to provide power to the unit whenever the power is down. In remote areas where no external power supply is available, we make use of Solar Panels to provide power to the AWS system. The Solar Panel generates 18Vdc power to the AWS system and is also converted down to 13Vdc via the Power Regulator board.

GOUGH BUNTING



Various meteorological sensors are connected from the meteorological camp (MetCamp) outside, to the AWS system, inside the weather office, via an 18cor cable.



Meteorological sensors like:

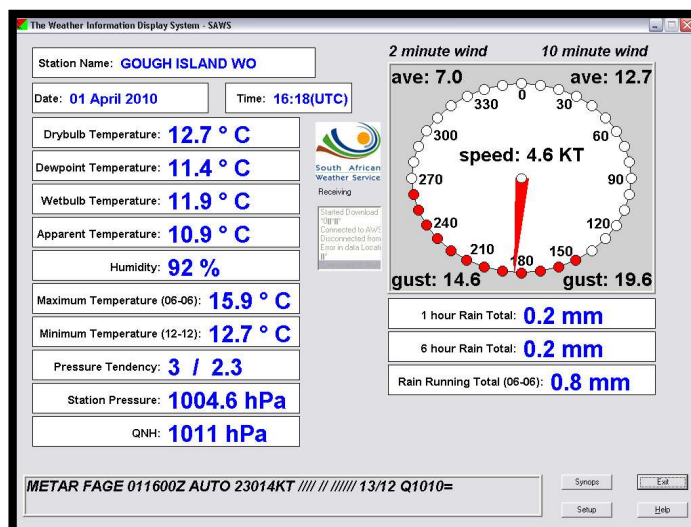
- A 50YA Temperature/Humidity Sensors to measure temperature
- A RM Young wind Anemometer to measure Wind speed and Wind direction
- A Tipping Bucket Raingauge to measure Rainfall
- Pyranometers to measure Direct (solar) Radiation and Diffuse (terrestrial) Radiation; (these sensors are optional and not always present at all the weather stations)

A Solar panel is also connected in this way, if applicable.

Unlike manual weather stations, automatic weather stations cannot report the type and amount of clouds, as well as the present weather occurring at the station and the degree of visibility.

Present Weather phenomena, like, is it raining or not. The type of precipitation occurring for instance rain, showers, drizzle, snow. Is the sky filled with haze, fog, dust, sandstorm, etc.

There is a 100 different kinds of Present weather phenomena that the Weather Observer must be able to identify and choose from and 27 different cloud types.



A meteorological display of real time data.

GOUGH BUNTING



These weather parameters are then used to generate meteorological messages called SYNOPS, and climatological messages as well as aeronautical messages called METARS.

This data can be stored in 5minute intervals up to 80 days, using the CR10X data logger that has an on-board battery power backup for data lost prevention.

The 5minute data is then downloaded daily to the database and quality controlled by the Weather Observer.

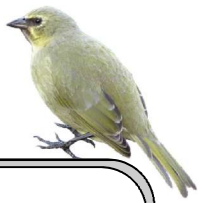
It is also possible to interface the system with either a computer or a CR10 D keypad where visual observations can be entered.



Once the data is retrieved from the AWS, a computer processes it locally before being sent via WAN communications network to the database and GTS servers in Pretoria, South Africa, where it is stored before being distributed to all applicable users.

Daphne Hollenbach

GOUGH BUNTING



What do we do on Gough Island when the sun shines?

I am sure every one wants to know what we are “doing” on the Island. Many times we must hear the question: “aren’t you bored”? So this month I am going to show you what we are “*doing*”, especially when the sun shines.

Being mostly South Africans in the team, we are used to the sun, and we miss having sunshine everyday, so when ever it is a clear, sun shine day, we are outside. Fishing, tanning or working.



Martin taking out weed in the court yard



Leon busy stocking up on Vitamin D

What better way to spend our sunshine days outside and cut grass? YES, we do have to cut grass on Gough Island, and NO, we are not bored by doing so. The grass on the catwalks grows with a speed. So we cut the grass not just for the tidiness but also for our safety. Grass on the catwalks becomes very slippery when wet, and if one of us will fall on the catwalk, you can be sure of a nasty cut.



GOUGH BUNTING

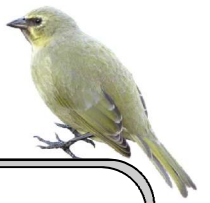


Coming from Cape Town and more particularly Kleinmond, Martin is a pro-fisherman and brings back many fish for the team to enjoy.

We do have glorious days on Gough Island, sunrises being one of the privileges to see – when rising early. Sunrise time changes the last 3 months a lot. In December the sun would raise anything from 04h30 and only sets 20h30, while now sunrise is 06h30 and sets at about 19h00. This month (March) the days become shorter by 40 minutes and next month it will be another 20 minutes. So winter really knocks on Gough's door.

Where ever you are, take time and stand still and appreciate what God gave you today - Whether it is a sunrise to see, love from some one, or just the fact that you wake up today and got a chance to live another day. We on Gough Island experience so much of HIS creation that every day – whether sunshine or rainy is a blessing. Take care and remember to remember us. We love you and miss you.





Nature Notes March 2010

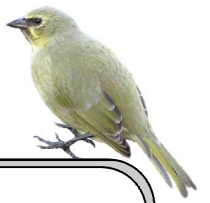
Congratulations to Gough Island's newest proud parents: the Tristan Wanderers. Having checked nearly 300 nests, we can confirm that most albatross pairs now have a chick. The rest will soon, since most of the eggs we saw had a hole broken into the shell by the chick inside. Of the nearly 1700 breeding pairs that we counted on the island in February, most will now have chicks.

The sound of the night-time symphony has changed dramatically in recent weeks. It is a special treat here to lie in bed listening to the cacophony of bird calls that lasts most of the night. The change is this: the winter breeders have arrived. These are an estimated 1.8 million Atlantic petrels and ten thousand each of Grey and Great winged petrels. Adding these three species to the already present Broad-billed prion, Great shearwater, Soft plumaged petrel, diving petrels and storm petrels sounds to us as though a new symphony is playing the night shift.

The molly chicks are now a great cause for humour, with every visit to the colony yielding new photos of classic down styles. Most are busy replacing their down with sleek new flight feathers. The remaining down bits often results in comical ruffs, caps, afros, manes, mohawks and mullets. Then when it rains, we see punk spikes everywhere too..



Kalinka Rexer-Huber and Graham Parker



Mouse Trap Thingy

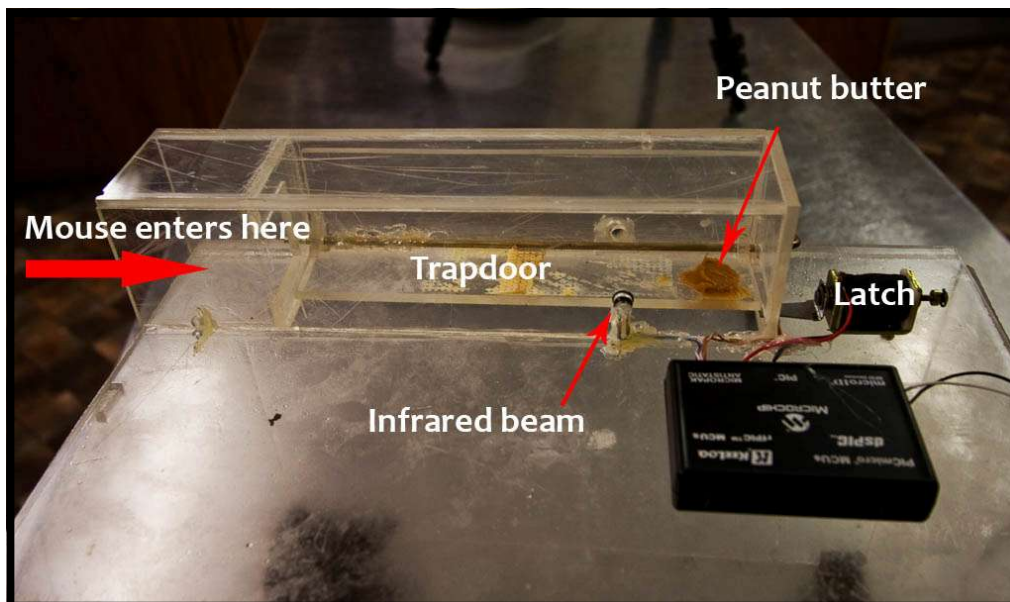


The trap with 5 victims inside

The winter is closing in on us here at Gough and the mice are running out of food. The base will soon be flooded by mobs of starving mice ready to devour anything edible. Our frontline (only) defence against these intruders are a couple of snap traps. With the army of mice on the island numbering in the millions these traps can quickly be overrun leaving us vulnerable to the wrath of the mouse army. It's quite a mission to rearm and bait the traps with peanut butter everyday. The traps also snaps just as easily onto a misplaced finger.

A solution was needed. Many simple designs exist with turning cylinders or balanced beams but I was looking for a more elegant solution, something that would make you say: "Wow, that's cool!". After disappearing into my workshop for two days, this little creation emerged: A repeating electronic mouse trap that detects if a mouse is present and then dispatches it so it can be conveniently disposed of later.

The trap works as follows. The mouse climbs up a ramp to the trap, lured by the peanut buttery goodness inside. When the mouse walks through the Infrared detector beam the latch releases the trapdoor, sending the mouse tumbling down into the container at the bottom. The trapdoor is raised back via a counterweight, ready for its next hungry victim.



The inner workings of the trap

Llewellyn Kriedemann

GOUGH BUNTING



Mmmmmmmm, plastic.

Gough Island is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, at minimum 2800kms of ocean separates us from any country. There is one inhabited area on this 65 square kilometre island, home to a six person Weather Station crew and sometimes, as in our case, biologists studying the flora and fauna. There has only ever been one other building on Gough except the one we live in, and there have never been any attempts to farm the island, or mine it for any lucrative minerals. It is comparatively pristine. Despite this though, there is litter, or rubbish, lying about the island in the strangest places. I suppose it is no surprise that buoys and bits of fishing nets, the odd sandal or coke bottle are washed up on most beaches. But what I find far more disturbing are the bits and pieces of plastic that we find everywhere. In the alpine the plastic stands out much more than at lower altitudes where fern-bush covers the ground. As the photo below shows, there are a lot of bottle tops, but also just a great deal of random bits and pieces. The plastic finds its way to Gough via seabirds. Albatross, petrels, and shearwater species, as well as skuas all eat plastic. In addition adult seabirds feed plastic to chicks. Essentially thousands of years of evolution have taught many seabirds to quickly dive upon and seize colourful objects floating at sea before a competitor can. For thousands of years these objects were dead squid, or fish or crustaceans for example. Today many of these bright coloured items are plastic, and the plastic is killing millions of seabirds a year. To live one of the most isolated and barely inhabited islands on earth and see plastic pieces everywhere, is simply terrifying.



A handful of plastic found at Gonydale

Graham Parker



Photo Synthesis



Presented here is a selection of photos taken by the team during their time here on Gough island.
Please vote for your favourite photo.

Email: gough@sanap.ac.za
Telephone: 021 405 9470
Facebook group **Gough 55**

Winning Photo for February

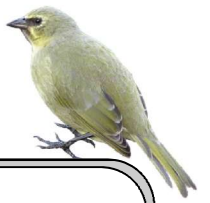
Golfing on Gough by Tshepo Tawane



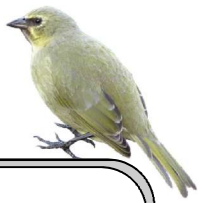
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Pressure

Ave Max Pressure	1014.4 hPa
Ave Min Pressure	1006.9 hPa
Ave Pressure	1010.4 hPa
Max Pressure	1025.3 hPa
Min Pressure	992.2 hPa

Temperature

Ave Max Temp	17 °C
Ave Min Temp	11.4 °C
Ave Temp	14.2 °C
Max Temp	22.8 °C
Min Temp	7.3 °C

Humidity

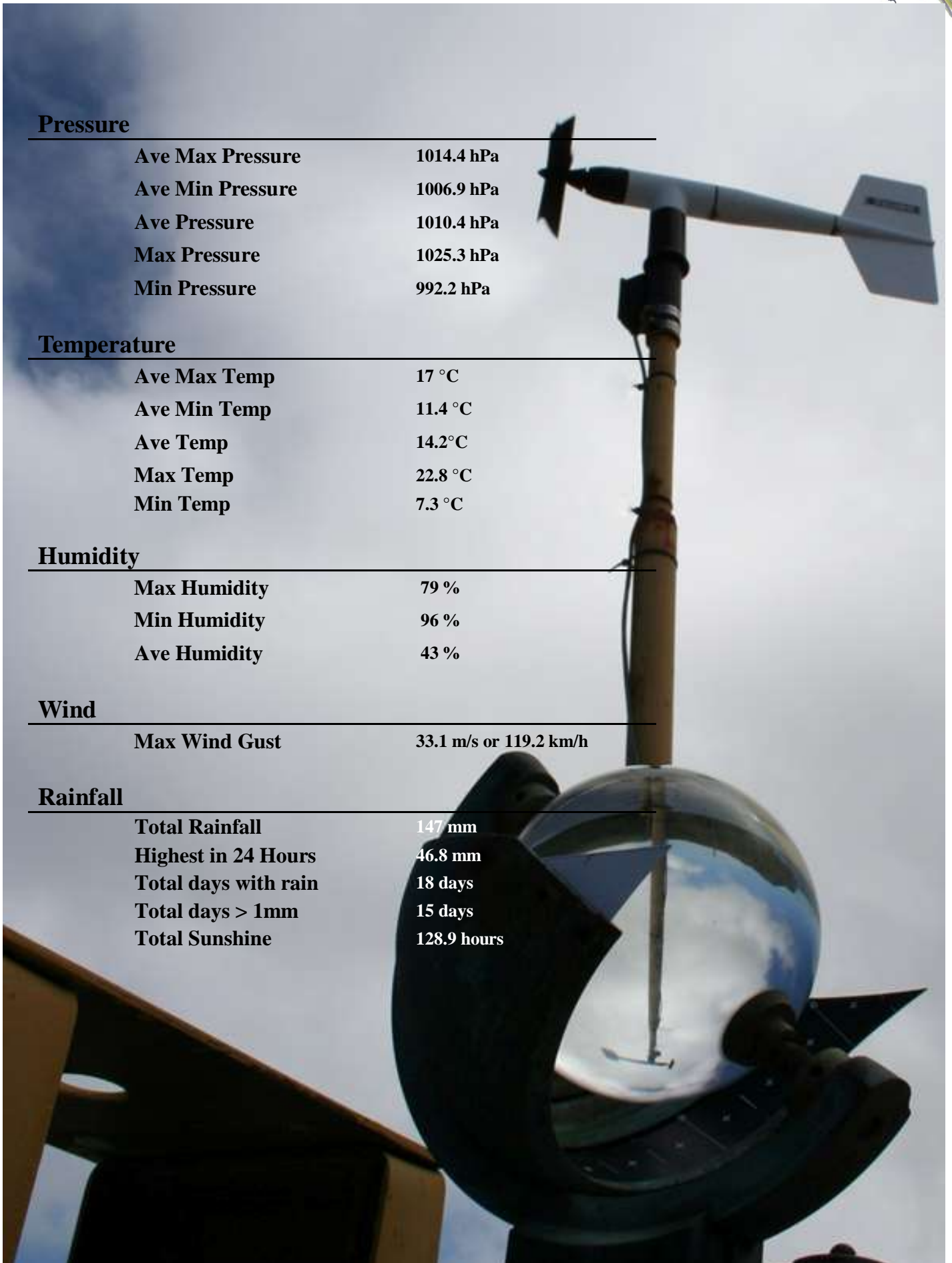
Max Humidity	79 %
Min Humidity	96 %
Ave Humidity	43 %

Wind

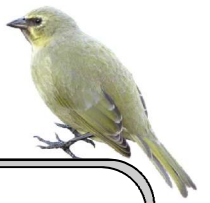
Max Wind Gust	33.1 m/s or 119.2 km/h
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Rainfall

Total Rainfall	147 mm
Highest in 24 Hours	46.8 mm
Total days with rain	18 days
Total days > 1mm	15 days
Total Sunshine	128.9 hours



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We would like to thank the following sponsors for making life on Gough island even more exciting.

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