

NNNN
ZCZC 033 01621
AAHQ16 FAME 110545
MP 142

M44/357

11/12/87

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER - MARION ISLAND

GREETINGS TO YOU ALL FROM MARION ISLAND.

THIS MONTH FOUND US ENJOYING MANY WARM, SUNNY DAYS WITH HIGHER TEMPERATURES, LOWER RAINFALL AND MORE SUNSHINE THAN IN PRECEEDING YEARS OF THE SAME PERIOD. (ACCORDING TO STATISTICS)

IT GAVE EVERYONE A CHANCE TO GET OUT OF THE BASE TO TAKE WALKS AND TO DO SOME FIELD WORK.

IAN AND JACO S 65 DAY, DAWN TO DUSK ELEPHANT SEAL VIGIL DREW TO A CLOSE IN THE MIDDLE OF NOVEMBER AND BOTH OF THEM APPEARED TO BE SOMEWHAT RELIEVED AFTER THEIR LONG ORDEAL.

IAN WAS A BIT CONCERNED, AFTER THE ELEPHANT SEAL COW WHICH HE HAD FITTED WITH AN ELECTRONIC BONNET TOOK TO THE WATER BEFORE THE FIXATIVE HAD HARDENED PROPERLY. THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGNAL FROM HER AS YET, BUT HE IS HOLDING THUMBS THAT THE TRACKING DEVICE WILL TRANSMIT HER POSITION IF SHE REMAINS ON THE SURFACE LONG ENOUGH. THIS IS THE SECOND COW TO BE FITTED WITH A TRANSMITTER.

HE AND JACO ARE AT PRESENT DOING EEEKLY TRIPS ALONG THE COAST TO RECORD NUMBERS AND COLOURS OF TAGS ON ELEPHANT SEALS COMING ASHORE FOR THEIR ANNUAL MOULT.

JUG SPENT MANY A HARD DAY AT ARCHWAY (THE SITE OF A LARGE COLONY OF KING PENGUINS) WITH AN ASSISTANT. GARY, JO HAN, A.J., DEON AND VOSSIE HELPED OUT RINGING PAIRS OF KING PENGUINS. THEY RETURNED EVERY AFTERNOON LOOKING DEAD BEAT AND SMELLING TO HIGH HEAVEN OF PENGUINS. THEY SEEMED A BIT OFFENDED WHEN EVERYONE GAVE THEM A WIDE BERTH.

ROCK HOPPER PENGUINS, A SMALLISH CRESTED PENGUIN, STARTED ARRIVING AND PAIRING UP IN COLONIES TO BREED AMONGST THE ROCKS ALONG THE COAST WHERE A CONTINUOUS JABBERING CAN BE HEARD. THESE BIRDS ARE QUITE AGILE AND MOVE AROUND WITH RELATIVE EASE IN THE MOST INACCESSIBLE PLACES.

SKUAS ARE ALSO STARTING TO BREED AND MANY A CAT HUNTER, WHILST HUNTING, HAS BEEN DIVE-BOMBED BY A PAIR OF SKUAS DEFENDING THEIR NESTS.

THE WANDERING ALBATROSS JUVENILES ARE MAKING SIGNS OF GETTING MOBILE AND ARE PRATICING THEIR TAKE-OFFS BY RUNNING ALONG RATHER CLUMSILY WITH THEIR WINGS OUTSTRECHED. THE ADULT WANDERERS ARE STARTING TO PAIR UP AND ARE DUE TO START BREEDING SOON.

EARLY NOVEMBER A DAWN TO DUSK KILLER WHALE WATCH WAS HELD FOR A WEEK AT THE POINT. IT PROVED TO BE RATHER FRUITFUL WITH NUMEROUS SIGHTINGS BEING MADE. SOME OF THE BASE BOUND GUYS TOOK PART IN THE WATCH AND ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT WAS RECEIVED FROM THE CAT TEAM ON THEIR RETURN TO BASE AFTER THE HUNTING SESSION.

PAGE TWO.....

NNNN.

ZCZC 034 01621
AAHQ16 FAME 110546
MP 142

M44/357

PAGE TWO

SOME OF THE SCUBA DIVING FANATICS ON THE ISLAND HAVE CONSTRUCTED A METAL MESH CAGE WHICH ONCE LOWERED INTO THE WATER, ALLOWS FOR SIGHTINGS OF KILLERS (AS THEY ARE AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN) AT CLOSE RANGE.

THE SCORE OF CATS IS INCREASING RAPIDLY AND A CENTURY BEFORE CHRISTMAS IS HOPED FOR. AS THE DAYLIGHT HOURS ARE BECOMING LONGER (SUNRISE AT +- 2.30 AM S.A. TIME) A LOT OF DAY HUNTING IS BEING CARRIED OUT WITH SOME SUCCESS.

THE CAT TEAM SEEMS TO HAVE GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO HUT LIFE BUT THE STOCK OF TINNED BRAISED STEAK AND SLICED CARROTS IN MOST HUTS REMAINS RATHER STATIC.

ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT, THE CACHE OF BREAD BROUGHT DOWN WITH THE TAKE-OVER HAS EVENTUALLY RUN OUT AND A WEEKLY BAKING SKIVVY LIST HAS BEEN DRAWN UP. IT IS ACTUALLY A LOT OF FUN BUT A LOT OF HARD WORK KNEADS TO BE PUT IN.

BIRTHDAYS FOR NOVEMBER INCLUDED POM AND MARCEL. POM PROCEEDED TO BECOME SOMEWHAT INTOXICATED WHICH WAS UNUSUAL FOR HIM. MARCEL RECEIVED A PARCEL WHICH CONTAINED, AMONGST OTHER THINGS, A PAIR OF BRIGHT YELLOW SHORTS IN WHICH HE LOOKED RATHER RESPLENDENT.

CHRIS AND ANDRE M TOOK A LENGTHY TRIP AROUND THE ISLAND WHICH THEY BOTH ENJOYED AND RETURNED WITH A DETAILED SLIDE COLLECTION OF THE ELEPHANT SEALS REPRODUCTIVE BEHAVIOUR.

THE MARION OLYMPICS (CONSISTING OF SNOOKER, POOL, DARTS, CHESS, BADMINGTON, TABLE TENNIS, DRAUGHTS, SCRABBLE AND TRIVIAL PURSUIT) IS PLANNED FOR THE CHRISTMAS PERIOD. THE DWARF-THROWING COMPETITION WAS CANCELLED AS THE CHIEF-MISSILE (V12 STEVE HENLYEY) WITHDREW AT THE LAST MINUTE. I M SURE ALL THE LATENT BAR-FLIES WILL BE EXPOSED AS THE COMPETITION PROGRESSES.

OTHER ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON INCLUDE A SLAP-UP MEAL, VIDEOS AND A VOLUNTARY SWIM DOWN AT THE POINT.

IN CLOSING I WOULD LIKE TO WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR FROM ALL OF US.

PS. THANKS TO ROBIN ALEXANDER FOR THE LEKKER SAKKIE-SAKKIE MUSIC HE PLAYED US ON RADIO ORION.

WEATHER DATA - NOVEMBER

MAX TEMP.....M....16,4 DEGREES
MIN TEMP.....-1,2 DEGREES
AVERAGE TEMP.....5,9 DEGREES
RAINFALL.....130,8 MM
HIGHEST WINDSPEED.....143,6 KM H
AVERAGE HOURS SUNSHINE PER DAY....6,3

WEATHER DATA: FRANK SOKOLIC
NEWSLETTER BY: PAT SAUSAGE DUIGAN

59
57.12.01