

Programme goes from strength to strength

Setting at night helps to reduce bycatch of seabirds



Welcome to the third edition of Sea Change, the Global Seabird Programme's newsletter. Since the last issue in July 2006, the project has moved on leaps and bounds. The Albatross Task Force (ATF) has expanded to eight members, three in South Africa, two in Brazil and three in Chile. It is expected that the ATF will continue expanding, into Uruguay, Argentina and Namibia in the near future.

Advocacy work with the major Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMO) responsible for the high seas pelagic longline fleets is showing dividends. Representatives of the Programme have participated in the Commission meetings of the five major tuna fishing RFMOs. Progress is often slow and laborious but

changes are slowly being implemented, resulting in improvements to the seabird mitigation measures employed in these fisheries.

Partner News brings a mixed bag this issue. SPEA, SEO and BirdLife Malta, are all working on innovative projects to investigate shearwater distributions and evaluate the impact of interactions with fisheries. Falklands Conservation continue to reduce seabird bycatch in South Atlantic fisheries. However, its not all good news several incidents of high albatross bycatch have occurred in New Zealand waters over recent months. Importantly, these incidents were reported and BirdLife partner, Forest and Bird, are currently working with the government to tighten up the regulations.

FAO best-practice guidelines

BirdLife had a great result at the March 2007 meeting of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization Committee on Fisheries (COFI), which is a bi-annual meeting of the primary international body responsible for the development of international fisheries policy and management. It was also responsible for enacting the FAO National Plan of Action–Seabirds (NPOA–S), so there are strong links between the work of COFI and the Global Seabird Programme (GSP).

Prior to the meeting, we lobbied several key Member States to secure backing for a workshop (FAO Expert Consultation) to draft 'best-practice guidelines' for the development of NPOA–S. At the meeting we received strong support from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, New Zealand and the USA – which secured the Committee's support for the development of best-practice guidelines for National Plans of Action to help reduce seabird bycatch.

The Committee agreed, in co-operation with relevant bodies (eg Commission on Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels and BirdLife International) to develop best-practice guidelines. These will assist countries and Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMO), the bodies responsible for the management of high seas fisheries and highly migratory

fish stocks, in implementation of the International Plan of Action–Seabirds. It was also agreed that the best-practice guidelines should be extended to other relevant fishing gears. This latter point is particularly important as it gives scope for the guidelines to feed into RFMO processes and provides a clear mandate to address non-longline fisheries (eg trawl) in the guidelines.

We are working with several key Member States and the FAO to plan for the consultation in 2008. Once agreed, the guidelines will be a valuable tool for implementing the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, helping Member States create more robust National Plans of Action that promote the use of mandatory and voluntary mitigation measures to reduce seabird bycatch. They will also give guidance to RFMOs on more effective measures on a regional scale to reduce seabird bycatch in their fisheries.

BirdLife considers that the case for best-practice guidelines is urgent and predicated on two key issues: firstly the accelerating decline of albatross population status around the world; and secondly the publication in recent months of a number of new NPOA–S. This makes it timely to distil lessons from which future plans can benefit and to assist contracting parties to develop them.

FAO best-practice guidelines to be extended to cover trawl fisheries



ALBATROSS TASK FORCE



ATF update

We are almost 18 months into one of RSPB/BirdLife's most ambitious and exciting projects; and the Albatross Task Force (ATF) continues to go from strength to strength. After spending considerable time planning the

strategic development of the world's first international team of mitigation instructors, we now have eight ATF instructors in-place. This includes three working in South Africa, for 15 months, two in Brazil, for eight months, and three in Chile, for three months. Two instructors in Chile work in the pelagic longline fishery that operates predominantly from Coquimbo (north of Santiago) and one half-time instructor based in Valdivia works in the demersal longline fishery. The Chile team is managed by BirdLife collaborators Prof Carlos Moreno and Rodrigo Hucke-Gaete, who are founding members of Centro Ballena Azul (CBA, www.ballenazul.org), an NGO of southern Chile. The team in Chile have excellent contacts in both the fishing industry and government, and we are well placed to make exciting progress in the short term, including providing skilled personnel to assist in the implementation of the country's National Plan of Action–Seabirds.

Over the last 12 months, the South African team have managed to hold workshops in every port used by pelagic and demersal longline fleets, and have assembled and distributed around 30 sets of tori lines. In addition to collecting at-sea data, providing tori lines and demonstrating a range of other mitigation measures (eg line weighting in longline fisheries) and conducting industry training workshops, the team have trained around 60 fisheries observers and government Compliance Officers on the need for and use of mitigation across South African longline and trawl fisheries. This part of the work is critical as it converts the increased knowledge of fishermen into changes in the way fisheries operate by ensuring compliance with mitigation requirements.

In the demersal hake trawl fleet, the team collected at-sea data to establish the baseline impact of the fishery on seabirds. This was estimated to be around 18,000 birds per year; an alarmingly high figure. Over 100 tori lines were assembled and distributed to the fleet along with an ATF brochure highlighting the nature of the problem and short-term (tori lines) and long-term (discharge management) solutions. We played a critical role in ensuring that new regulations were brought into force. They require the mandatory use of tori lines and prohibit the discharge of offal during net-setting operations.

We are already seeing tangible results from our work and similar positive signs in Brazil, where we have also achieved fantastic progress in eight months. Several workshops have been held in both Santos; the primary port for pelagic longliners in the south of Brazil, and



ATF continue to build strong links with the fishing industry

Itajai. As the largely artisanal fleet operating from Itajai (in southern-central Brazil) has not previously been involved in initiatives to reduce bycatch of seabirds, it has taken more time to establish links with industry. However, the team are off to a great start and have met and interviewed the captains and crews of 14 of the 20 vessels in the fleet and have conducted 10 at-sea trips to demonstrate the use of tori lines and blue-dye bait to reduce seabird bycatch.

Since the initial planning phases of the project, we recognised that once it reached a critical size of around 10 instructors, a dedicated co-ordinator would be required to help manage the team. The ATF is currently undergoing a rapid phase of expansion. With Argentina, Uruguay and Namibia all likely to come on-line in the coming months, we are on the verge of a major growth, and the recruitment of an ATF co-ordinator is a major step forward. The co-ordinator will facilitate communication across the project and help to develop an integrated and effective project that incorporates and maximises the strengths of ATF in-country project leaders and instructors.

We are excited about the results we have achieved in our first year of operation. Having completed developing a lot of the strategic planning and infrastructure that such a complex multi-national project requires, we can focus on the expansion of the project in South America and southern Africa, and on delivering action where it matters most...at the stern of the vessel! The ATF is already taking steps towards halting the decline of albatrosses and petrels by working with fishermen and governments to erase the world's bycatch 'hotspots'.

You can follow the progress of the ATF on our website www.savethealbatross.net and very soon you will notice the impact of our increased capacity in terms of instructors and the ATF Co-ordinator with more frequently updated diaries and news stories.

MARINE IBAS

Cory's shearwater

Ben Lascelles



Marine IBAs starting to become real in Portugal

Portugal hosts the eleventh largest Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the world, and the largest in the European Union. The archipelagos of Azores, Madeira, Selvagens and Berlengas vary from the mid-Atlantic to the pure Macaronesian and/or sub-tropical habitats, and are the breeding grounds for dozens of seabird species (including four that are globally threatened).

SPEA, BirdLife partner in Portugal, is now beginning to see the first results of its work as the Marine Important Bird Area (2004–2008) and SOS *Pterodroma feae* (2006–2010) LIFE Projects start to produce very interesting data.

With an average of two boat-cruises every month, several aerial surveys designed to study seabird migration along the coast of mainland Portugal, and a group of more than 15 observers, we are now able to cover a big portion of our enormous EEZ. As you can see in Figure 1 (following page), there are still areas

that need to be covered, especially around the Azores, and we will focus our efforts here this year.

Nevertheless, this picture exceeds our most optimistic initial expectations, and we are happy to say that all major fishing areas and/or important banks will be surveyed at least once.

In addition, several different tracking devices, from radio-transmitters to compass, Global Positioning System and/or geolocator loggers deployed on Cory's shearwaters, little shearwaters, band-rumped storm-petrels and Bulwer's petrels are now revealing amazing results that already pin-point our future network of marine IBAs. As you can see in Figure 2 (following page), we have tracked birds from all Portuguese archipelagos but one, Selvagens, which will be done this year.

Amongst the results, we can see how the Cory's shearwaters breeding at the Desertas archipelago do not visit the African shelf west of their

colonies, but instead travel to the important fishing banks that occur off Madeira, and even further north. Some other interesting data prove that the much cheaper compass-loggers are as reliable as satellite tags, showing the same feeding behaviour for birds tracked with these two types of device in the central group of the Azores archipelago.

Over the coming months, SPEA will continue its work, merging the existing projects with new ones, and developing several statistical models that will determine which variables are most important for the definition of marine IBAs. Together with SEO/BirdLife we will continue to adapt the IBA Terrestrial Criteria to the marine environment. We also intend to release an interactive CD-ROM, containing our first definitive marine IBAs, next winter.

Check all our progress at our website:

<http://programamarinho.spea.pt/>

MARINE IBAS

Figure 1: Seabird survey transects, 2004–2007

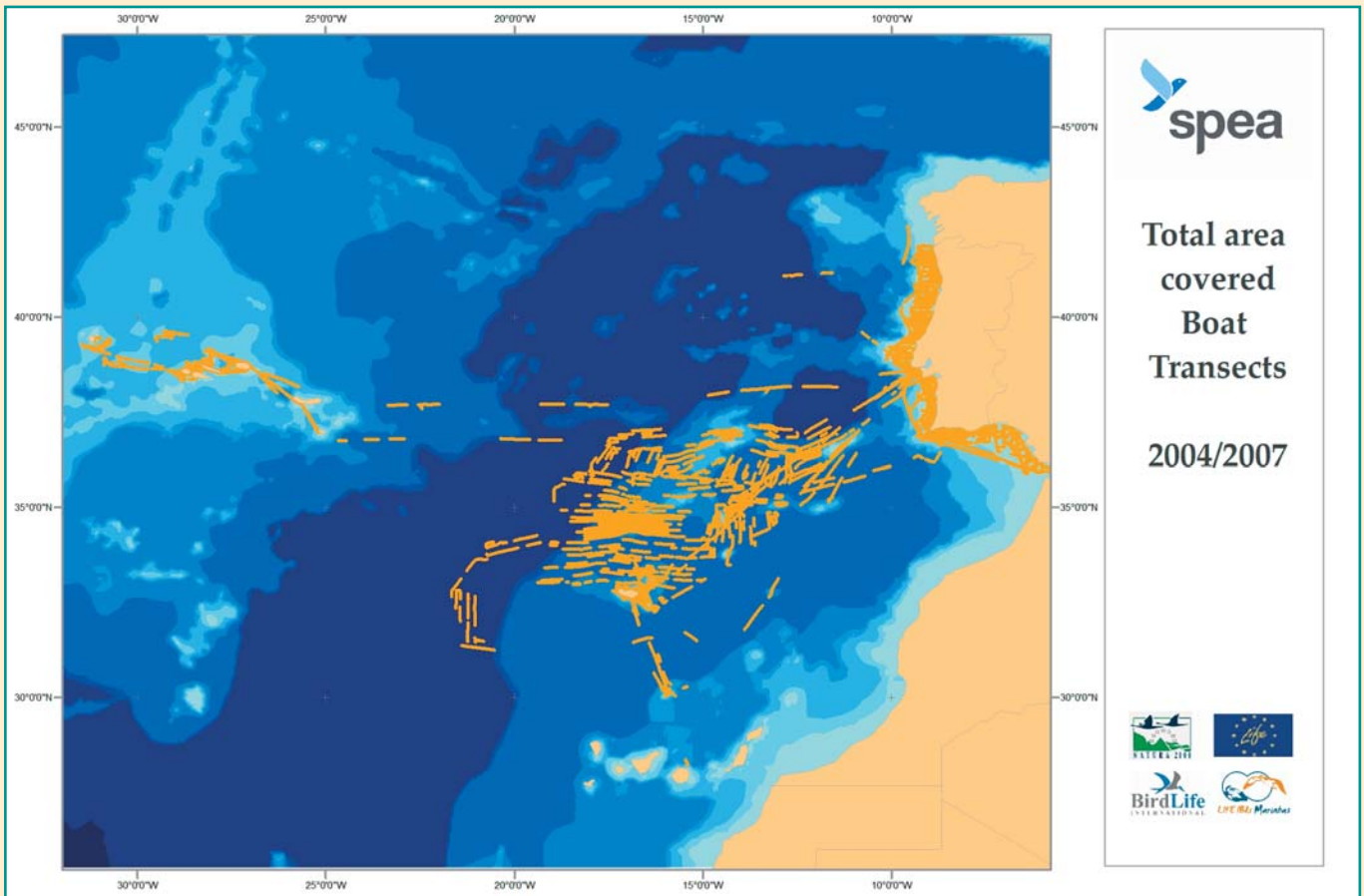
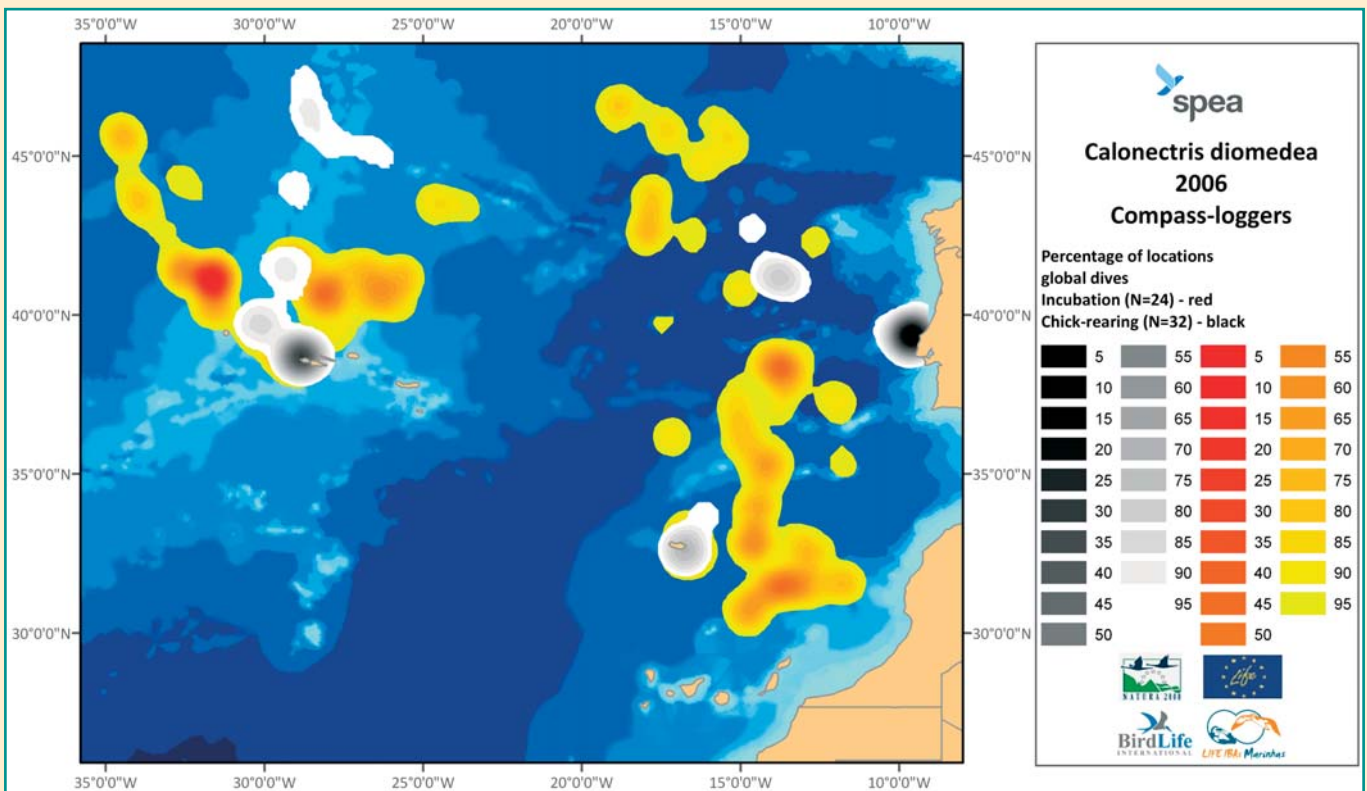


Figure 2: Distribution of tracked Cory's shearwaters during chick rearing and incubation, 2006



New Zealand develops new regulations to protect seabirds

Following a series of alarming incidents in the last year, the New Zealand government officials are drafting strict measures that will significantly reduce seabird bycatch in New Zealand fisheries.

The largely voluntary framework under the New Zealand NPOA-Seabirds appears to be unravelling. Since mid 2005, there have been several disturbing capture events – from only five fishing trips, captures of 90 white-capped albatrosses were observed in trawl fisheries (IUCN status, vulnerable), 58 Antipodean albatrosses (vulnerable) in pelagic longline fisheries, 12 Chatham albatrosses (critically endangered), and 22 Salvin's albatrosses (vulnerable) in bottom longline fisheries. These captures, along with a large number of smaller events in monitored fishing fleets show that seabird bycatch continues to be a problem in New Zealand fisheries.

Following the event that killed 12 Chatham albatrosses, measures are being considered to address bycatch across bottom and pelagic longlining, and may include line weighting, night setting and tori lines. This follows the introduction of mandatory night setting for all pelagic longlining for tunas or tuna-like species introduced in

January 2007, and mandatory bird scaring lines (tori-lines) which have been in place for several years. The BirdLife and Fishtek project to develop fisher-friendly safe-lead line weights for pelagic longlines is seen as a key step to ensuring that line weighting is taken up more broadly.

New Zealand BirdLife partner Forest & Bird welcomes the developments as a significant first step to address the issue of seabird bycatch, but hopes that satisfactory longer term solutions, including line weighting, will be found not just for seabirds, but also for sharks and turtles, which are also caught as significant bycatch in these fisheries. Forest & Bird are continuing to encourage the New Zealand government to greatly increase observer monitoring of seabird bycatch, from the roughly 5% coverage deployed currently.

These incidents show that voluntary measures and management of seabird bycatch through voluntary Codes of Practice has proved to be ineffective in many New Zealand fisheries. Although a great many responsible fishing operators are using the measures defined under the Codes of Practice to good effect, these measures are not being generalised across the whole fleet.

BirdLife Malta secures EU funds for seabirds

In an exciting development for seabird conservation in the Mediterranean, in March 2007, BirdLife Malta officially launched another EU Life funded project entitled: SPA Site and Sea Actions Saving *Puffinus yelkouan* in Malta. The project is the first Maltese project to be selected by the European Commission under Life Natura.

The project, which started last September and will continue over a period of 46 months, aims to reverse the decline in the Yelkouan shearwater population at Rđum tal-Madonna, a designated Special Protection Area (SPA) and host to the largest colony of Yelkouan shearwaters on the islands. The colony consists of 500 of the 1500 breeding pairs in the Maltese islands. The aims of the project will be achieved through a combination of eradication of rats, improving breeding habitat, reducing



human disturbance at the SPA site and investigating interactions with local fisheries.

For further details contact Helen Raine
helen.raine@birdlifemalta.org

PARTNER NEWS

Seabirds that forage with outstretched wings such as black-browed albatrosses can easily be injured on trawl warps

Sarah Crofts



Continuing seabird mitigation successes in Falkland trawl fisheries

Back in 2001, Falklands Conservation identified extensive seabird deaths in the Falklands' trawl fisheries. Trawl-related mortalities have emerged as the most serious problem for seabirds in the area. Extensive surveys, during the austral summer of 2002/03, estimated a minimum of 1500 birds killed per year. These were almost entirely black-browed albatrosses, whose long wings are easily entangled in the warps as the birds compete aggressively to get close to the offal. Subsequently, trials to tackle this problem showed that paired tori lines were the most efficient and cost effective mitigation device.

In July 2004, tori lines became mandatory on all licensed fin-fish trawlers as part of a National Plan of Action (NPOA-trawling) to reduce seabird deaths in the trawl fisheries. The following year, there was an estimated 90% reduction in seabird mortalities from trawlers deploying tori lines. Mitigation measures were extended to the *Loligo gahi* squid trawl fleet in July 2006 and now

effectively all stern trawlers operating in Falklands' waters use tori lines, with Falkland-flagged vessels extending this to the high seas. Recent trips conducted by Falklands Conservation observers, during March and April 2007, have shown that captains and crews have become more confident with the use of tori lines, deploying them during the critical early net-setting period when the majority of residual mortalities occur.

With the NPOA-trawling due for review at the end of 2007, the next phase is to set binding targets for seabird mortality limits in the trawl fisheries, a process that has been successfully accomplished in the Falklands' longlining fleet.

For further information contact Isaac Forster:
isaac.forster@conservation.org.fk

Visit Falklands Conservation at
www.falklandsconservation.com

Tuna commissions make progress in tackling seabird bycatch

In the past two years, at least four of the world's five tuna commissions have made significant progress in addressing bycatch of seabirds in their longline fisheries. However, obstacles remain to be overcome.

The world's five tuna commissions manage some of the largest and most valuable longline fisheries in the world. Longline fisheries of temperate tunas and swordfish in particular overlap to a high degree with albatross and petrel distribution. In 2005, when BirdLife conducted its review of the environmental performance of the tuna commissions and other fishery organisations¹, most had taken very little, if any, action on seabird bycatch.

Now in 2007, all five tuna commissions have passed seabird resolutions and three have requirements for seabird bycatch mitigation measures². BirdLife is an observer to all five tuna commissions, and has been working with them over the past two years to provide data on high risk areas for seabird bycatch, and on measures to reduce mortality. BirdLife is a key player in the Atlantic tuna commission's seabird assessment that began in February 2007, and is working with the Western and Central Pacific Fishery Commission on its Ecological Risk Assessment.

Seabird bycatch is firmly on the agenda of the meetings, and key delegations are pushing for advances.

However, much work is still needed before stated intentions are fully translated into effective action: the Atlantic tuna commission does not yet have mitigation requirements in place; there are still low levels of observer programme coverage in all the tuna commissions; and systems to monitor compliance with and effectiveness of mitigation measures are still lacking. The southern bluefin tuna commission (CCSBT) is of particular concern, having been in deadlock for almost 10 years. CCSBT must review the effectiveness of its current requirement for a tori line. However, the progress made in the past two years in the other tuna commissions is significant. BirdLife will continue to work with Regional Fisheries Management Organisations to assist them in reducing seabird bycatch in their fisheries.

¹ Small, C J. 2005. *Regional Fisheries Management Organisations: their role and importance in reducing bycatch of albatrosses and other species*. BirdLife International, Cambridge, UK.

² Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna

Four of the five tuna commissions are making progress in addressing bycatch of seabirds – but obstacles remain





The BBC devoted a whole programme to the albatross in its *Saving Planet Earth* series

BBC show highlights the plight of the albatross

This year, millions of BBC1 viewers saw the work of the RSPB/BirdLife's Save the Albatross campaign. The BBC's *Saving Planet Earth* series devoted a whole show to the albatross.

The programme started with Carol Thatcher, the show's presenter, in the Falkland Islands. Over the last 10 years, the population of black-browed albatrosses in the Falklands has fallen from 438,000 breeding pairs to 399,000. Many of them have been killed by longline fishing methods, which account for 100,000 albatross deaths every year. This equates to one every five minutes and is the major factor behind 19 out of 22 albatross species being threatened with extinction.

Carol said, 'I'd only been in the Falklands for a couple of days, but I could see the problem for the albatross straight away. It flies huge distances looking for food and frequently comes into contact with humans. And when that happens, it's the same old story. Humans one, albatross nil.'

The work of the Albatross Task Force (ATF) was highlighted when Carol travelled to Brazil, which is where many of the Falkland's albatrosses go in search of food. ATF member Tatiana Neves was on board a fishing boat demonstrating seabird-friendly practices to the crew. She was able to show that, when boats used the mitigation methods, seabird deaths were virtually eliminated. However, she also showed the sad haul of albatrosses that had been killed by a neighbouring boat where mitigation methods had not been used. This illustrated the need to put Task Force members on as many vessels as possible, as quickly as possible.

The BBC Wildlife Fund has been set up in association with the *Saving Planet Earth* series to support projects to save endangered species around the world and the ATF will benefit from it.

Read more about *Saving Planet Earth*:
www.bbc.co.uk/savingplanetearth/albatross.shtml

WRITERS' CORNER

John Cooper, Vice-Chair, ACAP Advisory Committee and Honorary Tristan Conservation Officer, writes on the Tristan albatrosses of Gough Island

It is the 31st of January 2007 and I am slowly climbing the mountainous slopes of Gough Island in the mid-Atlantic. In my too-heavy pack is a cake, as it is my 60th birthday. It is also my last day as a university academic. A year before, I decided to retire from the University of Cape Town while in the field, rather than the office, and chose Gough as the best place to do it.

Six of us, four from Cape Town and two from Tristan da Cunha, left the South African meteorological station in Transvaal Bay to spend up to eight days camping in the uplands counting Tristan albatrosses. Our aim was to undertake a full-island census of incubating birds. This was no easy task given the often-difficult weather conditions, rugged terrain and, even with hand-held Global Positioning System receivers, the problem of not knowing exactly where one is in a terrain lacking human constructions of any kind and with obscuring mist a regular feature. Gough Island is part of the United Kingdom Overseas Territory of Tristan da Cunha and is a proclaimed nature reserve and World Heritage natural site. It is also home to myriad seabirds, several species of which are in deep trouble.

The Tristan albatross, one of the great albatrosses of the genus *Diomedea*, is endemic to the Tristan Group, and except for a tiny remnant population of less than five pairs on Inaccessible Island, breeds only on Gough. Like all the albatrosses of the Southern Ocean, it is threatened by longline mortality at sea, especially in the offshore waters of Brazil. However, unlike most other species



**John enjoys his
60th birthday cake
on Gough Island**

of albatross, it also faces a serious threat on land from the introduced house mouse. Once the guard stage is over, the mice move in and literally eat the downy chicks alive, causing a very low breeding success over large parts of the island. Thus the Tristan albatross faces a double whammy: losing its 'capital' in the way of adult (and juvenile) birds dying on hooks at sea, and suffering from a low 'interest' rate with few chicks surviving to fledge. Not surprisingly, the annual censuses strongly suggest the population is declining, with the 2007 count of 1279 'Apparently Occupied Nests' (AONs) the lowest yet (the 2001 count was 2400 nests). The bird has been categorised as Endangered by BirdLife International following World Conservation Union (IUCN) criteria, and population modelling now being conducted may well push the bird into the Critically Endangered category.

Action has started to reduce the at-sea mortality. For example, Brazil has recently adopted its National Plan of Action–Seabirds (NPOA–S) in terms of the Food and Agriculture Organization's guidelines, and the International Commission of the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) has commenced a review of incidental mortality in its fisheries. Namibia and South Africa, both range states for the Tristan albatross, are also progressing their NPOA–S. In terms of the land-based threat, research on the house mouse, including its susceptibility to a poisoning effort, is continuing and late in the year a New Zealand expert is set to visit the island to undertake a feasibility study for an eradication campaign based on the dispersal of poison bait by helicopter. If the feasibility study is positive, then an operational plan will be drawn up, detailing exactly

WRITERS' CORNER (contd)

how the mice can be eradicated (and at what cost, as it will certainly not be a cheap operation).

Deciding to commit the necessary funds (several millions of pounds sterling) will ultimately be a political decision, one more likely to be taken if there is strong public support within the United Kingdom, as well as globally. The UK (including its Overseas Territory of Tristan da Cunha) is Party to the international Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) and has thus already made an international commitment to save the species. But before poison bait can rain down on Gough there is a need to consider its side effects. There are two endemic land birds on Gough, a bunting and a moorhen, and it will be essential that sufficient numbers survive the campaign to eradicate the mice. Research on the birds' susceptibility to poison bait is thus required, and it may even be necessary to take 're-founder' populations into temporary captivity to ensure their survival, releasing birds back onto the island after the poison (and, we hope, the mice) have gone.

So, it is likely to be a few more years before we can expect the Tristan albatrosses of Gough to breed unhindered by mice. It is therefore intended to continue annual censuses of breeding birds, to confirm the decline currently taking place – and keep their threatened status high on the agenda. Ideally, such counts should be continued after any mouse eradication, so as to measure the expected improvement in breeding success and, ultimately, population size. In addition, a detailed demographic study has been set up in two different parts of the island, with all the breeding birds being colour-banded and their nests staked. This will allow breeding success (and such parameters as life-time breeding production) to be assessed in detail.

When I was an undergraduate in the 1960s, I used to say I had three ambitions: to see what 1984 would really be like in comparison to George Orwell's frightening vision, to stare upwards at Halley's Comet, and to see in a new millennium. At the time all three events seemed far in the future, as far in the past as they now seem to be. My new, and

much more important, ambition, is to see the end of the Gough mice and to know that the at-sea mortality of Tristan albatrosses has been reduced to the absolute minimum by improved fishing practices. We have started on the road to both achievements and I trust (and hope) I will live to see them both attained. For my own part, I will do what I can to help in my retirement, with the expectation of several more 'birthday climbs' on one of the world's most important (and beautiful) seabird islands.

Research and conservation activities on Gough Island are undertaken with the approval of the Tristan Government by the combined efforts of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Tristan Agriculture and Natural Resources Department and the University of Cape Town. Principal funding received from Birds Australia (BirdLife in Australia) through its 'Save the Albatross Campaign' and the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators, and the United Kingdom's Overseas Territories Environment Programme is gratefully acknowledged.

Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross, endemic to the Tristan da Cunha Island group



Smart leads

The Smart Lead is a new device that will help to reduce the number of seabirds killed in pelagic longline fisheries by increasing the uptake of appropriate line weighting. It has been developed by Fishtek Ltd (UK), who have been working closely with Ben Sullivan of BirdLife International's Global Seabird Programme on mitigation measures for pelagic longline fisheries.

Although there is a wide range of operational and environmental variables that affect the bycatch rate of pelagic longlines, the single most effective means of reducing seabird bycatch is to sink the longline rapidly, to prevent seabirds from accessing baited hooks. The Smart Lead came about in response to the safety issues surrounding the use of leaded swivels to increase the sink rate of longlines. Leaded swivels ranging from 45 g to 100 g are used to increase the sink rate of the branch lines.

The problem with conventional leaded swivels (also referred to by fishermen as 'lead bullets') is that during a bite-off (eg when sharks are hauled to the

surface and swim hard away from the vessel), which stretches the branch line to breaking point; the swivel slingshots towards the boat at dangerous speed. A 2 mm diameter branch line will accelerate a 60 g leaded swivel to speeds of 500 km/h. Over the past few years, there have been serious injuries and even deaths. Such incidents have caused understandable reluctance to use weighted swivels.

The Smart Lead (see diagram) resolves the problem as the weight is designed to fall from the line whenever the line breaks under tension, thus protecting the fishermen from injury.

By addressing the fishermen's safety concerns, we can encourage more boats to use line weighting, which would have a significant impact on seabird mortality.

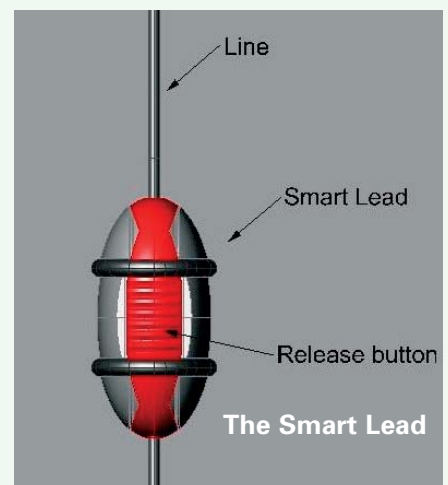
Prototypes are currently being tested and proving to be very reliable.

Sea trials are planned in Australia, Hawaii, New Zealand and South Africa. We look forward to reporting on these results.

Smart Lead is one of two new devices designed by Fishtek Ltd – the other is the 'Bait Pod', which encapsulates the baited hook and releases at a specific depth – more about the Bait Pod in our next issue.

Fishtek Ltd is a dynamic UK company focused on developing technologies to reduce bycatch. It is run by Pete Kibel (Fishery Biologist) and Ben Kibel (Engineer).

For more information contact pete@fishtek.co.uk or Ben Sullivan at ben.sullivan@rspb.org.uk



UPCOMING EVENTS

BirdLife International's World Conference will be held between 22 and 27 September 2008 in Buenos Aires. Workshops will be held throughout the week and although the agenda is yet to be finalised we hope to feature the work of the Global Seabird Programme in many of these sessions.

The fourth **International Albatross and Petrel Conference** will be held in Cape Town from 11 to 15 August 2008. For further details and a pre-registration form visit www.iapc4.org

End notes

The Global Seabird Programme is co-ordinated, on behalf of the BirdLife International Partnership, by the RSPB (BirdLife Partner in the UK). Programme staff at the RSPB include Euan Dunn (Head of Marine Policy), Cleo Small (International Marine Policy Officer), Ben Sullivan (Global Seabird Programme Co-ordinator) and Andy Black (Technical Officer). Please feel free to contact Ben by e-mail: ben.sullivan@rspb.org.uk with comments and potential articles.

BirdLife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge CB3 0NA, England. Tel: +44 (0)1223 277 318

www.birdlife.org



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